

Hamilton Jewish Family Services

Minutes – Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 7:00 pm via ZOOM

Cindy Mark, Chair of the Board welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting and informed everyone that the meeting was being recorded. Cindy confirmed that the quorum was met with fourteen members present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Moved by Geraldine Katz to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Jeff Levy

Passed unanimously

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Two sets of minutes were circulated for approval:

- i. AGM Minutes – June 25, 2024
- ii. Special Members Meeting – February 4, 2025

MOTION: Moved by Carol Adler that the minutes of the AGM on June 25, 2024, be approved as circulated. Seconded by Phil Kriszenfeld - **Passed unanimously**

MOTION: Moved by Carol Adler that the minutes of the Special members Meeting – February 4, 2025 be approved as circulated. Seconded by Geraldine Katz - **Passed unanimously**

Prior to the ED report, Board Chair Cindy Mark expressed her deep gratitude to Cara and the entire HJFS team for an exceptional year. She reflected on how far the team had come and how smoothly operations were running. Cindy noted that during the pandemic, the board had functioned in a very operational capacity out of necessity, but she was pleased to report that the current team had taken over day-to-day operations, allowing the board to focus on oversight. She concluded by thanking everyone for a great year.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Cara Bensimon noted that 2024 -25 was where HJFS shifted from recovery to renewal by strengthening programs, developing community partnerships, and expanding our impact in the community.

This year marked the official the renaming and incorporation of our agency as Hamilton Jewish Family Services.

Program Highlights:

Seniors Living Well Centre: Launched and thriving, with multiple weekly programs and growing participation.

Carol's Cupboard Renovation: A complete overhaul of our Kosher Food Bank to enhance accessibility, security, and client experience.

Modernized Systems: Upgraded security and internal data/case management systems for better service delivery.

Volunteer Program Revitalized: New onboarding and engagement efforts to support and recognize the vital role of volunteers.

Newcomer Supports: Emergency aid, multiple referrals, and a strong partnership with *J Welcome Home* provided timely assistance for Israeli newcomers.

Mental Health Programming: Groundwork laid for a new **clinical mental health program**, launching fall 2025 with counseling and wellness workshops.

By the Numbers:

- **1,100+** visits to Carol's Cupboard — *17% increase*
- **42,000+ lbs** of food & hygiene products distributed — *65% increase*
- **458** unique individuals served — *21% increase*
- **\$110,000+** in emergency financial relief distributed to 55 families
- **180 seniors** registered in weekly programs
- **20 Holocaust Survivors** received vital services including home care and financial support
- **30 grant applications** submitted: **13 approved**, resulting in **\$290,000+** in funding
- **220+ referrals** to external services (employment, housing, mental health)
- **54 volunteers** engaged across programs, committees, and the Board

Focus for the year ahead includes:

- **Improving communication** so clients can access support easily—whether online, by phone, or in person.
- **Enhancing documentation and follow-up** to better serve clients and funders.
- **Raising visibility and trust** within the broader community.
- **Prioritizing staff wellness and retention** through HR improvements.

Cara thanked the dedicated staff, committed volunteers and Board members, past and present, for their leadership and vision.

APPROVAL OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Phil Kriszenfeld, Treasurer presented the Audited Financial statements commenting that the organization had a stable year and is in a much stronger cash position thanks to the dedicated staff leadership.

In presenting the statements, Phil noted the following

- There was an increase in assets largely tied to cash and in improvements to the agency's facility. The renovations costs were capitalized, contributing to long-term asset value.
- The previous year showed a \$37,000 net loss, which has now been recovered resulting in a \$25,000 increase in net assets.
- Restricted and deferred contributions were allocated to specific programs areas
- The organization continues to meet its lease obligations with Effort Trust
- Expenses are proportionally allocated to each program area, enabling a more transparent and accurate snapshot of each area.
- Several capital purchases were made during the year, including new computers and leasehold improvements. These costs are being amortized to reflect multi-year use.

Phil welcomed any questions during and after the meeting to provide follow-up answers.

MOTION: Moved by Phil Kriszenfeld to approve the Audited Financial Statements FYE 2025 as presented. Seconded by Adrian Jaspen. ***Passed unanimously***

APPROVAL OF AUDITORS

Phil Kriszenfeld recommended that HJFS continue its long-standing relationship with Vine & Partners, emphasizing the importance of consistency.

MOTION: Moved by Carol Adler to reappoint Vine & Partners, LLP s auditors. Seconded by Jeff Levy. ***Passed unanimously***

Prior to the Election of Directors, Cindy Mark delivered a heartfelt tribute to the late Hanna Schayer z'l, former Chair of the HJFS Board of Directors. She praised Hanna's leadership during the pandemic, highlighting her grace, compassion, and deep commitment to the agency and its mission. Hanna's legacy of kindness, community-building, and dedication continue to inspire all who knew her.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Cindy Mark thanked the outgoing Board members—Geraldine Katz, Laura Herman, Adrian Jaspan, and Gord Garshowitz— for their outstanding service and support.

Cindy Mark introduced the Board nominees: Sherry Bavley, Stephanie Waxman, and Daniel Marcus. All have been active HJFS volunteers and bring valuable experience and fresh perspectives to the Board.

Cindy Mark presented the proposed Slate of Directors for the 2025-26 term as follows:

Carol Adler
Sherri Bavley
Michelle Daleo
Miriam Farber Wajnberg
Phil Kriszenfeld
Jeff Levy
Cindy Mark
Daniel Marucs
Iris Rinkoff
Stefanie Waxman

MOTION: Moved by Michelle Daleo to accept the Slate of Directors as presented. Seconded by Carol Adler.
Passed unanimously

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved by Carol Adler and seconded by Iris Rinkoff that the meeting be adjourned

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 pm