

Board Meeting
Thursday September 19, 2019

Participants:

Jim August, Saul Berkowitz, Richard N. Bernstein, Sid Besmertnik, Conrad Giles, Baron Vivien de Gunzburg, Robert Grey, , Eva Gans, Suze Goldman, Larry Kadis, Suellen Kadis, Brad Kolar, Gail Lanznar, Howard Lanznar, Joan Levin, Leandro Margulis, Pepe Sigal, Louanne Smolin, Bubba Urdan, Lew Zipkin

Linda Kirschbaum

Jeffrey Cooper (CEO), Allison Halpern (DOO), Sari Berkowitz (Director of Marketing)

Absent: Shelly Dreifuss, Debbie Kanter, Jonathan Lanznar, Hugo Leibovich, Judy Menikoff, Morgan, Michael Perlmutter, Barbara Ross, Barbara Siegel, Dario Werthein, Andi Wolfe, Larry Wolfe, Nicole Miller (Regional Director), Naomi Reinharz (National Director of Major Gifts)

1. Welcome / Approval of Minutes

Howard Lanznar

Richard Bernstein moves to approve the minutes. Joan Levin seconds. All in favor / no abstentions.

2. Chairman's Report

Howard Lanznar

Integration with World ORT, Inc.

- In general, the process is moving forward well but there is more work to do.
- There is full integration and alignment of interests, priorities and planning.

Coordination with World ORT

- Almost all the issues that remain can be satisfied with better communication.

US Operations and LAOTI

- ORT America has had a rocky relationship with US Ops (operator of the Los Angeles school and previously of the New York and Chicago schools).
- There is an absence of trust leading OA to conclude that the best way to move forward is to disaffiliate itself completely from US and as a consequence from the Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute.
- There have been discussions with legal counsel to formalize the agreement.

- Jeff and Howard met with five long standing ORT leaders who are on the board of the Los Angeles school to walk them through the rationale for this separation, and how to re invigorate the Los Angeles donor base.

3. CEO's Report

Jeff Cooper

Financial Report

- The Project Progress report through August 31, 2019 was made available online. The numbers represents about 40% of the total year. We are lagging a little– 5 or 6 % behind our goal but ahead of last year. We are ahead in Michigan and the Northeast and behind in other regions.

This PPR is only for ORT America. World ORT has provided a year on year PPR which we can share. They did not have goals. Goals will be established for the fourth quarter.

- Contributor grids were sent to each fundraiser for review, including a listing of their donors – we will have better forecasting ability for the next board meeting.
- The former director in Los Angeles was let go and we moved in Heath Blumstein, former World ORT Inc. fundraiser. We are currently in Los Angeles reviewing with him the region and his goals.

Status report on integration with World ORT, Inc.

- Almost all the World ORT people have been trained in Raisers Edge. We need to move over the data they had which was not in database form. That process will take some time.
- The official move date of the World ORT staff to ORT America is October 1, 2019. Bob Grey was a tremendous help in this endeavor.

Status report on COTI audit/letter of credit

- We had to do an audit from scratch because of lack of information sharing of US Ops who had all the books and records. Now that the audit is completed, we are working on freeing up the funds ORT America put up in a letter of credit (\$580k). This was a costly enterprise but needed to be done.
- The sale of the Los Angeles property encountered some hiccups but we hope all issues will be resolved by the beginning of January-

4. Board Approval – World ORT, Inc. Integration Steps

Howard Lanznar

We have been operating as one organization for some months now but this needs to be formalized. A simple agreement has been prepared that says that World ORT will send all of its assets to ORT America and ORT America will accept them and assume liabilities linked to those assets and other specific scheduled liabilities.

OA will only assume liabilities that are explicitly known and identified in the agreement. World ORT inc. will remain in existence for a little while.

Richard Bernstein moves to approve the agreement. Suze Goldstein seconds. All in favor / no abstentions.

5. Committee Reports

Fundraising

Gail Lanznar

- Judy and Gail have had conversations with the chairs of all of the fundraising committees who in turn have all had conversations with their assigned professionals. Some of the Committees have already had their kick-off calls.
 - **Campaign Committee** – focus in next few months on Donors under 55k and making sure those gifts are coming in.
 - **Major Gifts** – no kick off meeting yet. Trying to get as many people as possible together during the October week-end meeting. Materials will be sent out to get everyone moving of their responsibilities
 - **Donor recognition and involvement** – focused on thank yous and appropriate recognition
 - **New York Committee** – trying to build our presence in New York
 - **Planned Giving** – Brad wants to spend some funds for data analysis and web page revamp.
- October Dinner during the board meeting weekend: Please make reservations and be present. Encourage others to come
- Kfar Silver – please make a significant gift to Kfar Silver. The board must be a leader in this initiative.

Kfar Silver update: \$480k/\$490k on the thermometer does not include excess funds from Rub a Dub which will be added and bring total above \$600k.

Marketing

Jim August

- We are following the recommendations of the work stream to make the marketing activities donor centric. The focus has to be on the value that ORT delivers. We are hoping to do that through storytelling and emotionally stirring content.
- Our biggest challenge is the lack of content, or the fact that what content we do have (photos and videos) is not appropriate or does not resonate with the American donor. We need better materials.
- We are setting up two content development trips to Israel. One before the December direct mail materials are needed and one sometime next year.
- We hope that Board Members will remember their role as Brand ambassadors using the resources that are available on the board portal. Please like and share social media posts.

There will be funding in the budget for next year to address some of these deficiencies.

US Pedagogical Programs

Linda Kirschbaum

Framework developed on first call:

- The group had a consensus that any programs done in the US need to serve two purposes:

- a. Build awareness of ORT in the USA
- b. Do good for the Jewish community and perhaps the broader community as well
- ORT America is not a program delivery organization. We rely on our partners to implement the programs. This is an opportunity but also a constraint.
- Funds are a consideration. We have access to some Special Purpose Funds that are designated for US programs. There are also donors who will only give to US programs that can be approached.

Some ideas discussed:

- World ORT developed an initiative to bring STEM education to Jewish Summer camps. It worked well and the feedback was good. We are looking to expand the program and improve on it.
- We will look at opportunities to build on existing World ORT leadership programming such as the LEAD seminar and International Student Programs.

Many ideas were discussed and will be found in the committee minutes that will be available on the Portal.

CEO Search

Howard Lanznar

- The search committee has met with a number of candidates. We have identified two candidates who will have a second interview. We hope to move forward quickly and have a new person to announce in the next several weeks.

6. Upcoming Events

Jeff Cooper

- Combined Boards/Major Gifts Dinner – Saturday Oct. 26
For this board, the WO Board of Trustees and Major donors.

In person board meeting on Sunday at 9am at the Federation building on 57th street
Information available on the Board Portal

- World ORT GA/ORT America Mission – Jerusalem, May 20-26 (est.), 2020
Mission will be planned in conjunction with the General Assembly being held in Jerusalem
Will be a wonderful way to celebrate ORT’s 140th anniversary.

7. Adjournment

Howard Lanznar