

Individual Articles for Consideration

ARTICLE 2; OFFICERS; Duties; 2.1 **President** – The duties of the President shall include... 2.1.e. “Appoint chairpersons for committees of the Board of Directors except the Standing Committees.”

Issue: sub-Article 2.1.e is not clear and the following recommendation to change the text as:

“Can create ad hoc committees and appoint chairpersons of such committees with a stated purpose or mission, and with written responsibilities published in the official minutes of the Board of Directors.”

Pros: Structuring is so important; it shows forethought, purpose and guidance for future leadership.

Con: The only thing missing from this sub-Article is the word “special” to denote ad hoc vs. standing committee.

ARTICLE 4; **TRUSTEES**; Duties; 4.2.d Oversee the conduct of Congregational elections

ARTICLE 7; **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**; Elections; 7.14; The Nominating Committee shall conduct the elections under the supervision of Trustees who are not standing for election.

Issue: The Trustees are given the responsibility for overseeing the conduct of elections, but in section 7.14 the Nominating Committee is told “to conduct elections.” This duplication needs to be corrected.

Pro: Keeping the Trustee oversight will keep Nominating Committee honest.

Con: This duplication encumbers the Board structure, gives bogus duties to the Trustees and is an insult to the members who volunteer to work on the Nominating committee. Suggest we do away with 4.2.d (reword 7.14 to exclude this duty of the Trustees).

ARTICLE 5; **STANDING COMMITTEES**; Duties; 5.b. **Religious School Committee** – This committee shall supervise the elementary and secondary religious schools of the Congregation, and shall determine policy and formulate rules and regulations for the administration of the schools.

(Also – Article 5.m. Preschool Committee – This committee shall supervise the preschool for the Congregation, and shall determine policy and formulate rules and regulations for the administration of such preschool.)

Issue: As written, this Article and sub-Article 5.m does not take into account Educational Directors. Should the wording be revised to include these positions? Should the Religious School and RUJEC committees have these responsibilities over the Educational Directors?

Recommendation: Add wording: “in consultation with the educational director(s) and the Board of Directors”

Pro: Formalizes the relationship to the Educational Directors’ position which would structure (or define) roles and responsibilities.

Con: May lead to putting in place more policies/directives of roles and responsibilities to which would be restrictive to good relationships and great education and hard to enforce.

ARTICLE 5; **STANDING COMMITTEES**; Duties; 5.2.c **Ritual Committee** – This committee shall be in charge of all religious services of the Congregation, including weddings, B'nai Mitzvah, and funerals, and shall formulate administrative rules and regulations for all such services. It shall offer to the Rabbi advice and guidance regarding the character and mode of the various services. It shall have the responsibility of appointing gabbaim and ushers for the various services.

Issue: Should the Ritual Committee be solely responsible for services, or should this sub-Article be reworded to say “in consultation with the rabbi”?

Pro: The By-Laws need to be changed to correct the omission as with any fully functioning synagogue would recognize its rabbinic leadership as the Mara d’atrah.

Con: In a shul it is the lay-leadership that should structure the ritual activities.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; Duties; 5.2.e **Adult Education Committee** – This committee shall develop a program of adult education for the Congregation. It shall also determine a policy and formulate rules and regulations for the administration of such a program, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Issue: This Article states “...programs are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.” Shouldn’t it also include a consultation with the Rabbi?

Pro: Since the Rabbi is an ex-officio of the Board of Directors, she/he is included in the approval process.

Con: Since it’s assumed that as a synagogue, our adult education would be of a Jewish content and therefore the committee would naturally consult with the rabbi and such text is unnecessary.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; Duties; 5.2.d **Membership Committee** – This committee shall be responsible for keeping in touch with Jewish members of the community not affiliated with any Congregation, with the view of inviting them to become members of the Congregation. This committee shall receive and investigate applications for membership. This committee shall carry out a program to encourage membership retention. If required, this committee shall also initiate action for the suspension or expulsion of members.

Issue: Should the Membership Committee really have any role in expelling members?

Suggestion: Delete sentence: “If required, this committee shall also initiate action for the suspension or expulsion of members.”

Pro: The wording only *suggests initiation* of such activities and therefore can be left as stated.

Con: This type of enforcement is too extreme to be conducted at a Chair level and additional wording should ensure that privacy/confidentiality and matters are *forwarded* to the President and Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; Duties; 5.2.f. **Social Action and Community Relations Committee** – This committee shall develop and maintain liaison with other organizations in the community. It shall study community problems that may arise from time to time and make recommendations for appropriate action to the Board of Directors.

Issue: The Social Action Committee doesn’t seem to have any social action responsibilities—it needs to be reworded. Can this be done non-controversially?

Pro: Under the spectrum of *tikun olam*, and/or “building of a community” it may be beneficial to rename the Social Action and Community Relations Committee to *Programming* and included rolls of Social, Social Action, USCJ Liaison, Leadership Training, and the Jewish Community at Large.

Con: This article is descriptive and all inclusive as it stands.

Recommendation: add a sentence to stipulate responsibility to include the shul’s Tikun Olam programs.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; Duties; 5.2.1 **Personnel Committee** – This committee shall formulate policies and procedures for personnel administration for Board of Directors consideration. This committee shall review all personnel contracts prior to being offered to the individual being hired, to ensure such contracts are in accordance with adopted personnel policies and procedures.

