
TRANSCRIPTION OF THE
MINUTES OF THE BETH TZEDEC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MAY 28, 2024

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Beth Tzedec Annual General Meeting May 28, 2024 - 2

1 Mr. Don Smith, Chair of the Board Directors,
2 welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the technical
3 elements that would be used during the meeting. Mr. Smith
4 personally thanked Ms. Patti Rotman, President of the Board,
5 for her service to the Board and the congregation over the
6 past two years. He then called on Ms. Rotman to call the
7 meeting to order at 7:40 P.M.

8 Ms. Rotman advised that the affairs of the Beth
9 Tzedec congregation were governed by the Ontario Not for
10 Profit in Act, which has regulations to permit holding the
11 meeting by telephonic or electronic means, and deems a Member
12 who through those means votes at the annual meeting to be
13 present at the annual meeting.

14 Before this annual meeting, information was provided
15 to Members regarding the telephonic or electronic means for
16 establishing the communications links in order to attend and
17 vote at this annual meeting and dedicated links to members who
18 registered to attend the meeting by Zoom or telephone.

19 Ms. Rotman advised there were 25 Members in
20 attendance who had established a telephonic or electronic
21 communications link to the meeting and was therefore deemed to
22 be present at the meeting and were also present for the
23 purpose of voting at the meeting.

24 In addition, there were 38 Members attending in
25 person. Given that the quorum required at the annual meeting
26 in accordance with the Bylaws is 50 Members entitled to vote,
27 whether present in person or by proxy, Ms. Rotman was pleased

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1 to advise that there was a quorum for this meeting and
2 therefore the Annual Meeting was now validly constituted.

3 Ms. Rotman called on Rabbi Wernick to deliver a Dvar
4 Torah.

5 Rabbi Wernick thanked Ms. Rotman, Mr. Smith and
6 everyone who is participating in the annual meeting. Rabbi
7 Wernick stated the first prayer a child learns is the shema
8 v'ahavta, which teaches that our relationship with God should
9 be all consuming; that you should love the Lord your God with
10 all your heart, all your soul and all your might.

11 Rabbi Wernick stated that serving on a synagogue
12 Board is both rewarding and challenging, particularly in the
13 role of President. He believes the people who step forward to
14 serve the community have nurtured the elements of the shema,
15 serving the community with their heads, their hearts and their
16 hands.

17 Rabbi Wernick thanked all of those who had served on
18 the Board for the last two years, especially Ms. Rotman, who
19 have served the synagogue with their head, heart and hands.
20 He thanked, in advance, those who were coming onto the Board
21 for their service.

22 Ms. Rotman thanked Rabbi Wernick. The Members were
23 then asked to approve the minutes of the annual meeting of
24 2023. Ms. Rotman advised Members had previously been sent a
25 link to the minutes, which were also available through the
26 website.

27

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1 **MOTION:** To approve the minutes of the Annual
2 Meeting of May 23, 2023.

3 **Moved by:** Mr. Pearl Berman

4 **Seconded by:** Ms. Earl Schwebel

5
6 Ms. Rotman advised the poll function had been
7 launched and asked everyone online to vote. The poll will
8 open for up to 30 seconds and the results would appear on the
9 screen. Ms. Rotman asked those in person for a show of hands
10 for those in favour of the motion.

11
12 **Motion carried.**

13
14 Ms. Rotman stated the next item was to elect the
15 Members of the congregation to the Board of Directors for a
16 three year term and noted that all nominees had been elected
17 by acclamation. Ms. Rotman thanked the outgoing members of
18 the Board, Bernie Gropper, Debbie Rothstein and Aaron Wine,
19 for their commitment to Beth Tzedec. She welcomed the newest
20 members of the Board, Jacob Citron, Jennifer Lau and Steven
21 Liss, who would be joining the Board as new Directors.

22 Ms. Rotman called on Mr. Jamie Golombek, Treasurer,
23 to present the financial statements of the Congregation for
24 the year ended June 30th, 2023.

25 Mr. Golombek advised the audited financial
26 statements of Beth Tzedec Congregation had been available by
27 email request since the Notice of the Meeting was
distributed.

