

Plan For The Co-ordination of the Orthodox Organization of
the City of Portland, Maine, into one Consolidated
Group to be known as "The Orthodox Jewish
Kehillah of Portland, Maine."

Purpose: The Jewish Community of the City of Portland, Maine, has developed along the familiar pattern of most Jewish communities in this country. It is a pattern whose most striking criticism is—lack of planning. The result has often led to confusion, chaos, decline of morale, and difficulty of maintenance.

The Orthodox Jewish community of the City of Portland has the following institutions:

Shaarey Tphiloh Synagogue

Etz Chaim Synagogue

Anshe Sfaard Synagogue

Portland Hebrew School

Vaad Hoir

Chevra Kaddisha

Mt. Sinai Cemetery Association

Each of these institutions serves a legitimate need and each, through the years, has attracted a number of sincere, honest, loyal and devoted supporters.

Time and events beyond our control have brought about a weakening of the structure of these institutions, and a consequent inability to serve with efficiency the purpose for which each was created. The authority of some of them has been challenged, and the status of others is undefined and nebulous in the minds of many.

The result has led to some confusion, and this confusion has brought about a general undermining of the authority and prestige of the Orthodox Jewish community. Indeed, it would be correct to say that these various institutions, operating as they do independently, do not truly form a Jewish community. The term, as it is used, is a nebulous one.

Great recognition must be given to those individuals and institutions who have, in the past, worked to bring about cohesion of the Orthodox Jewish life. Those who championed the creation of the Vaad Hoir must be highly commended for the idealism and genuine desire for unity which prompted their action. But the Vaad Hoir has never become the great unifying force in the community which its founders undoubtedly had hoped that it would be. Except for the common maintenance of a Rabbi, Shochtim, and supervision over the kashruss of the city, there has been no true unification of any organizations.

The weaknesses and dissatisfactions which are growing more rampant with time must be eliminated. It is the purpose, therefore, of this report to recommend a plan of action which shall firmly unite the Orthodox Jewish organizations into one solid cohesive whole and which shall function for the improvement of all. It will serve to raise Torah-Ture Judaism to its historic and respected position in this city.

PLAN AND ORGANIZATION:

- 1 - It is recommended that the entire memberships of Shaarey Tphiloh Synagogue, Etz Chaim Synagogue, Anshe Sfaard Synagogue, Portland Hebrew School, Vaad Hoir, Chevra Kaddish, and Mt. Sinai Cemetery Association be called together for the purpose of organizing themselves into a Kahillah.
- 2 - Each organization will be asked to surrender its corporate entity, its funds, its monies, its assets, its property (both real and personal), and its rights to collect and solicit dues and donations, to a new parent body which is to be called "The Orthodox Jewish Kahillah of Portland, Maine."
- 3 - The members of each individual organization are to surrender their membership in that organization and, in return, are to receive membership in the Kahillah.
- 4 - The Kahillah is to be governed by a Presidium of three—three vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, and thirty—five directors.
- 5 - These officers are to be elected biennially by a direct vote of the members.
- 6 - The members shall elect officers from a list prepared for them by a Nominating Committee, or by direct nomination from the floor.
- 7 - As soon as the directors of each of the existing institutions have voted to become part of the Kahillah in accordance with the above—outlined plan, those

directors shall choose a nominating committee of five who will serve with the nominating committee of the other organizations to nominate officers for the first election to the Kahillah.

OPERATION:

- 1 - The Kahillah, shall make all decisions through a plurality vote, except where otherwise specified.
- 2 - The Kahillah shall be empowered to collect dues and operate all the affiliated organizations, as it sees fit.
- 3 - The Kahillah shall become the sole owner and repository of all property real and personal, monies, funds, rights to inheritance, charters, books, papers, which the individual institutions owned or which were in their custody.
- 4 - The Kahillah shall respect the terms of tenure of all paid personnel now engaged or under contract to the individual institutions.
- 5 - For ten years after the Kahillah has been formed it shall not dis-establish, dismantle, cease to permit the functioning of, nor permit to fall into disrepair the existing houses of worship known as the Shaarey Tphilah Synagogue at 151 Newbury St., the Etz Chaim Synagogue at 267 Congress St., the Anshe Sfaard Synagogue at Cumberland Ave., except by a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the Kahillah, present at three successive meetings. Such meetings shall be

called by the Presidium especially for the above-mentioned purpose, and all meetings shall be held within a six-month period.

6- The Kahillah shall be charged with the maintenance, conduct and functioning of all duties which have heretofore been discharged by the individual organizations.

7 - The Kahillah shall function through the following standing committees and as many other committees as are found necessary.

Committee on Buildings:

This committee shall be responsible for the physical maintenance of all buildings now belonging to the individual organizations.

Personnel Committee:

This committee shall be charged with the proper disposition of duties of each of the personnel engaged by the Kahillah. It shall recommend the engaging or discharging of personnel, and salary and adjustments.

Kashrus Committee:

This committee shall be in charge of all matters dealing with the preparation of kosher food for the Jewish community.

Education Committee:

This committee shall be charged with the proper functioning of all educational activities necessary to the Orthodox Jewish community.

Cemetery Committee:

This committee shall be charged with all duties necessary to the proper preparation of the dead, for burial, for the religious rites of the dead, and for the maintenance of the Mt. Sinai Cemetery.

Maintenance Committee:

This committee shall be charged with maintaining and keeping in good order all personal materials such as books, furniture, etc., and the replacing of same for the individual organizations.

All Committees shall make recommendations for the disbursements through their chairmen to the treasurer of the Kahillah.

All monies collected by these committees shall be turned over to the common treasury.

Committee chairmen and their committeemen (as many as are deemed necessary) shall be appointed by the Presidium and shall continue to function at the pleasure of the Presidium.

Each committee chairman shall be empowered to appoint as many sub-committees ~~xxxxxx~~ as are necessary.

Each committee chairman shall be empowered, upon his own recommendation or upon the recommendation of any of his sub-committees, to spend for the purpose for which ~~xxx~~ his committee has been formed the sum of \$50.00 for any individual purpose. Such sums shall be made available to him from the common treasury upon his written request.

Sums ranging between \$51.00 and \$100.00 for any individual

purpose shall be expended upon the recommendation of a plurality of the committee appointed by the Presidium, and shall be made available to the chairman of the committee by the treasurer of Kahillah when the latter has so been informed in writing by the committee chairman.

Sums above \$100.00 must be brought for approval to the directors of the Kahillah, and shall be authorized by a plurality vote.

This Kahillah shall come into operation when any five of the seven aforementioned organizations shall have voted to become part of it and to abide by the rules and regulations which have been aforementioned. Any other Orthodox Jewish organization may be admitted by a majority vote of the directors.

The Presidium shall appoint a Constitutional Committee at its first meeting to draft a constitution.

The Kahillah shall always maintain an Orthodox Rabbi and shall govern itself by the laws of the Torah which he interprets to them. Decisions on secular matters are to remain within the jurisdiction of the directors of the Kahillah.

It is hoped and believed that this Kahillah will strengthen the Orthodox Jewish group here in Portland. It will give prestige and power to its functions. It will eliminate the bickering, the dissatisfactions, and petty loyalties which have been the bane of our Jewish community life. It will exchange smaller loyalties for larger ones. With the help of G-D, in whom we trust and who has bidden us to be one people, we cannot fail if our determination is real, honest and sincere.

October 16, 1952.