

# **By-Laws of Congregation Ahavas Yisrael of Edison, N.J.**

*Ratified December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015*

## **I. Standing Committees**

### **Finance Committee**

The duties of the Finance Committee shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- 1) Review financial records of the Congregation<sup>1</sup> to assure proper accounting of monies received and spent.
- 2) Review billing procedures for members to assure that statements are regularly issued, and that accounts receivable are promptly and properly posted.
- 3) Review the budgeting of special funds.
- 4) Ensure that committees submit adequate budget proposals and within the required periods of time.
- 5) The Second Vice President, also known as the Vice President of Finance, shall be the chairman of the Finance Committee.
- 6) Make recommendations on the Rabbi's compensation and other benefits by reviewing the Rabbi's compensation history (committee chairman only) and need for adjustment(s) upon contract renewal.
- 7) Prepare an annual budget based on recommendations by committee chairs and the Board.
- 8) Be responsible for the appointment of a Fundraising Sub-committee, whose sole responsibility is the creation of new and maintaining of ongoing fundraisers for the benefit of the Congregation.
- 9) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee (and sub-committee) meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

With the exception of the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, only the President and the Second Vice President (Finance) may make withdrawals from, or check balances of, the bank accounts of the Congregation. The Rabbi is the only person who may distribute funds from the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund account. The Vice President of Finance may obtain balance of the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund account on the bank's website.

### **House & Security Committee**

The duties of the House & Security Committee shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1) Maintain the inside and outside of all synagogue properties, including heating, air conditioning, plumbing, electricity, security, and associated equipment.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to Congregation or AY are to Congregation Ahavath Israel of Edison AKA Congregation Ahavas Yisrael of Edison, N.J.

- 2) Report to the Board of Directors as required on problems requiring the solicitation of bids, recommend contractors to the Board, and assure contractor compliance and completion of work.
- 3) Develop and maintain the security action plan for the Congregation and periodically report to the membership on security needs and enhancements.
- 4) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

## **Ritual Committee**

The duties of the Ritual Committee shall be to consult with the Rabbi on, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Establish procedures to enhance daily, Shabbos, and Holiday services. Determine if new *minyanim* (prayer services) should be added or the existing ones modified.
- 2) Provide the Congregation and Rabbi with a forum for the discussion of ideas relating to the ritual services of AY. The Ritual Committee will act as a sounding board to both the Congregation and the Rabbi for ritual issues either the Congregation or Rabbi would like to see changed.
- 3) Keep, update, and publicize the AY minhagim document.
- 4) The committee will have a minimum of three (3) members at all times appointed by the President and approved by a majority vote of the Board. The Congregation's Gabbai Rishon, Gabbai Sheni, and Gabbai Shlishi shall be the first members of the committee. Selection and duties of the Gabbaim are governed by the constitution<sup>2</sup> of the Congregation, Article X.
- 5) The Rabbi shall have the final decision on all matters brought before the Ritual Committee.
- 6) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

## **Youth Committee**

The duties of the Youth Committee shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 1) Establish policies and oversee the activities of the Congregation's youth program.
- 2) Oversee and monitor work performed by the Youth Director who is responsible to the committee for all of his/her activities. The position of the Youth Director may be either a volunteer or paid position. (Constitution, Article XII, governs employment practices.)
- 3) Oversee the coordination of all youth programs conducted under the auspices of the Congregation, or that are conducted by other organizations when such programs are held within the facilities of AY.

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<sup>2</sup> All references to the constitution are to the ratified constitution of the Congregation.

- 4) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

### **Membership Committee**

The duties of the Membership Committee shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 1) Make recommendations to the Board and Rabbi on events to enhance cohesiveness of the Membership and coordinate social programs for all members.
- 2) Plan and execute, with assistance from the Board and other committees, events to assist in reaching out to potential new members.
- 3) Coordinate welcome gifts for new members. Only full, not associate, members may receive welcome gifts.
- 4) Connect new members or visiting potential members with established families for Shabbos or weekday hospitality when needed/requested.
- 5) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

### **Annual Journal Event Committee**

The duties of the Annual Journal Event Committee (AKA Breakfast, Brunch, or Dinner Committee) shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 1) Plan and execute the annual journal event for the Congregation.
- 2) Hire all vendors for the annual event.
- 3) Accept ads for the annual journal, compile all ads, and proofread all sections of the journal before printing.
- 4) Determine honorees for each year's event with sufficient input from both the Rabbi and the Board of Directors.
- 5) Collect monies as payment for ads and event registration, as well as follow-up with all receivables for the event.
- 6) Defer to the President for decisions on ads paid for by vendors or local businesses with services-in-kind.
- 7) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