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1 He noted they were also available at the meeting.

2 Mr. Golombek reported the congregation had a very
3 good year and provided highlights for those in attendance. He
4 advised the Statement of Financial Position, formerly known as
5 the Balance Sheet, shows the assets and liabilities. He noted
6 the main asset for the shul is its investments, which are
7 approximately worth 25 million dollars. He stated that the
8 shul is in a very good financial position with the assets it
9 needs for renovations, programming and endowments.

10 Mr. Golombek reviewed the Statement of Operations,
11 and reported that there was in excess of revenue over expenses
12 of approximately \$935,000. There was also a gain in
13 investments of over \$90,000, bringing the total surplus to
14 just over one million dollars. Mr. Golombek stated he was
15 very comfortable with the shul's financial position.

16 Mr. Jacob Citron inquired if there was any
17 information on the finances after June 30, 2023. Mr. Golombek
18 advised that was still being computed and hoped they would be
19 available in the next few months.

20 There being no further questions, Mr. Golombek asked
21 the auditor, Mr. Edison Montero of Deloitte to deliver the
22 Auditor's Report. Mr. Montero thanked the congregation for
23 their support and full cooperation during the audit. He
24 advised the financial statements were produced by management
25 using standrd accounting practices for a not for profit
26 organization. Mr. Montero reported that the auditor has
27 issued a clean report on the financial affairs of the shul.

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1 Ms. Rotman thanked Mr. Montero for his report. She
2 called for a motion to reappoint the auditor.

3
4 **MOTION:** To re-appoint Deloitte LLP as the
5 auditors for the upcoming year.

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

7 **Seconded by:** Mr. Paul Mandel.

8
9 Ms. Rotman advised the poll function would be
10 launched and asked everyone to vote. Again, she noted the
11 poll would remain open for up to 30 seconds and the results
12 would appear on the screen. For those in person, Ms. Rotman
13 asked for a show of hands for those in favour.

14
15 **Motion carried.**

16
17 Ms. Rotman reminded members to leave their copies of
18 the financial statements in the recycle bin for shredding.
19 Ms. Rotman advised there were no other items of business
20 requested and was pleased to provide her President's report to
21 the Congregation.

22 Ms. Rotman stated she was filled with a profound
23 sense of gratitude and humility. Her Presidency had been a
24 two year journey filled with memorable moments, shared growth
25 and collective achievements. Together, the Board had
26 navigated challenges, celebrated milestones and strengthened
27 the bonds that make Beth Tzedec such an extraordinary and

1 sacred space.

2 When she first assumed the role of President, she
3 was both excited and humbled by the trust the congregation
4 placed in her. As she prepares to step down, she was deeply
5 grateful for the opportunity to have led this congregation.

6 Ms. Rotman stated when she joined the Board of
7 Directors back in 2013, her aspirations were modest: be kind,
8 be the voice of the membership adding effective decision
9 making and goal setting requires compromise. After years of
10 chairing catering, joining the building committee, planning
11 and executing numerous fundraising events, she was content to
12 be the organizer.

13 However, as it is often said, "We plan, God laughs".
14 In 2022, Patti received a call from Debbie Rothstein
15 requesting that she step in as her Chair of the Board for the
16 third and final year as President. After some soul searching,
17 she agreed and moved up the ladder. Ms. Rotman reflected on
18 some of the highlights of her tenure.

19 For several years, the leadership had been
20 increasingly aware that inclusivity is fundamental to its
21 vision and young adults are less likely to get involved in a
22 synagogue, if financial dues are a condition of entry,
23 especially during and post COVID.

24 To address this challenge, the Generations
25 Membership was formed, focusing on engagement and connection
26 without the barrier of financial commitment from those Jewish
27 households 40 and under. Ms. Rotman noted three years into

1 this highly successful pilot project, she was proud to share
2 that membership had increased by 1,000. She added there has
3 been a healthy conversion rate of over 50% into full paying
4 members.

5 Ms. Rotman advised she has been approached multiple
6 times by other synagogue leaders who are captivated by Beth
7 Tzedec's success. She added that the shul is currently being
8 modeled and copied by other congregations across North
9 America.

