

JEWISH CONGREGATION OF VENICE
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (DRAFT)

MARCH 22, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Eli Rapaport at 10:03am. Eli announced that we have a quorum.

Maxine Arkin made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2026 meeting, Alma Rogers seconded. Vote taken; minutes were approved unanimously.

Rabbi's report-Rabbi-Cantor Marci Vitkus

Rabbi Marci reported that she, Linda Cook and Rod Margolis met with the new president of the board of the Jewish Federation of Sarasota and Manatee County. It was a very good meeting. They are working with us to become more involved.

Jewish Congregation of Venice has joined the Sarasota Ministerial Association, which meets once a month. This is a great way for us to have relationships and exposure with clergy throughout Sarasota County.

Rabbi Marci mentioned that Mila Liss and Rabbi Marci are performing a concert this afternoon. Rabbi Marci also spoke about the classes she has ongoing at the JCV. There is a Hebrew class and a prayer familiarity class. The women's discussion group Kol Isha, which has existed since 2018, is the last Tuesday of the month and all women of the JCV are welcome.

Rabbi Marci is involved with VICCA, they are working out logistics for meetings and activities. Seder is April 1, Yizkor is April 9.

Rabbi Marci reported that Bill Harris, Marilyn Borkin's husband, would like to offer a program for congregants and their guests called Caregiving for Alzheimer's. It is six sessions. The information will be available soon.

President's report-Eli Rapaport, Officer

This is Eli's last Congregational meeting as president. Eli spoke about the wonderful experiences he has had and the people he met during his four years as president. He spoke of the investment Rabbi-Cantor Marci has made in the JCV. He talked about the progress that has been made during his tenure including the upgrading of the sanctuary, the kitchen, the classrooms, security upgrades by the security committee led by Randy Brodsky, the security grant obtained by Judy Rapaport. He spoke about Barry Bye, Aaron Rosen, Steve Shoub, Judy Haran and Dave Goldstein who make sure our services are available on Zoom. He talked about Susan Kohmstam who does our service flyers. Eli mentioned those who get out our weekly L'Chaim, Aaron Rosen, Dee Andrews and Selma Bitz. Eli said that so many congregants volunteer to keep the JCV running. He mentioned Paul Bond, the kitchen crew, Cynthia Greene. He thanked everyone for helping every single day. Eli thanked his wife Judy for all her support and encouragement.

Treasurer and Finance committee report-Victor Haran, Officer

Buck Isenberg gave the report for Victor Haran.

The 2026-2027 Budget that was submitted to the Board of Directors from the Finance committee was approved at the February board meeting. This budget starts on July 1, 2026. Buck reported that a summary of the budget is in the members portal under governance. The 2025 annual financial statement is available under governance as well. Last year, 2025, the food festival's gross income was \$80,000 plus \$11,000 in donations; net income was about \$50,000. This year, 2026, the preliminary gross income was \$76,000 plus \$10,000 in donations, the preliminary net income is \$50,000 because of a reduction in expenditures this year Victor thanked the members of the finance committee; Buck Isenberg, Bob Schoenewald, Maxine Arkin.

Membership committee-Deborah Rosen, Director

Deborah acknowledged the committee: Maxine Arkin, Aliza D'Agati, Linda Goodman, Cynthia Greene, Mark Silvermintz, Ferris Rinko, Donna Spector, Fran Hertz, Michelle Usiskin, Barbara Brodsky and Debbie Berlin.

Deborah stated that there are programs for prospective members, programs for continuing members of the JCV and next Friday we will be honoring the 45 members who have belonged twenty or more years. Deborah asked for people to volunteer to be buddies to new members and volunteers to sit at the welcome table.

Ritual committee-Susan Litwer, Director

Susan acknowledged the committee: Aaron Rosen, Aliza D'Agati, Barry Bye, Arlene Stolnitz, Carol Nathan Metzger, Dave Metzger, Rabbi Marci Vitkus, Joel Kreiss, Joel Reznick, Zvi Gellis, Michelle Usiskin, Ruth Bauers, Robin Williams, Celia Marion and Eli Rapaport

Susan gave the definition between a ritual and a habit. Letting us know how important rituals are.

Adult Learning-Keith Usiskin, Director

Keith thanked Eli for everything he has done.

Keith reported that there has been great participation in the adult learning activities and many people who helped to organize everything for a very musical year of programs. Keith spoke about the upcoming presentation "From Tel Aviv to Venice by Rabbi Meir Azari.

Keith also spoke about a scholar in residence program in the Fall to repair our Torah.

House and Grounds-Jeff Weisenberg, Director

Jeff spoke about what the committee will be spending time on in the future. Jeff said we need to concentrate on bringing the building up to date. The committee is working on capital improvements and planning towards the future and coordinating with other appropriate committees. They are also addressing technology needs, such as a media room.

Jeff introduced the committee by asking them to stand and hope that if anyone has any ideas to, please contact them.

