
TRANSCRIPTION OF THE
MINUTES OF THE BETH TZEDEC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MAY 23, 2023

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 2

1 Mr. Don Smith, Chair of the Board, welcomed the
2 members to the 2023 Annual General Meeting and reviewed some
3 of the technology elements that would be used during the
4 hybrid meeting, consisting of members in person and online.
5 He noted that the Zoom webinars tool was being used and only
6 those designated as panellists would be able to speak
7 regularly and seen on camera for those participating on line.

8 Attendees on line would be able to communicate
9 through the Q & A function, the raise hand function, the chat
10 function and the poll function of the webinars. The polls
11 function will be used for voting. When a motion is moved and
12 seconded, a popup will appear on screen, asking you to input
13 your vote. He reminded the online attendees that each log in
14 could only vote once, so each attendee wishing to vote must
15 have their own login.

16 A vote timer will be used and once the votes have
17 been tallied, the results would be posted online. For those
18 attendees in person, Mr. Smith advised they would be using a
19 show of hands.

20 Mr. Smith then called on Ms. Patti Rotman, President
21 of the Board and Chair of the meeting, to call the meeting to
22 order and preside over the meeting.

23 Ms. Rotman called the meeting to order at 7:38 P.M.
24 and advised that the affairs of the Beth Tzedec congregation
25 were governed by the Ontario Not For Profit Corporations Act
26 (ONCA). ONCA and its regulations permit the holding of this
27 annual meeting by telephonic and electronic means and deem a

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 3

1 member in attendance through those means to be present at the
2 annual meeting for the purposes of ONCA.

3 Ms. Rotman reported that prior to the meeting, the
4 corporation provided information to members regarding the
5 telephonic or electronic means for establishing the
6 communications link in order to attend and vote at this annual
7 meeting and provided passwords to members who were registered
8 to attend the meeting by Zoom or telephone.

9 At present, Ms. Rotman was advised by the I.T.
10 people that there were 39 members in attendance in person and
11 25 in attendance on line. She advised that the quorum of
12 members required at the annual meeting in accordance with the
13 Bylaws, whether present in person or by proxy, was 50.
14 Therefore, Ms. Rotman was pleased to advise that there was a
15 quorum for the annual meeting and therefore was now validly
16 constituted.

17 Ms. Rotman called on Rabbi Steven Wernick to deliver
18 a D'Var Torah.

19 Rabbi Wernick noted the Book of Numbers begins with
20 a couple of different census, and asked what the important
21 numbers are in the Jewish tradition. There were many, and
22 Rabbi Wernick noted the most important was number one, one God
23 in heaven and on earth.

24 Rabbi Wernick stated he was thinking about numbers
25 as this evening the group would be sharing a lot of numbers;
26 membership numbers, financial numbers as well as many others.
27 Numbers are very important as well as very impressive. He

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 4

1 noted that the congregation was thriving by almost every way
2 imaginable for synagogue communities in North America and
3 around the world. In some ways, Beth Tzedec has certain
4 numbers that no other synagogue in the world could claim.

5 However, at the end of the day, the most important
6 number is still number one. Not just God, but Rabbi Wernick
7 liked to believe that part of what makes Beth Tzedec such a
8 warm and inclusive and thriving community is that the number
9 that we focus on, to the best of our abilities, is the number
10 one.

11 Each and every individual that is a member of this
12 congregation and this community is of infinite value and we do
13 our best to care for each other, to connect each other and to
14 create the types of Jewish experiences and Jewish content and
15 spirituality that does exactly what our mission statement
16 says, to inspire and enable us to live a meaningful Jewish
17 life.

18 Rabbi Wernick thanked every member of the
19 congregation but especially members of the Board that continue
20 to lead this congregation each and every day with great care
21 and experience and concern. They give of their time, their
22 energy. We treasure the work that you do that helps us be the
23 congregation that can focus on one, on each and every
24 individual that is part of this community.

