

Minutes  
Kona Beth Shalom  
Board of Trustees  
August 6, 2023  
Zoom (online) meeting

TRUSTEES LOGGED INTO MEETING

Alan Silverman, Eva Pierce, Barry Blum, Joel Gimpel, Nella Silverman, Elaine Dobinson and Trina Yerlick

TRUSTEES ABSENT

R. Shari Berman, Vivienne Aronowitz, Vic Greenspan, Mike Bernstone, Sara Nealy

OTHERS PRESENT

Aviva and Yehudah Plaut

CALL TO ORDER

The board meeting began at 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER

Mi shebeirach was sung for those in need of healing.

MINUTES

Joel made the motion to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2023, board meeting. The motion was seconded and approved. Joel noted that the minutes should reflect the person who makes motions. Also if there is a request by a member to record the results of a vote, it shall be done.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial report was emailed to the board before the meeting. Since Mike would not be able to attend the board meeting, he sent a memo to express his concern about declining membership and increasing costs. He made a chart of our events with an expense column and an income column. His suggestion was to increase dues by 10%. (See his complete email in Addenda A). Sara and Vivienne sent in responses by email agreeing with Mike's assessment of need to increase dues and have sponsors for events.

Barry, after reading Mike's emails, made up a series of discussion topics so that we could make a decision about dues before sending the annual newsletter for High Holidays (HH).

Increase Income?	Decrease Expenditures?
Raise dues	Cancel "Meet the Cantor/Rabbi luncheon for Board + spouses
Solicit donations from rich people and foundations	Empty our storage unit (save \$250/month)
Hope that Nitzavim will continue	
Do more "Varieties" that make money	Hire only one prayer leader for future High Holidays
Do more destination b'nai mitzvot for money	Do fewer "Varieties" that cost money
Fund raisers? (Who will produce them?)	

A discussion ensued. We were told that Una Greenaway stated in her email to the Board that she recalled asking Michael Zola, a past president of the Board, that the building fund can be used for whatever KBS needs. This fund is not just for buying a brick and mortar place for KBS to have services. Una urged using our funds to keep KBS afloat. Not everyone agreed.

We have received \$60K from Nitzavim during the past two years and we have used approximately \$5K.

In regard to the dues, it was noted that in March of this year the board decided to reduce single person member dues to half the family membership (\$360) from \$270 to \$180. Trina made a motion to clarify and confirm that this would be the single member dues for this year. The motion passed with Joel abstaining. Previous Zoom-only HH tickets were \$36/holiday and Eva made a motion to clarify and confirm that Zoom only fees will be the same this year. The motion passed. Visitor/walk-in non-member fees were \$36/holiday last year and Joel made a motion to clarify and confirm that it will now be \$50/holiday for adults, children and kupuna are free. The motion passed. Doorkeepers will keep in mind that everyone should feel welcome to attend services no matter their ability to pay.

Barry asked for a Finance Committee to come up with ideas to increase revenue and/or ideas to increase membership. Those on the committee so far are Mike Bernstone, Joel Gimpel and Elaine Dobinson. Yehudah said perhaps he would join. Others on the board who are interested in this project but did not attend the meeting are welcome to join the committee.

## FACILITIES

Old A Pavilion has been cancelled as the site for the Chanukah Party. Hawaiian Queen Coffee Garden (HQCG) has been booked for Sunday, December 10.

Considering the heat inside HQCG during previous HH, the idea of renting a tent to set up an outdoor space this year could be considered at the September board meeting after we have an idea of the number of people who might be attending. Another idea being considered would be to hire a tech assistant to help Alan.

## EDUCATION

Yehudah submitted a list of 100 book titles that he would suggest for young adult pre and post b. mitzvah student reading. These are available through digital sources. This would not be a physical library.

## CEMETERY

Heather Rivera, on her weekly visit to the cemetery, noticed that the mechitza fence and vine had been torn down when a new gravesite had been dug. She notified Eva who called Loke in the cemetery office and in two days the cemetery had remediated the problem. Eva noticed that the repaired fence was not the same as the old fence and notified Loki of this fact. She has not heard back yet as the manager had to be consulted. Eva was wondering who was responsible for paying to get this resolved. According to the agreement, maintenance is the responsibility of the seller, in this case the cemetery. A “dignified mechitza” was in the agreement and no one at KBS okayed the new fence that was erected. Eva was thanked for her followup and she will notify Barry of what the manager says.

Barry has found out more information regarding the non-Jewish grandson’s plan to have the ashes of his recently deceased Jewish grandma buried at Beit Hashamayim. It seems that the details have been worked out. He will buy a regular plot from the cemetery, Barry or someone will conduct a service and her ashes will be buried. The charge for opening and closing a grave will be less than for burial of a full sized coffin.

## WEBSITE

There was a security update which inadvertently caused the website to be down for a couple of days. It is now up and running.

## BIKUR CHOLIM

Shai Yerlick is recovering from knee surgery.

