

C O N G R E G A T I O N

Brith Shalom
 MEETING MINUTES- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date	December 15, 2016	Time	7:30 pm -8:30 pm
Staff	Larry Estes	Guests	Marc Malacoff
In Attendance	Jeffrey Actor, Debi Mishael, Karen Bernstein, Ken Podell, Dori Wind, Stephan Rubin, Milton Mosk, Steve Lerman, Aaron Howard, Seth Lerner, Jacobo Goldberg, Allan Goldstein, Iris Fisherman, Amy Halevy, Morris Narunsky,		
Next Meeting Date	January 19, 2017		

ATTACHMENTS TO MINUTES

No.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Agenda	CBS Board Meeting Agenda 12/15/16
2	Report	From Special Committee- Cantor's Renewal
3	Motion	Gift Acceptance and Dedication Motion
4	Pictures	Double sided page of pictures of furniture for donation

TZEDAKAH COLLECTED AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING	\$ 32.00
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MEETING ACTION ITEMS

No.	Action Item	Owner	Date
1	Send minutes from October/November	Debi	1/19/17
2	Tell Cherye-Ann of emails being "cc'd" to her instead of Rabbi	Jeff	
3	All board members are asked to solicit ads for the directory	ALL BOARD MEMBERS	ASAP
4	Defer Kitchen Issue to next meeting		

MOTIONS OR DECISIONS MADE	1ST / 2ND RESULTS
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Board members and congregants should be encouraged to honor Rabbi Teller's sabbatical and NOT to e-mail or "cc" him while he is away unless it is an emergency. Cherye-Ann can be copied on correspondence you would like Rabbi to see upon his return.	
Vote to accept the report from the Special Committee to Review Cantor Levine	PASSED UNANIMOUSLY
Motion to instruct the EC to begin negotiating a continued contract with Cantor Mark Levine.	Allan/Howard PASSED UNANIMOUSLY
Motion to accept the recommendation of the committee to negotiate a 10 year term of contract with Cantor Levine with the appropriate "out-clauses".	Steve L./Dori/Aaron 14 Yes/1 Abstain PASSED
Motion to accept a variance on the current gift policy and accept donated furniture.	Ken/Dori PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Thursday, December 15th, 2016

- I. **President's Welcome-** Thank you for attending and we appreciate everyone's willingness to start late to accommodate the shivah minyan for Blanche Roubein.
 - A. **Minutes for approval (October meeting)-** will be sent next week via email and approved next month
 - B. **Observations –** skipped to expedited the late meeting

- II. **Clergy and Education updates-** Rabbi is on Sabbatical, Cantor Levine is not available this month. Cantor Levine is giving a talk at the J tonight and unavailable to attend the Board meeting.

- III. **Old/New Business/Reports and Updates**
 - A. **Upcoming Rabbinic Sabbatical – "Rules of Engagement"**- There was a lovely send off for the Rabbi on Shabbat. Jeff suggested rules for engaging with Rabbi during his sabbatical. We normally "cc" the rabbi on emails. Let's **not cc him during the sabbatical**. All communications are off unless it is an emergency. He will be apprised of critical issues but we should not include him. Milton recommended that we "cc" Cherye-Ann instead. She can keep a file for his future reference. Jeff will communicate this to Cherye-Ann.

 - B. **Update: Personnel - 360 review –** The EC has completed the 360 review of the personnel. Up to 70 people provided input for Rabbi, Cantor and the Executive Director. Jeff and Milton met with all three last week to review the results. Overall, the feedback was fantastic. Constructive ideas and goals to move forward will be created for them going forward. Thank you to Milton for spearheading this effort.

