

Hello!

Thank you for agreeing to serve on Kavana's financial modeling team. We're thrilled to have so many talented people on board.

This letter introduces the team's members, our mandate, and briefly sketches out how we'll try to achieve that mandate. Finally, it points you to a bunch of background reading ahead of our first meeting.

First, the team: Our members are David A., Kathryn B., Marc Cohen, Steve C., Allan F., Melissa H., Diane H., Eli P., Simon R., Dan R., Lori S. and Jeff S. Lori and Jeff will be coordinating the project and helping drive the team forward.

Second, our mandate: To develop and recommend to Kavana's partner and participants a financial model for the community that is true to Kavana's identity and ensures a sustainable future.

Third, how we get there:

1. As a team, we need to develop a clear understanding of how the Kavana community understands its identity. This will involve analyzing Kavana's vision, mission and values and the feedback we've received from the community on the role of Kavana in their lives. We'll also need to reconcile sometimes conflicting values, such as personal involvement vs. professionalizing certain roles; an open community vs. requiring membership; dictating donation levels vs. decoupling money from membership.
2. We'll need to research and analyze existing alternative financial models. We'll encourage creativity and thinking outside the box of traditional Jewish or even any religious communities. We'll then work through the alternatives to achieve a model that comports with Kavana's identity and ensures that Kavana can meet its budget, and we'll recommend this model to Kavana's membership.
3. We also plan to bring our conversation to the larger community. Discussing money among community members is a difficult task, with different expectations on all sides. We hope to use intimate meetings, or "salons," in partners' homes to encourage a discussion of the role of money in our community.
4. Also with the community, we'll learn more about what Jewish tradition has to say, with educational programs designed by Rabbi Rachel to inform us about the role of money in Jewish life.

We envision three reporting milestones:

- End of June 2010 – We'll report on our organization and plan of action at Kavana's fiscal year-end meeting at the end of June.
- Fall 2010 – We'll report on alternative financial models at a meeting for Kavana partners and participants this fall.
- Winter 2011 – We'll deliver a final report and recommended financial model at Kavana's annual "State of the Union" meeting in February 2011.

We're very excited to work with you, and thank you again for volunteering on this important project.

Lori S. & Jeff S.