25 For those who were exiting the Board at this time,
26 Rabbi Wernick thanked them for their service. For those who
27 were joining the Board, he thanked them in advance of their

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 5

1 service. And for those continue on the Board, he thanked them
2 for their continuing service. May we continue to go from
3 strength to strength, focussing on the importance of
4 relationships under the one God. Ms. Rotman thanked Rabbi
5 Wernick.

6 Ms. Rotman asked the members to approve the minutes
7 of the 2022 Annual Meeting. She advised that members had
8 previously been sent a link to the minutes, which were also
9 available through the website. Ms. Rotman read the following
10 motion:

11 **MOTION:** To approve the minutes of the Annual
12 Meeting of May 24, 2022.

13 **Moved by:** Mr. Brian Segal

14 **Seconded by:** Ms. Naomi Kramer

15
16 The poll function was launched online and Ms. Rotman
17 asked everyone to vote. Ms. Rotman asked for those in person
18 to vote by a show of hands.

19
20 **Motion carried.**

21
22 The next item on the agenda was the election by
23 acclamation members of the congregation to the Board of
24 Directors for a three year term. Ms. Rotman noted that all of
25 the nominees had been elected by acclamation. Ms. Rotman
26 thanked outgoing members of the Board, Sasha Abrams and Karen
27 Hersh for their commitment to Beth Tzedec. Ms. Rotman

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 6

1 welcomed Paul Mandel and Corrine Promislow who were joining
2 the Board as new Directors.

3 Ms. Rotman called on Mr. Jamie Golombek, Treasurer,
4 to present the financial statements of the congregation for
5 the year ended June 30, 2022. Mr. Golombek thanked everyone
6 for joining the meeting in person and online. He noted that
7 those who had requested a copy had been sent one in advance.

8 Mr. Golombek reported that the Beth Tzedec is in a
9 very good financial position. He noted that the financial
10 statements were basically a year old and in the next month,
11 the next fiscal year would be completed. He reported that the
12 preliminary results for 2023 are positive and encouraging.

13 Mr. Golombek shared the financial position of the
14 shul, noting that the fund balances are the same and the main
15 asset of the shul is the investments, which at present, were
16 higher than the previous year.

17 Mr. Golombek reviewed the Statement of Operations
18 and noted it is similar to an income statement for the shul,
19 showing how the revenue was acquired and what the expenses
20 are. He reported that the revenue was greater than expenses.
21 He advised that the preliminary numbers for 2023 projected a
22 balanced budget, i.e., revenues and expenses were equal.

23 Mr. Golombek thanked Ms. Hadassah Bernstein, the
24 office staff and the Audit Committee for assisting in the
25 preparation of the audit.

26 Mr. Golombek welcomed any questions on the financial
27 statements. Mr. Jack ___ inquired why the 2022 year end

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 7

1 showed revenues of \$1.6 million and was expected to be flat
2 for 2023. Mr. Golombek advised it was due to the expenses and
3 the investment returns realized in the portfolio.

4 Mr. Golombek invited the auditor, Ms. Pina
5 Colavecchia, of Deloitte Canada, to deliver the auditor's
6 report. Ms. Colavecchia advised that the auditor's opinion
7 attached to the financial statements is an unmodified audit
8 opinion or a clean audit opinion, indicating that the
9 financial statements are not materially misstated.

10 As part of the audit process, Deloitte meets with
11 the Audit Committee to both plan the audit and then present
12 the result of the audit procedures. The auditors meet with
13 the Audit Committee at the end of November and reported it was
14 a very smooth audit process.

15 The audited statements were approved at the December
16 Board of Directors meeting, which is concurrent with the
17 process in place to approve financial statements as well as
18 the filing of the charity tax return.

19 There were no issues from the audit process, with
20 the auditors receiving full cooperation from the Beth Tzedec
21 team and the audit results were satisfactory. Ms. Colavecchia
22 welcomed any questions. There were none.