 - C. **Report: Ed Director Renewal –**Aaron Howard presented the report from the Ed Director Review committee. Bottom line is that the feedback was overwhelmingly positive about Cantor Levine. Aaron explained the process which is detailed in the committee report attached. Recommendation from the committee: Cantor Levine has expressed his desire to retire here and to play a different role as emeritus educator past retirement stage. The relationship between the clergy is uniquely positive and symbiotic. Jeff thanked the committee for their work and asked for a vote to accept the report with gratitude. Vote was unanimous. Jeff asked to separate the recommendation to rehire Cantor from the recommendation to hire a future professional Education Director. Discussion ensued. Currently, the plan is that the new contract will begin at the end of the current contract. However, there is a possibility that the contract can begin this June, if negotiated to the benefit of all. Rabbi Teller's next contract negotiations will begin in June or possibly when the Rabbi returns from his sabbatical. Some issues raised in the discussion include the length of the term, the unlikely possibility that there will be a clergy change in the future or future financial issues. One of the reasons Cantor has asked for the contract to be renewed early is because currently, his contract is up for renewal at the same time as Rabbi Teller's contract. Jeff will negotiate the contract, Amy will write, review and the contract. Cantor Levine will have his representative.
Motion: Allan moves that we vote to engage the EC to negotiate with Cantor Levine to renew. Milton 2nd. Unanimous.
Motion: Steve Lerman made a motion to accept the recommendation of the committee to negotiate a 10 year term of contract with the appropriate "out-clauses". Dori Wind 2nd Aaron Howard 2nd. Discussion ensued. Vote 1 Abstain. All 14 in favor. Iris commented on the "awesomeness" of this kind of an issue!

 - D. **Update: Gala 60th celebration –** Invitations are going out. Over 300 will go to friends and contacts of Sandra Weiner specifically. General invitations went out this week. Directory and tribute sales are going on now. This is the focus now. The tributes in the directory will focus on the directory/synagogue. Tributes in the Gala booklet will focus on Sandra. Marc Malacoff came to the meeting and commented on how much work George Engelhart has done and is doing. Ads are slow to come in. Marc and George cannot be the only ones doing this. **All board members are asked to solicit at list one ad.** The deadline has been extended one week. cbstdirectory@cbs.org Contact Marc or George if you have questions. Stephan asked us all to "talk it up" Dec. 30 is the deadline. ½ page is \$400. Jeff asked to place an ad from the board of Trustees in honor of 60th. Funds were collected at the meeting to cover the ad.

 - E. **Update: Membership analysis since September –** Jeff passed out the copy of the membership analysis. Our goal was to increase membership by 5%. We have added 17 member units since September 1. We are growing at an amazing pace. We will need to keep up with meeting the needs of our members. We are unique in this regard around the country. We are growing and we are not "aging". We are growing the next generation. Most of the new members are not at the sustaining membership level but they are poised to grow for the future. 556 member units. 2 Member units have resigned but stayed as "Friends of Synagogue" members.

 - F. **Report: Israel Advocacy-** Steve Lerner reported that the Men's Club, in conjunction with the Israel Advocacy group have invited a congressman to speak on "how to effectively advocate to a congressman". AIPAC

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conference will be in March. The synagogue bought a block of tickets at a discounted rate of \$399. Please contact Steve if you are interested in attending. Cantor Levine is attending AIPAC. Rabbi will be going on the Federation Israel trip and encourages others to attend. There is an Anti-BDS bill by Texas Legislature to boycott the boycott! Israel Advocacy thinks this is a very positive step. The committee wants to send letters to encourage our local representatives to vote for it and to encourage congregants to do the same. There was some discussion.

- G. **Report: USCJ General Assembly of Kehillot** –Morris reported that he was part of the teleconference to vote for the board of the USCJ. Some of the highlights include: 5 new Kehillot and the Reorganization of USCJ. Many Masoroti congregations were affected by the fires in Israel. Inter-marriage rate among Jews is moving up 58%. It is imperative for synagogues to respond to surveys. Allan commented that Richard Kammerman is on the national board
- H. **Report: Kitchen** – Differed this issue to the next meeting. Issue was raised after the Teller bake date about the state of the kitchen. It will be addressed at the next meeting.
- I. **Administration -Internal resources – new personnel** - Denise Moreno has left the employ of CBS and Lori Campbell has started. She sits by Larry's office.
- J. **Facility Report** – Ken brought a motion. Current gift acceptance policy needs a variance in order to accept a donation of furniture. We need to move the new furniture here at a cost of less than \$500. Dori 2nd the motion. All in favor. Motion passes.
There has been a request to move the "Minyanaire of the year" plaque to a more visible location. Short discussion. Result: It needs to fit the policy currently in place. All plaques must fit within the standard.
- K. Morning minyan men's club and Larry Estes will be putting new blinds in the chapel to replace the broken ones. They are \$80 short of funds. Several board members made up the difference at the meeting.

