

Congregation Brith Shalom Board Meeting

Minutes

September 15, 2011

CBS President Milton Mosk called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Present:

Milton Mosk, Jeffrey Actor, Karen Lukin, Mitch Kreindler, Rosine Chappell, Steve Conaway, Jennifer Friedman, Peter Gingiss, Alan Goldsmith, Ellen Heffler, Seth Lerner, David Lewis, Tom Samuels, Randi Sonenshein, Wendy Conaway, Lisa Estes, Lisa Lowenstein, Frances Rubin, David Wald, Rabbi Ranon Teller, Cantor Mark Levine, Larry Estes, Rhoda Goldberg.

Rabbi Teller gave a d'var on Ki Tavo and spoke about the power of words. During the High Holidays the words we speak when we ask for forgiveness have great power. The High Holiday liturgy helps make the words we speak more powerful.

President's Report- Milton Mosk

Milton asked all Board Members to call a list of congregants and to extend a Shanah Tovah from the Board. This is also an opportunity to find out if there are any issues that need to be addressed and to say thank you for their support of CBS. Milton would like to see the Board call these members through the year to keep in contact with them.

The two renewal committees are continuing to progress.

Membership Update-Lisa Estes

Lisa described a new membership engagement strategy called *Being Social, Taking ACTION* that will focus on engaging currently uninvolved members in planning activities, creating volunteer activities and in making phone calls to involve more members in these activities. While making calls Board members can

use the opportunity to ask if people want to take part in this project. Email or call Lisa with the names of any people who would like to be involved. The people who are asked to take part should be people who are not currently involved in CBS activities.

Endowment Campaign Report-Larry Estes

An account has been opened with the Houston Jewish Community Fund. These funds will be accounted for in a separate set of books. The logistics of billing congregants for the Endowment are still being worked out.

Currently 88% of the Campaign Cabinet and 26 % of the Board has a made a financial commitment. Let Milton know if you have not yet received a solicitation from the Campaign Cabinet. There will be a separate Yom Kippur Appeal, but Milton will also speak about the Endowment Campaign.

To date:

Annual Giving adjustments-\$16,816

Endowment Commitments-\$185,000

Legacy Commitments-\$440,000

Financial Report-Larry Estes

Because dues will be collected over a ten month period, dues are coming in faster. At this time there is a \$48,000 surplus, which is normal for this point in the fiscal year.

Membership Report- 14 new members joined CBS between June 1 and August 30, 2011 for a total of \$16, 603 in dues. Five new members are sustaining; 9 are below that level. Over the past year 31 new members joined and 16 members left. This is mostly due to people moving and also to deaths of members.

Rabbi Teller and Lisa Estes follow up with members who have resigned.

New members receive calls from Lisa Estes and there is an attempt to involve members according to their interests.

91% of the annual giving from FY2011 has been received. Attempts are being made to collect the rest. The Year of the Torah pledges are coming in on schedule. \$ 137,657 in pledges are outstanding. \$65,000 is due in FY2011-2012 and \$72,657 is due in FY 2012-2013.

USCJ Update- Rabbi Teller

Milton and Rabbi Teller met with USCJ Executive Director, Steven Wernick and Regional Representative, Jay Weiner and had a good discussion. As USCJ goes through a transformational process Jay Weiner will be available to work with CBS to show the value of USCJ membership to CBS.

El Jay Waldman and Hy Warshaw will co-chair a committee that will lead the deliberation process to give guidance on the issue of whether CBS should withdraw from USCJ. Rabbi Teller and Cantor Levine will be teaching classes that will educate congregants about the Conservative movement. Representatives from USCJ will speak to congregants, to the Board and there will be town hall meetings . If the decision is made to leave USCJ a vote will be taken at a congregational meeting. A decision needs to be made by June 30, 2012. Dues to USCJ are approximately \$30,000.

Education Report-Larry Estes

Over the past four years there has been a 35% increase in enrollment. 151 students are currently enrolled. 26 new students enrolled and 16 students left because of graduation, enrolling in day school or moving out of town. Some of the reasons for this success is a result of low faculty turnover, a quality faculty, an innovative Mosad program and the overall success of the synagogue.

The Religious School is not self supporting. Approximately \$800.00 of the \$1900 cost per student is paid by parents.

Board Engagement-Milton Mosk

Milton would like to change how the Board functions, possibly having groups of Board members work on specific issues. One issue that needs to be addressed is the updating of the constitution. The Board tzedakah fund is sizable and needs to be used. A committee can determine the best use of these funds. A hands on Board Mitzvah Day and a Board retreat should also be planned.

At present there are 34 Board members. Is this the right size? If not, what is the right size? At one time new leadership came up through committees. This is no longer the case. Do committees need to be changed? Combined?

As the synagogue is led more by professionals, how do we engage our congregants and develop synagogue leadership for the future?

A suggestion was made to have committee chairs submit short reports that can be emailed to the entire Board. These could also be included in the online newsletter that is sent to the congregation.

The Board should be the strategic arm of CBS.

Old Business

None

New Business

Board members introduced themselves.

David Wald mentioned that the Men's Club will have a breakfast meeting on September 18. A representative from the October 30 Chili Cook-Off will be at the meeting.

Ron Klein is looking for volunteers to usher during the High Holidays.

David Lewis spoke about the CBS Mitzvah Day that will be held on December 11.

Good and Welfare

Matt Stein arranged for 100 old machzorim to be sent to Surinam.

The Goodmans have donated the new shelving behind the Bima

There will be new High Holiday ark curtains and a new shulchan cover.

There is a new monitor in the lobby and the sound system has been upgraded.

New commodes have been installed in the rest rooms in the social hall.

CBS will have a retreat for adults and teens the weekend of January 27 at camp Young Judea in Wimberley. Rabbi Naomi Levy will be the c scholar in residence and Lauren Henderson will be with the teens. Congregation Or Ami, Congregation Shearith Israel and possibly other conservative synagogues will participate.

\$58.00 in tzedakah was collected.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 by Milton Mosk.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhoda L. Goldberg

Secretary