23 Ms. Rotman thanked Ms. Colavecchia and Mr. Golombek.
24 She called for a motion to reappoint the auditor.

25
26 **MOTION:** To reappoint Deloitte LLP as the auditor
27 for the upcoming year.

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 8

1 **Moved by:** Mr. Jamie Golombek

2 **Seconded by:** Mr. Rafi Yablonsky

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4 Ms. Rotman advised the poll function would once
5 again be launched and asked everyone to vote. For those
6 attending in person, Ms. Rotman asked for a show of hands.

7

8 **Motion carried.**

9

10 Ms. Rotman reminded the members attending in person
11 to deposit the financial statements in the recycle bin at the
12 exit to be shredded.

13 Ms. Rotman reported there were no other items of
14 business requested and was pleased to provide her President's
15 report to the Congregation.

16 Ms. Rotman noted that Walt Disney once said if you
17 can dream it, you can do it. Over the past year, many dreams
18 have been fulfilled at the shul, which is and always has been
19 a vibrant, multigenerational leading conservative synagogue
20 with a rich history and strong vision for the future.

21 For almost 70 years, Beth Tzedec has been a leading
22 voice in the world of conservative Judaism as well as an
23 important institution in the landscape of both the Toronto and
24 Canadian Jewish community. We do not look for opportunities
25 at Beth Tzedec, we create them and we lead by example. Our
26 mission of inspiring and enabling our community to lead
27 meaningful Jewish lives is something we practice on a daily

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 9

1 basis, along with our six core values - care, connect, learn,
2 pray, celebrate, give and get.

3 In July 2022, Beth Tzedec hired its new Executive
4 Director, Phil David. With less than a year under his belt at
5 Beth Tzedec, Phil has already made his mark in leading the
6 implementation of our strategic vision, nurturing and
7 developing critical internal and external relationships and
8 has taken on the overall accountability for the management and
9 supervision of the staff, program development, member
10 engagement, growth and retention, marketing and
11 communications, maintenance and operations as well as
12 overseeing fundraising and development.

13 At High Holidays 2022, Beth Tzedec welcomed close to
14 1,000 generations members into our building. Since then, it
15 has hired Penina Hoffnung, our Family Engagement Specialist,
16 to support the reinvigoration of youth, teen and family
17 programming. Penina's creativity helps to create communities
18 of connection amongst and between these families.

19 Our shul, likely unlike any other in the world, has
20 more members under the age of 40 than over. They are the
21 future of Beth Tzedec. It is up to us to encourage, engage,
22 to connect and to meet this cohort on their terms.

23 Since October, Beth Tzedec has been host to over 200
24 and as high as 285 adults and children at its monthly Young
25 Family Shabbat dinners and approximately 100 guests at each of
26 our monthly 20s to 30s Shabbat dinners. Thanks to our
27 generous sponsor and the hard work and vision of Yacov

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 10

1 Fruchter, Aviva Chernick and Daniel Silverman, these dinners
2 are two of our most popular events.

3 More than ever, Beth Tzedec is focussing on
4 inclusion. Thanks to the devotion of our REDI committee,
5 consisting of members of the Beth Tzedec community, work
6 passionately to promote an inclusive anti-racist and welcoming
7 environment for all. The REDI acronym stands for anti-Racism,
8 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and its mission is to champion
9 the inclusion of all members of the Jewish community at Beth
10 Tzedec. This committee meets regularly to promote and support
11 actions of equity and anti-racism within our kehila and to
12 foster reputation of diversity and inclusion for all Jews.

13 With the pandemic in our rear view, Beth Tzedec's
14 programming has increased dramatically and our building is
15 often brimming with members and guests. Recently, over 400
16 attended the Lady Justice event with another 100 plus
17 participating via live stream. In just a few weeks, we will
18 welcome Divas on the Bima for a night of song, inspiration
19 and celebration as these four female cantors perform an
20 eclectic selection of Judaic, Broadway, Israeli and popular
21 music.

