

OLIN-SANG-RUBY UNION INSTITUTE, URJ

BOARD OF GOVERNORS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Board of Governors of Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute is comprised of **thirty six members** from around the region served. They are all volunteers who, in part, represent their home congregations as well as various members at large.

As is customary in most boards of not-for –profit organizations our expectation is that board members **bring at least two of wealth, wisdom and work**. Every board member is expected to make a personally significant financial contribution each year as well as serve on a committee of the board whether standing or ad hoc.

Our committees serve two simultaneous functions...the first is the accomplishment of the stated purpose of the committee and secondly to act as a training ground for potential new members of the board. This latter has been particularly successful giving the interested individual a chance to feel their way through the work of camp volunteers. Tied to this is the basic premise that committee members should bring personal experience or professional knowledge to the camp. One of the more difficult jobs for the director and the board chair is to be firm about this. There are often folks who step forward with real interest but cannot necessarily add to the progress of the committee assignment. Care should be taken, though, since there are frequently individuals who can bring a sense of the “right way” to move ahead even though they might lack the technical knowledge of the specific project.

Of course, there are also those who will step forward with strong financial support when given the opportunity to have some say in the work of the camp. They should neither be ignored nor automatically assumed to be right simply because of this one facility.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS COMMITTEES

Standing Committees

Finance Committee charged with keeping current on the financial situation of the camp, relationship with the national organization and oversight of the financial management of the camp. This committee includes several people with finance background and business experience.

Physical Plant Committee is designed to work directly with the director and the camp’s Physical Plant Manager in planning construction, rehabilitation of facilities and site management. They are also responsible for oversight of the physical master plan of Union Institute as it evolves with recommendations from the administration of camp, faculty and various Board members. Tied to this is the need to maintain updated information and relationship with the board of the village in which camp

is located and the State of Wisconsin. Members of this committee include people in the construction business, real estate attorneys and a representative of the camp Judaica faculty.

The Special Needs Committee is charged with the evaluation and inclusion of campers with special needs. This committee is composed of physicians, psychiatrists, nurses, special education specialists along with the camp's inclusion coordinator. Every camper application that comes in with a notation of special needs or indicating that the youngster has an IEP is automatically referred to the Special Needs committee. A member is assigned to call the parents, review materials from the school, physician or therapist and review the response with the rest of the committee. There are three alternatives that can be presented to the parents – yes, we will certainly accept your child, yes and we would need a one on one aide (provided by the parents) or no, we are not able to respond to the needs of your child at our camp.

Following this, the members of the committee will create a list of appropriate strategies for counselors to use when working with these children. Some of these will be learning or behavior matters and, of course, some will be guidance for staff working with youngsters who have various physical needs that require attention.

Financial need is, of course, high on the list family concerns. For this purpose, OSRUI has a **Campership Committee**. This committee works in direct and close contact with the Associate Director. OSRUI has separate funding for camperships through endowment contributions and annual giving. In addition, there is a budgetary line for camperships. Of course, part of the work of this committee is to assure that the various incentive programs both local and national are expressed through the synagogues and the camp web site.

Each year families request campership grants through an application that are sent out *following* registration. Families are also required to apply for any incentive awards that are available in their community as well as congregational awards. Each application is then completely rewritten excluding any identification and brought to a separate meeting of the committee. The committee is presented with the available amount to distribute and they then evaluate the applications and make awards. These committee members names, because of the sensitivity of the matter, are not made public.

The Strategic Plan Committee works on planning for the evolving personality of the camp as well as a substantial investment in future planning. While much of the time spent in strategic planning is designed to focus on feedback from various elements and regions that the camp serves, there is no doubt that it looks to keep priorities in order. At the same time, there is a major press to keep camp programs aligned with the mission identified through the work of this committee. This focus brings together administration, program staff, faculty and alumni in leading the camp into a future by intent and design rather than “accidental” circumstance.

Faculty of the camp is represented by the **Rabbinic Advisory Committee** which is comprised of rabbis, educators and cantors. Each unit in camp has its own Jewish learning theme and there is a time period each day in which the theme unfolds with the campers. This group is charged with the responsibility of creating the summer learning themes along with their implementation. They organize

the faculty for the summer, all of whom come as volunteers and are assigned to a specific unit of the camp. The RAC functions as the program committee for the camp and they prepare background materials that the counselors use in implementing the learning themes of the session.

The camp's fundraising and advancement fall under the work of **the Development Committee**. Development at OSRUI, like so many other places, is dependent on financial contributions both large and small as well as gifts in kind. This committee is charged with responding to the physical and program needs of the various committees along with engaging endowment and future giving projects. The committee is staffed by the Development Manager of the camp and, like all committees is ultimately responsible to the camp Board of Governors.

This committee will also sponsor events of various kinds to forward the above goals.

Camper welfare is the assignment of the eponymous **Camper Welfare Committee**. They review camper and parent evaluations and reach back to the Director and Associate Director for staff consideration. There is much information available through surveys and focus groups that this committee sifts and ties back to the camp mission for effectiveness. An important part of their work includes contacting families who have not yet re-registered for the next summer. This is done through phone-a-thons, mail, email and the like.

There are **also ad hoc committees** that evolve for specific projects or needs. An example of this is a triennial concert that was sponsored this past summer. This group took on a major event, brought together scores of volunteers and raised funds to produce a remarkably successful program bringing together nearly a thousand alumni and friends of camp for a single day.

The Director of the Camp and Associate Director staff all of these committees.