Issue #1: Does the Personnel committee get to review the rabbi’s contract?

Pro: If the congregation is lucky enough to have a knowledgeable “Personnel Relations” Personnel Chairperson, than the responsibility is proper and this Article stands as efficient.

Con: This may be inappropriate. Currently, are done by an Officer of the synagogue.

Issue #2: There is no mention of recruitment responsibility. Isn’t this an oversight? When hiring any professional, skills need to be identified; open-job announcements need to be managed, as well as interviews arranged. Should this Chair be involved in those requirements to fill positions? Or is this an assumed responsibility?

Pro: The clearer the definition of duties, the higher the chances of the recruitment tasks will get done in a timely manner.

Con: Why clutter-up the By-Laws text with extraneous obvious verbiage; if the Personnel Chair doesn’t want to do the job, or fails to, anyone can be appointed by the President to carry out the role.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; **Committee Membership**; 5.3 Each Standing Committee shall have at least three members including the committee chairperson.

Issue: How can this Article be enforced? Committee Chairs are lucky to get any volunteers to work on programs.

Pro: The more members involved, the better the program results. Setting a requirement forces Chairs to be more inclusive.

Con: Not enforceable.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; **Committee Membership**; 5.4 Only members in good standing shall be allowed to serve as Standing Committee members.

Issue: Identifying members not in good standing to chairman of committees is a violation of privacy. Difficulty in paying dues is a private matter between member, Treasurer and President; expanding this circle would embarrass members. Is this a criterion to allow members on a committee?

Pro: We desperately need our members to be involved in the running of our synagogue. However, since member's privacy must be preserved, suggest rewording to include such oversight and confidentiality not going beyond the person of interest, the Chair, the Treasurer and President.

Con: Members need to know the ramifications of not keeping up with dues commitments and ask to refrain from further committee work until financial arrangements are addressed.

ARTICLE 5; STANDING COMMITTEES; **Committee Membership**; 5.5 All Standing Committee meetings shall be open to all members of the Congregation.

Issue: Should the Personnel committee meetings be open to the entire congregation or leave text stand as is?

Pro: It enforces and "open" and "transparent" management of the synagogue.

Con: This is inappropriate as contracts or disciplinary activities need to be confidential.

Input and Issues Identified by Past Presidents

- *"The Board is just too damn big; we take too long to get things done."*
- Article 3.1.a. There shall be two Directors at Large on the Board of Directors. (*"Is this position even necessary?"*)
- Article 5.1 The elected officers will determine which standing committees will need to be filled. The officers holding office before an election will determine the standing committees to be filled for the next term. During a term, the officers may form one of the standing committees that are currently inactive by holding a Special Meeting of the Congregation to elect a chairperson for that committee.
 - *"This seems like a very bad idea and these committees need to be reduced (e.g. financial, programming, educational, ritual, facilities/ management) with other subsumed."*
- *"All committee chairs should be appointed by the President with the approval of the Exec Committee and all BOD positions shall have a single vote. If a Board Committee is important enough to be elected, then make that committee position a VP position (e.g. Membership chair becomes Membership VP)."*
- *"I think there are entirely too many Board positions; we should be able to eliminate the Directors-At-Large and Trustee positions (with Trustees incorporated into an Officer's duties)."*
- *"I would likely eliminate Directors at Large, in favor of trustees; then would clarify the roles of trustees."*

Issues: As noted above, the response from our leadership was to 1) reduce the number of Standing Committees, 2) chairs should be appointed—not elected, and, 3) the Board's too large—reduce the number of chairs! One solution is to reorganize the structure of our Board of Directors.

The Board could be simplified through restructuring down to only seven voting vice presidents covering required roles as follows:

Vice President of Administration (covers House/Grounds, Office Admin, Long Range Planning, and Ways and Means)

Vice President of Communications (covers Recoding Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Web Site, The Bulletin, and the eBulletin)

Vice President of Education (covers Religious School, RUJEC, Adult Ed, and Youth Activities)

Vice President of Finance (covers Treasurer, Budget & Finance, Dues Management, and Bookkeeping)

Vice President of Membership (covers Membership, Outreach, and Retention)

Vice President of Programming (covers Social, Social Action, USCJ Liaison, Leadership Training, and the Jewish Community at Large)

Vice President of Ritual (covers Religious Services, Life-cycle Celebrations, Chesed, Cemetery Committee and Library)

Past President (covers Endowment, Personnel, Nominating Committee and Elections)

Pro: With a smaller decision making administrative body, the Board could work more efficiently, and the majority of the work is done at a lower, but expanded base of membership involvement. It could be less intimidating to work under a VP than attending “Board” meetings.

Con: There may be difficulties filling a “Vice President” position with so much oversight and responsibility. Also, members may not feel that they have Board affiliation and less opportunity to for visibility and importance, as well as, to grow within the shul. With so many people removed from the Board level, many will not be included in the decision making process. The information may not “filter-up” correctly to the decision makers.

Committee proposal to consider:

- Leave By-Laws Committee structure as is (status quo)
- Greatly reduce Board positions to working/management Vice Presidents
- Further reduce Board to just Officers of the Synagogue plus Directors at Large with Standing Committees as a policy subsidy and therefore allowing flexibility in management

There are no Constitutional Articles that govern, or refer to, Committees of the synagogue and therefore no conflicts between these two governing documents.