22 Ms. Rotman encouraged everyone to join her at
23 Shabbat dinner on Friday, June 2, as we celebrate Rabbi
24 Frydman-Kohl. After 26 years as Beth Tzedec's senior rabbi
25 and four more as our teacher, lecturer and service leader, Rav
26 Baruch will officially retire from his work obligations to
27 Beth Tzedec and enjoy retirement as Rabbi Emeritus. It will

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 11

1 be an intimate, musically infused Shabbat service followed by
2 Shabbat dinner, where everyone will have the opportunity to
3 celebrate as a kehila, sharing our appreciation and well
4 wishes with Rav Baruch and Josette and the Frydman-Kohl
5 family.

6 And on Shabbat morning, Beth Tzedec will honour Rav
7 Baruch during the Shabbat morning service followed by an
8 enhanced congregational Shabbat Kiddush. Everyone is welcome.

9 Last September, Beth Tzedec embarked upon an online
10 High Holidays campaign. Thanks to the generosity of members
11 and the foresight of the generations that came before us, Beth
12 Tzedec emerged from the pandemic fiscally sound and ready to
13 invest in our future.

14 That's why it launched the Generations Membership
15 Initiative and invited Jewish adults under 40, singles and
16 families, to join our community without any financial
17 obligation. The message was and still is that we care, that
18 we want to engage with them in their journey to create a
19 meaningful Jewish life spiritually, culturally and
20 religiously.

21 Due to the hard work of many volunteers and
22 especially Rabbi Wernick, Beth Tzedec were able to raise funds
23 beyond our goal of \$450,000, due in part to the generosity and
24 matching funds from the Larry and Judy Tanenbaum Family
25 Foundation.

26 Ultimately, the goal is to lower the financial
27 barrier for all members as we raise revenue through

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 12

1 philanthropic means, but that is going to take some spending
2 right now to reap the rewards down the line. And most of that
3 spending is dedicated to salaries. Developing a fundraising
4 strategy is paramount. It provides four essential components
5 - annual campaign, major gifts, legacy giving and event and
6 program sponsorship.

7 To this point, in November, we hired a new Director
8 of Development, Jonny Ain. Jonny is an experienced and proven
9 philanthropy leader, whose oversight of all fundraising and
10 developmental activities provides strategic direction and
11 leadership of our philanthropy plan, and is responsible for
12 its execution and endurement. Jonny has already begun to
13 build relationships with our donors of all ages to help us
14 achieve our fundraising targets and encourage deeper
15 connection within our shul.

16 On June 1, Beth Tzedec will begin our first phase of
17 a two phase annual campaign, followed by phase two beginning
18 on August 28. The details will be shared in the upcoming
19 bulletins, weekly e-blasts and social media platforms. Ms.
20 Rotman looked forward to everyone joining her in contributing
21 to the fundraising goals.

22 Ms. Rotman was excited to share that Cantor Audrey
23 Klein will be joining the Beth Tzedec family in July to meet
24 the needs of the growing congregation. Cantor Klein has been
25 hired to be the Director of Family and Young Engagement and
26 will act as a spiritual and administrative lead for family
27 programming at the shul. While building relationships, Cantor

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 13

1 Klein will help to inspire the next generation of members to
2 live meaningful Jewish lives, sharing her appreciation for the
3 link between family, community and spirituality.

4 Like many other shuls, Beth Tzedec has had the
5 challenge of ensuring a daily in person minyan. Thanks to
6 WhatsApp, we've made it easy to assure who and how many will
7 attend and resolve the requirement of at least 10 Jewish
8 adults in the room, permitting mourners and those with
9 yahrtzeit to fulfill their religious obligation to recite
10 Kaddish in the presence of the community.

11 Watching on Zoom or live streaming maybe convenient,
12 but joining us in person is not only a mitzvah, you will be
13 part of the community, perhaps make some new friends and, of
14 course, there's free breakfast afterwards.