10 In the post-COVID world, Ms. Rotman was delighted
11 that the synagogue was back in full swing, offering a
12 multitude of programs. Ms. Rotman thanked Daniel Silverman,
13 Director of Programming, and Pearl Berman, Board Director, for
14 overseeing so many diverse programs. It's wonderful to see
15 the building filled with members, plenty of strollers, and the
16 community on an ongoing basis.

17 Ms. Rotman thanked the High Holiday 2023 Campaign
18 Co-Chairs, Lianne Leboff and David Matlow, Rabbi Wernick and
19 the generosity and matching funds of the Larry and Judy
20 Tannenbaum Family Foundation and Irving and Tammy Granovsky
21 for helping to raise \$550,000 during the High Holidays
22 campaign, a 22% increase over the prior year, due in part to
23 the advent of Beth Tzedec Circle, a program initiated by our
24 Director of Development, Johnny Ain. Ms. Rotman was delighted
25 to announce that the campaign Co-Chairs for the upcoming High
26 Holidays were Debbie Rothstein and Alan Kanee.

27 Ms. Rotman reported that Beth Tzedec had not

1 increased its dues in 10 years, however, costs have risen
2 dramatically and maintaining a warm, welcoming and secure
3 environment comes with a price. Since October 7th and the
4 evolving security landscape, ensuring the safety of members
5 during services and events has become a paramount concern.

6 To this end, comprehensive security measures have
7 been implemented, including professional security personnel,
8 the Toronto Police Services and advanced surveillance systems.
9 These necessary protections come at a significant monthly cost
10 between \$12,000 and \$15,000.

11 To sustain these critical security measures, the
12 congregation reached out to members for support and the
13 generous security funding contributions in 2023 raised \$46.3
14 thousand dollars and helped maintain a safe and welcoming
15 environment for everyone in the community. Ms. Rotman asked
16 the members to respond generously when the shul reaches out
17 again, noting every donation, no matter the size, is vital and
18 greatly appreciated as it will provide consistent support to
19 meet the ongoing security needs.

20 Ms. Rotman shared three important milestone events.
21 First, the Cecil Ross Collection, formerly housed at Beth
22 Tzedec's Museum, has found a new and permanent home at the
23 ROM. This is a significant development and it's reassuring to
24 know that these valuable works of art will receive the care
25 and preservation they deserve, while also being made
26 accessible to a broader audience. Ms. Rotman appreciated the
27 work of Bernie Gropper, Sheldon Rotman and the dedicated staff

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1 and volunteers who helped make this happen.

2 Secondly, Beth Tzedec has received a remarkable a
3 \$750,000 commitment dedicated to the appointment of a senior
4 cantor. A diligent search committee has convened and they are
5 reviewing the finest candidates from across North America and
6 beyond. It is anticipated this addition promises to
7 complement Beth Tzedec's music, deepen spirituality and enrich
8 the cultural programming in profound ways.

9 And finally, Ms. Rotman was immensely grateful to
10 announce a two million dollar donation. Beth Tzedec extends
11 its deepest gratitude to The Weisfeld Family Charitable
12 Foundation for their unprecedented generosity, their belief in
13 our mission and their ongoing support.

14 Ms. Rotman reported that the current museum space
15 will be transformed into a modern space for spirituality,
16 movement and lectures where both minds and hearts can find
17 enrichment. The Salon, formerly the gift shop, will become a
18 warm gathering area, much like the living room where members
19 can come together as a community. As we look ahead, Ms.
20 Rotman asked everyone to remember that the gift is not just an
21 investment in bricks and mortar, but an investment in Beth
22 Tzedec.

23 Ms. Rotman expressed her thanks to the entire
24 administration team, espeically Hadassah Bernstein, who makes
25 balancing your budget so simple. She offered a huge thanks to
26 each and every staff member in the offices all the way to the
27 custodians. She added kudos to the volunteers who are the

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1 backbone and the greatest strength of the community.