Aviva Plaut has recently retired from Kona Community Hospital but found herself as a “visitor” seeing a friend who was hospitalized. With that experience, she is considering becoming “visiting clergy”. She asks anyone who knows about this process to please let her know what it would entail.

## NORTH HAWAII CHAVURAH (NHC)

Vivienne was off island and not able to attend the board meeting. She did say the NHC is planning an event on August 11. From her email July 25, "Please save the date for our next erev shabbat gathering at No 3, Mauna Kea Beach Resort at 6pm on August 11th. We are blessed to have part time resident, Solange Tajchman, help us prepare for the upcoming High Holidays. Solange is a longtime student and teacher of Jewish traditions and text. Here is a little taste of what Solange will discuss. "Welcoming the month of Elul is an opportunity for Cheshbon Ha'nefesh: an accounting of the soul. This is a time to explore our relationships with ourselves, with others, and with the universe in preparation for the High Holy Days. I will offer an alternate understanding of the words we use - Tefillah (prayer), Teshuvah (repentance), and Tzedakah (charitable offerings) - that can serve as a model for experiencing the High Holy Days not as an exercise in self flagellation but as an invitation to grow as individuals and as a community."

## NITZAVIM

Yehudah Plaut received a letter from Nitzavim stating Josh Levinson has resigned from his position and Marisa Hayase will probably take over. Rabbi David Friedenrich will lead workshops to coach community members on helping their organizations to achieve their specific goals. Yehudah and Aviva have contacted Rabbi Friedenrich and felt good about his ability to help us increase membership, deal with the lack of continuity of generations here on Big Island, how to find and keep engaged Jews who live on Island. Our Varieties of Jewish Experience projects are a good platform for the future.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### HIGH HOLIDAYS (HH)

The machzorim have arrived and are in Mike's garage. Barry would like to have a fundraiser by offering book plates to be inscribed for a suggested donation of \$100/set (the machzorim come as a two-book set). Aviva will call Sara Nealy as she would be a good resource to consult about how to encourage and find big donors. Barry has written the annual newsletter and gotten edits from some members on the board. He also listed the people who died and people in need of healing and asked for input from the board to make sure we haven't missed anyone. Barry wishes to step down as President and we have no 2nd Vice-President. Anyone wishing to take on these responsibilities or suggest someone should contact Barry so they can be voted on at the annual meeting.

Alan is setting up the application form in the computer. It will have dues and ticket information for members and non-members (walk ins and Zoom attendees). There will be ways to sign up for the different holidays and the two get-togethers with the Cantor, one on Monday evening after Rosh Hashanah to discuss "Pray and Mean It." There will be another on Friday evening of Shabbat Shuvah at the Plaut's where he will discuss, "Democracy in Israel."

Joel made a motion and was seconded to skip the Meet the Cantor lunch this year since the schedule is full. The motion passed. Trina abstained.

#### PEACE GARDEN

Since the Garden is not open on Sundays, it was impossible to schedule an event for the congregation. Elaine expressed the hope that perhaps a few could visit during the week of Sukkot, Monday Oct. 2 through Thursday Oct. 5.

#### OLD BUSINESS

#### SHABBAT KI TEITZEI

Location: HQCG  
Producer: Aviva Plaut  
Challah: Silvermans

BAR MITZVAH      Evan Wedgwood      Sat., Oct. 28      HQCG

CHANUKAH PARTY   Sun. evening Dec. 10 Music, details?

PESACH      Details?

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### CANDLELIGHTING ON ZOOM

This event is no longer being scheduled.

#### KBS SCRAPBOOKS

What to do with them? Barry has looked them over and considers them treasures. We are in need of a person to take over this project.

#### NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting will be held September 3 at 10 am on Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nella Silverman,  
Board Secretary

ADDENDA A

Michael Bernstone's email regarding KBS revenues.

At 02:04 PM 7/23/2023, Michael Bernstone wrote:

I will be traveling for the next board meeting and unable to attend.

As I look towards next year, I have concern regarding adequate revenue for KBS.

Thanks to the generosity of the Weinberg Foundation, cash availability is not the problem.

We have a declining membership and increasing cost.

The outlook for next year given a status quo is not great.

We will finish the current year with an operating loss around \$5,000.

While membership dues increased this year, I think it is only a return to normalcy following the pandemic, with those who withdrew returning.

We will most likely see declining membership in the coming years similar to all religions.

If we do not want to see an operating loss next year, It is time to consider raising membership dues.

Our Board of Trustees recently voted to decrease single membership dues to 50% of family.

We have not raised dues for 10 years.

I suggest we raise dues by around 10% for all memberships.

We still have an extremely low dues structure.

However, as a non-profit continuing to operate at a loss is inadvisable.

	Expense	Income	
Klezmer concert	\$625	0	
JK Meyer	\$2700	\$4,000*	*mainly from Vivienne's sources
Seder	\$3900	\$1550	
Chanukah	\$250	0	