## **Education Committee**

The duties of the Education Committee shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 1) In conjunction with the Rabbi, establish classes and programs (e.g. "Scholar in Residence") that are designed to meet the interests of the AY members, their families, and Edison/Highland Park Jewish community at large.
- 2) In conjunction with the Rabbi, schedule classes and recruit instructors.
- 3) Oversee and develop lecture series to address contemporary halachic issues.
- 4) Maintain the library and acquire materials that will improve the collection.
- 5) Committee chairman shall record minutes of committee meetings and provide said minutes in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Board of Directors within seven (7) calendar days (or sooner if required) for review.

The Rabbi shall have the final decision on all religious matters brought before the Education Committee.

## **Sisterhood**

The duties of the Sisterhood shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 1) Develop and run social and educational programs for the Congregation and the community.
- 2) Develop and maintain fundraising activities for the benefit of Sisterhood and shul programs and initiatives.
- 3) The Sisterhood President shall be a voting member of the Board of Directors.
- 4) If Co-Presidents of the Sisterhood exist, only one may attend a Board meeting and only one vote will be recorded.
- 5) A committee representative will provide updates of Sisterhood events, initiatives, and plans at the Board meetings.

## **II. Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Board President**

The President shall direct the administration of affairs of the Congregation. In that capacity, he shall:

- 1) Preside at all meetings of the Congregation.
- 2) Ensure that the officers of the Congregation's Board of Directors faithfully discharge their duties.
- 3) Neither make nor second any motion while presiding over meetings. This means that the President must remain an "honest broker" and not motion for anything at a

Board meeting, allowing only the other Board members to motion for something that results in a vote of the Board, while the President breaks the tie if needed.

- 4) Keep confidential the details concerning all deliberations, finances, and documentation discussed and/or passed upon by any committee with respect to the compensation of the Rabbi.
- 5) Preserve order at meetings and put all proper motions to a vote, as well as to adjourn a meeting.
- 6) Have the authority to hire and fire Congregational employees subject to the approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Board of Directors. Disputes between a job candidate and the Board of Directors, or between the Congregation's employee and the Board of Directors, shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees ("BOT") for conflict resolution, in accordance with constitution, article III, section 3.
- 7) Not vote except for the election of officers or in the event of a tie.

### **The Gabbaim**

The duties of the Gabbaim are stated in the constitution, Article X. Additionally, the Gabbaim shall:

- 1) distribute and maintain records on aliyahs and distribute honors (for example, hagbah, gelilah, Simchas Torah honors);
- 2) make arrangements with Ba'alei Smachos for aliyahs and honors; and
- 3) adhere to the relevant motions passed by the Board.

### **III. Membership Guidelines**

Categories of membership shall include the following:

- 1) Full Membership (see constitution, Article II, Section 2 for the definition of a full member aka regular member). Full Members are entitled to all member benefits.
- 2) Associate Membership (see constitution, Article II, Section 3 for the definition of an associate member). The Board may set additional requirements for Associate Membership.
- 3) Associate members have the following limitations on their membership rights:
  - a) They are not entitled to vote at meetings of the Congregation, nor may they be a member of the Board of Directors or the Board of Trustees, nor hold any elected office of the Congregation.
  - b) Their fee for High Holiday seats shall be 50% above the fee for Full Members
  - c) They may not reserve High Holiday seats during any priority period established for Full Members.
- 4) In accordance with halacha and with the discretion of the Gabbaim, full members enjoy priority over associate members regarding honors and obligations ("chiyyuvim") at religious services. Within these parameters, associate members enjoy priority over non-members.

- 5) Associate members' rights to reserve the Congregation's facilities may be restricted by policies established by the Board of Directors. The cost of using the Congregation's facilities will be set by the Board of Directors.
- 6) General Limitations - A child's age for each year shall be determined as of the end of the congregation's immediately preceding fiscal year (currently, December 31<sup>st</sup>).
- 7) The Board of Directors are authorized to set the dues rates for the various membership categories and within categories.
- 8) If individual full members of the Congregation experience financial hardship, the President together with the Vice President of the Finance Committee may adjust dues of these individuals on a case-by-case basis.
- 9) Conversion from one membership category to another must be requested in writing by a letter or email addressed to the President.

#### **IV. Amendments**

Amendments to these By-laws shall follow the same requirements as Article XV of the constitution of the Congregation.