2 Ms. Rotman noted that during her first few months as
3 president, the shul was without an executive director. She
4 stated she was fortunate to be the first person to benefit
5 from the expertise of Mr. Phil David. She is continuously
6 astonished at the breadth of his knowledge, his unwavering
7 kindness and invaluable guidance. Ms. Rotman added she deeply
8 appreciated his friendship and support as they undertook this
9 journey as newcomers together.

10 Ms. Rotman thanked the spiritual leadership team and
11 was grateful for their continuous dedication, tireless efforts
12 in nurturing spiritual growth, inspirational guidance and the
13 countless ways they enrich the congregations' lives.

14 Ms. Rotman invited the entire Beth Tzedec community
15 to celebrate the wonderful news that Rabbi Wernick and Rabbi
16 Fryer Bodzin have each renewed their contracts for another
17 five years. She added they expect to be signing a formal
18 agreement with Cantor Ezer shortly. Looking forward to the
19 next five years, she is filled with gratitude and excitement
20 for the flourishing journey with the rabbis and cantor to
21 continue to build a strong foundation to nurture traditions
22 while embracing new opportunities for growth and connection.

23 Ms. Rotman thanked the Officers who served with her
24 over the last two years; Brian Segal, Bruce Elman, Debbie
25 Rothstein, Jamie Golombek, Mitch Max, Don Smith and Aaron
26 Wine. Ms. Rothstein and Mr. Wine will be stepping down from
27 the Board this evening after many years of devoted

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1 service. Ms. Rotman thanked Mr. Oscar Zimmerman for always
2 being there as her sounding board and voice of reason and
3 encouragement.

4 Ms. Rotman stated as her time of President nears its
5 end, she found herself reflecting on the remarkable journey
6 the Board of Directors had shared together. She added her
7 heart was overflowing with gratitude and admiration for each
8 and everyone of them.

9 Ms. Rotman noted the experience of being President
10 has been life affirming and life changing and she was so proud
11 of the initiatives launched during her tenure. The growth and
12 successes are a direct result of the commitment of the
13 incredible Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

14 Ms. Rotman took a moment to acknowledge the 38
15 Presidents who served before her, who paved the way for her
16 and all future Presidents at the shul. She was deeply
17 grateful for the exemplary leadership, dedication, wisdom,
18 tireless efforts of my predecessors who have been instrumental
19 in shaping the community.

20 Ms. Rotman stated she had been told the most sought
21 after position of synagogues is immediate past President, a
22 title now she and her husband, Sheldon, will share. She looks
23 forward to the next two years as Past President with much
24 excitement.

25 Recently many have mentioned she must be so thrilled
26 to step down. Ms. Rotman stated to her, it has been true
27 privilege serving as President, and was thankful for the

1 experiences that have shaped her and the challenges and
2 lasting memories that have woven themselves into a rich
3 tapestry of personal growth and transformation.

4 Ms. Rotman thanked her husband, Sheldon, for setting
5 the bar high when he served as president, giving her a role
6 model to which to aspire.

7 As she passed the baton to Mr. Don Smith, she did so
8 in confidence, knowing that our synagogue is in capable hands.
9 Ms. Rotman added she has complete faith in the leadership of
10 this incoming board and confident that it will continue to
11 uphold the values and traditions that make Beth Tzedec so
12 exceptional.

13 Ms. Rotman noted this was day 234 since October
14 7th. May the IDF be safe and made the hostages come home.

15 Ms. Rotman opened the floor to questions. There
16 were none. Given that all the agenda items have been dealt
17 with to the satisfaction of the members, Ms. Rotman presented
18 a motion to adjourn the annual meeting of the congregation.

19
20 **MOTION:** To adjourn the Annual meeting of the
21 congregation.

22 **Moved by:** Mr. Gary Elman

23 **Seconded by:** Ms. Leah Mauer
24

25 Ms. Rotman advised the poll function would be
26 launched and asked everyone to vote. Again, the poll will be
27 open for up to 30 seconds and the results will appear on the

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1 screens. For those in person, Ms. Rotman asked for show of
2 hands so those in favor.

3
4 **Motion Carried.**

5
6 Ms. Rotman thanked everyone for taking the time
7 to attend.

8
9 --- THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:20 P.M.

10
11 * * * * *