15 Ms. Rotman advised Beth Tzedec has already begun
16 planning for the High Holidays early this year. Once again,
17 Cantor Moshe Fishel and Choirmaster Meir Briskman will lead
18 the members into Rosh Hashanah and culminate with Yom Kippur
19 along with the Lishmoa El Harina choir.

20 Fostering relationships is what Beth Tzedec is all
21 about. Ms. Rotman stated she is fortunate to have the
22 opportunity to work with, banter with and be inspired by and
23 receive advice from Reb Wernick, Rabbi Fryer Bodzin, and the
24 Executive Director, Phil David.

25 Beth Tzedec's rabbis have spent countless hours
26 creating relationships with the newest members over coffee
27 dates as well as an immeasurable amount of time for the sake

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 14

1 of the Jewish people.

2 Ms. Rotman thanked, as always, the ongoing
3 commitment of our Cantor Sydney Ezer, for his beautiful
4 liturgical music with and without the harmonisers, and Lorne
5 Hanick for being an exceptional Ritual Director for the past
6 24 years at Beth Tzedec.

7 Ms. Rotman thanked the entire administrative team,
8 all the way to our custodians so capably led by Brian Dias, no
9 one really knows how much you do to make sure the doors are
10 open daily, we are welcoming and our building is safe. Ms.
11 Rotman thanked the innumerable volunteers who oversee on the
12 committees, lead small groups and help with so many of the
13 events.

14 Ms. Rotman stated while she never sought this
15 position directly, she thanked those who have stood behind her
16 and gently behind her and pushed and those who check in with
17 her regularly to see how she is managing this monumental but
18 gratifying responsibility.

19 Synagogue presidents historically don't train for
20 their position, but learn the ropes experientially in the
21 Boardroom. Since joining the Beth Tzedec Board 12 years ago,
22 Ms. Rotman stated she has learned from the finest. She is
23 forever grateful to an incredible Executive Committee and
24 Board of Directors who give their time and diverse skill sets
25 to help make the best decisions on behalf of this membership.

26 Ms. Rotman stated she appreciated Don Smith as her
27 Chair of the Board and wingman, always there with a smile and

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 15

1 a positive attitude. And to Debbie Rothstein, the Immediate
2 Past President, who has been there when Ms. Rotman needed
3 guidance and finally to her husband, Sheldon, also a Beth
4 Tzedec past president, and the one who assured her she is
5 capable taking this presidency on, thank you for being there
6 when she needed them and for not being there when she said 'I
7 got this'.

8 As we enter into Shavuot, we commemorate the day God
9 gave the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai over 3,000
10 years ago. And in this coming Shavuot, we remember those who
11 we have lost, the ones who taught us Jewish values and
12 instilled in us the traditions we uphold today.

13 It is because of our rich history and those who came
14 before us that we can continue to build a legacy for all the
15 future generations to come at Beth Tzedec and around the
16 world. Ms. Rotman encouraged everyone to use this holiday as
17 a springboard for learning and for reflection of our beautiful
18 religion that gives us the opportunity to do so much good in
19 the world.

20 Ms. Rotman opened the floor to questions. There
21 were no questions.

22 Ms. Rotman stated that given all agenda items had
23 been dealt with to the satisfaction of the members, she asked
24 for a motion is to adjourn the Annual Meeting of the
25 congregation.

26

27 **MOTION:** That the meeting adjourn

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting: May 23, 2023 - 16

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Moved by: Mr. Larry Rachlin
Seconded by: Ms. Arlyn Zimmerman

Ms. Rotman advised once again, the poll function would be launched and asked everyone to vote. She asked for a show of hands of the in person attendees.

Motion Carried.

Ms. Rotman reminded everyone to deposit their financial statements in the recycling bin for shredding. She declared the annual meeting was adjourned.

--- THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:11 P.M.

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