Sisterhood-Robin Schoenewald, President

Robin thanked Eli for being her buddy when she joined the board. Robin reported that there were many who attended the My Roots presentation. There are about 15 members in the My Mishpachah group. JCV Blooms are working on beautifying the grounds. They offered 12 different classes this year with 43 Sisterhood members participating with 6 instructors. Sisterhood has over 130 members; 21 were new this year.

There were 110 different women who attended some event. They are continuing their joint program with Men's Club and Adult Learning. They also hope to meet with the Ukrainian Women again this year.

They have announced their new slate of officers, and the end of year luncheon is May 7.

Men's Club-Ed Lipman, President

Ed stated that there has been a robust schedule of Men's club events this year. Ed spoke about some of the upcoming events. He announced there are tickets available to see The Crucible followed by dinner, there is a bicycle tour followed by lunch open to the congregation and a two-hour Lemon Bay cruise.

They will be setting their agenda for next year on April 8, looking forward to a well-attended meeting. They will wrap up this year with their traditional Memorial Day picnic.

Memorial Park-David Cook, Chair

David named the members of the committee: Bob Aaron, Howard Berlin, Randy Brodsky, Jeffrey Chaitman, David Goldstein and Gerald Ronson.

David said that like every committee, it is very active. David spoke about how important it is to make funeral arrangements ahead of time. David explained the responsibilities of the committee. Upon notification of death, the committee assists the family with connecting to the rabbi and funeral homes as well as assist members and others about end-of-life needs including funeral and burial arrangements. They maintain the Memorial Park grounds, sell burial plots and maintain records of ownership. David suggested if there are questions, call a member of the committee.

Website committee-Deborah Rosen, Chair

Deborah recognized the committee: Dee Andrews, Selma Bitz, Cathy Bruni Schnitzer, Joan Attenberg and Aaron Rosen.

Strategic Planning committee-Deborah Rosen, Chair

The members of the committee are Rod Margolis, Ed Lipman, Eli Rapaport, Linda Cook, Harry Hertz, Robin Schoenewald, Jeff Weisenberg, Judy Rapaport, Victor Haran and Annette Blum. Some will rotate off but many will continue.

Deborah reported that the committee has done a lot. She thanked Eli for keeping us involved in this activity. Deborah stated that we have spent a lot of time determining who we are and where we will be going. The phrases that the congregants came up with for elevator pitches will be used in our marketing.

Going forward the committee will be working on developing a marketing plan and communication. We need to clearly articulate who we are and why someone should join the JCV.

Volunteers-Jeff Chaitman, Chair

Committee members are; Rabbi Marci Vitkus, Deborah Rosen, Robin Schoenewald, Keith Usiskin and Jeff Weisenberg

They held their first volunteer fair after our last Congregational meeting, and they hope to have another one. Jeff spoke about how important and fulfilling volunteering is. They produced a booklet with the volunteer opportunities at the JCV.

Food Festival-Marc Antine, Chair

Marc spoke about the history of the Food Festival, since he became involved. He stated that last year was a terrific year net profit was \$50,000. This year our gross income was down a little bit, our donations were down a little bit, but the expenses were down this year. Therefore, we netted approximately \$50,000. Keeping the expenses down was crucial. Marc reported the food festival hired a social media expert this year, which Marc felt made a difference. He feels we have a huge presence on social media. Even with the cost of the social media consultant, we were able to make a good profit. Marc stated that the parking situation was excellent this year, Beth Weisenberg created a parking plan that worked beautifully and the Men's club did a great job organizing and implementing it.

Next year the food festival will be on February 28 because our usual Sunday falls on Valentine's Day and the Super Bowl.

Giving Challenge-Keith Usiskin

Keith stated that Rod Margolis did hours of work to get us accepted into the Giving Challenge program. Rod explained that the Giving Challenge happens every two years and donations are matched up to \$100 per person from the Patterson Foundation. It will be April 15-16. It is a 24-hour challenge. Members of the congregation will be calling other members to let them know about the challenge. The appropriate link will be on the website to make the donation. There will be someone at the JCV to help to navigate this challenge, if needed.

New Business:

Election of candidates to the Board of Directors:

Officers: Two-year term

President-Linda Cook, 2nd Vice President-Marc Antine, Treasurer-Victor Haran

Directors: Three-year term:

Fundraising-Keith Usiskin, Membership-Selma Bitz,

Member-at-large: Two-year term

Ed Lipman

Eli Rapaport made the motion to approve the slate as presented; Voice Vote taken, Motion passed unanimously

Linda Cook, newly elected president, thanked Eli for everything he did for the JCV. Linda stated that our congregation has come a long way, and she believes we will continue to grow with community effort. Linda said, in these trying times it is important to connect with each other, that we are a family and that is what is most important about us. She is very proud to be elected and to serve as president.

Motion to adjourn made by Marc Antine, seconded by Richard Rinko, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 11:32am.

Submitted by,

Ferris Forman Rinko, Secretary

March 22, 2026