

Jewish Historical Society of Delaware
Annual Meeting Minutes
Sunday April 11, 2021

Welcoming remarks - Gerry Resnick

Gerry welcomed everyone in attendance through the use of Zoom technology, due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions. He gave a synopsis of what was accomplished in the past year, focusing on the establishment of the new home of the JHSD, the Delaware Center for Jewish History, at the Coxe House on Willingtown Square. Established through the cooperation with the Jewish Historical Society, the Jewish Federation of Delaware and the Delaware Historical Society, it will be a place to collect and pass on our history to future generations. He expressed thanks to all who made this new home a reality, mentioning a number of individuals and agencies, and extending particular thanks to the honorary chairperson, Toni Young, one of the founders of the JHSD.

Diane Wolf shared words from Rabbi Peter Grumbacher who was unavailable to attend but wanted to express his thanks to Gerry, Gail, and others who made the Coxe House a reality.

Coxe House Presentation - Richard D. Levin

Richard shared a PowerPoint slide show reviewing the history and progress of the Coxe House project. The Delaware Historical Society (DHS) had provided a home to the JHSD for the past 47 years, but with the archives of both organizations growing, space was becoming a problem. More than two years ago, the plans for a new home began. The Coxe house, built in the early 18th century, located on Willingtown Square, was offered by DHS in mid-2019. An engineering study and preconstruction planning began over one year ago, followed by the development of architectural plans. Fundraising began at the end of 2019 and over \$300,000 has been raised for the project. DHS pledged to raise the remaining \$400,000 to finish the project. Richard expressed thanks to DHS and JFD for their support. In July, construction began to renovate and restore the structure. On October 15, a written lease with DHS was signed, along with a memorandum of understanding. An executive council was formed, and has been meeting for over a year to oversee the progress of the project, and will continue to do so until the completion.

Before and after photographs of the building were shared. A Certificate of Occupancy was issued for the building this past week. The move has begun and will be completed this summer. Richard stated the need for additional funds to help cover the costs of the shelving and equipment necessary for the archives and the increased costs of our future operations. Richard extended his thanks to everyone who worked on the project.

Treasurer's Report

Paula Gordon gave a report summarizing expenses for the year 2020. Our revenue was \$25,166.34. Expenses were \$22,379.15, not including those related to the Coxe House. She thanked the members for

their support in 2020. Contributions of members covered 68% of all expenses and made up 60% of revenue. Paula thanked institutions for donations and grants which bridged the budget gaps.

In 2021 expenses will be higher due to taking occupancy of the Coxe House. To date, \$2,426.37 has been spent and our revenue is over \$4,000, mostly from donations. We have approximately \$43,000 in the bank.

Thanks to the generosity of members we achieved our \$260,000 goal for the Coxe House renovation fund. An additional \$43,500 was raised as the beginning of a planned \$100,000 endowment to be managed by the JFD. The endowment will provide income to cover operating expenses for our new building, allowing annual fundraising to focus on our core mission. The endowment target may change when we are in the building long enough to determine actual costs.

There are \$53,700 of services and equipment associated with the move into the Coxe House that will need to be paid for over the next three years, the majority of which will come due by the end of 2021. With this in mind, fundraising efforts have continued. Several grant applications have been submitted and we will continue to look to the community for support. Paula expressed that the support of the community has been greatly appreciated, especially in this challenging year.

Paula asked that members share information about the JHSD with friends and family to increase awareness of the organization in the community.

Archivist's Report- Gail Pietrzyk

Gail expressed that the most important event was the signing of the Coxe House lease in October. Thanks to the agreement with the DHS and with the support and cooperation of the JFD this collection of records will be preserved and accessible to future generations.

Although it has not been possible to have visitors to the JHSD, activities have continued. In the coming months, volunteers will be working to add to the list of names of Jewish war veterans so that the memorial at the JCC can be updated. A group is interested in researching the history of Machzikey Hadas. The JHSD has been invited to work with teaching staff at Red Clay School District to provide materials and reference information about the Jewish community for their social studies programs. This will be our fourth summer with University of Delaware summer interns. This year they will be from the History and Museum Studies programs. Interns will work on getting our oral history resources onto our website so that they are accessible to anyone. Now that room is available, we will be accessioning some new collections. Gail is looking forward to a busy year and she thanked everyone for their support.

Election of Board Members – Gerry Resnick

Gerry read the list of nominees to the JHSD Board: John Elzufon, Joe Goldberg, Roger Horowitz, Tina Heiman, Paul Lukoff, Donald Parsons, Charles Salkin, David Wilk, Robin Silver-Zink, and Peter Zoll. Eligible members voted electronically to approve the new board members.

Gerry read the nominees for board officers: President - Diane Wolf, VP - Harriet Ainbinder, Ron Riebman, and Richard Levin, Treasurer – Paula Gordon, and Secretary – Robin Silver-Zink. The officers will be voted on at the board meeting that will follow the annual meeting.

Retiring Board Members:

Gerry recognized the outgoing board members and thanked them for their service: officers Danna Levy, Secretary, and Eleanor Weinglass, Treasurer, and board members Ellen Meyer and Richard Margolin.

Certificates of appreciation will be delivered to our outgoing presidents.

Closing Remarks

Nominee for incoming president, Diane Wolf, began by acknowledging all the work that has been done by the board, and she thanked the membership for their previous, ongoing and future support. Diane shared her professional background and explained what led to her interest in archival work.

Diane described her vision for the coming year, which will emphasize outreach with the community through cooperative projects, deepened relationships with our partners, and strengthening our financial resources by building a regular income stream. While continuing our presence in the Jewish Voice, Diane also hopes to build our online and social media presence in an effort to increase membership, with a focus on bringing in younger members.

Diane hopes to see everyone in person next year at our annual meeting.

Gerry thanked everyone for attending and closed the annual meeting.

Board Meeting for the Election of officers

Gerry convened the meeting at 11:50.

All members of the board were present except for David Wilk, who had technical issues.

There were no objections to the slate of officers nominated. Gerry welcomed new members of the board. He opened up the floor to members of the board to share remarks.

Gerry asked that new members send their bios to Gail or Diane to add to JHSD's files.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Silver-Zink
Secretary