IV. Financial Info

- A. **Update: FYTD Income Statement/Cash status** –will send report for us to see.
- B. Milton reported that our Line of Credit is currently at "0". Our cash reserves are low and any payments members make early would be appreciated.

V. Good and Welfare – Adjournment

- A. Noah Mishael had his first "by" line on the cover of the JHV
- B. Ellen Fiesinger and committee are given great appreciation for their work.
- C. Appreciate Mark Levine for taking over during Rabbi's Sabbatical. There were 2 funerals and major event within the first week.
- D. Congratulation to Richard Kammerman on his USCJ nomination.

Report from the Special Committee – Cantor Levine’s Review

CHARGE: Congregation president, Jeffrey Actor appointed the following people to the Cantor’s Contract Review Committee in accordance with the constitutional requirements.

COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair: Ellen B. Fiesinger	Education Council Chair
Lisa Lowenstein	Education Council
Aaron Howard	Education Council
Sheldon Weisfeld	Religious Practices Chair
Rachel Silton Robinson-	Religious School Teacher
Debi Mishael	Executive Committee, Education Council
Amir Halevy	Member at large

PROCESS: The committee met to discuss their charge and to begin the process of gathering information. Input was reviewed from the following sources:

360 Survey Results
Membership Survey Results
Religious School Parent Surveys
Interim Plan Survey Results

The committee interviewed several staff members to ascertain opinions on Cantor Levine’s past job performance and thoughts on renewal of his contract. Cantor Marc Levine

Rabbi Ranon Teller
Executive Director, Larry Estes
Assistant Educational Director, Anna Blum

Representatives of:

Teachers
Religious Practices Committee
Sisterhood & Men’s Club
Chai Initiative
Tikkun Olam Committee

RESULTS: *The information gathered about Cantor Levine’s job performance was overwhelmingly positive. Cantor Mark Levine is well respected, admired and loved by this congregation.* The few areas of concern were consistent, both from congregants and from Cantor Levine himself. It was very clear to the committee that the number and scope of responsibilities assigned to Cantor Levine is considerable. There was general concern that he did not have enough administrative support and that the Assistant Educator position, as it currently stands, requires a good deal of his time to train and oversee.

STRENGTHS:

- shows a genuine integrity and love for others.
- excels at working with older elementary children, middle school, high school and adults.
- is always well prepared and organized. He manages his time and delegates appropriately.
- has a profound passion for Jewish learning and Jewish living.
- is able to fulfill clergy functions both on the bima and in pastoral care as needed.
- has great people skills. He is approachable and has a positive temperament for all.
- he and Rabbi Teller have a strong level of respect for each other and a positive working relationship.
- is active in the larger Jewish community and is a strong representative of CBS.
- has expanded programming with Young Professionals providing a renewed energy to the group.
- has engaged a significant number of congregants in Tikkun Olam Projects, expanding our outreach.
- spearheads the Chai Initiative to reach members in new and meaningful ways.
- has increased parent satisfaction with the B’nai Mitzvah experience because of his involvement.
- is a positive role model.

SOME CONGREGANT QUOTES:

“Cantor Mark Levine is HaShem’s gift to Congregation Brith Shalom!”

“A good leader who seems passionate about teaching Judaism with respect and knowledge.”

“I think he is a great asset to the shul, and his leadership is one of the reasons I joined CBS.”

“...CBS is extremely blessed to have a person with Cantor Levine’s talent, educational background and personality and strongly feel that it is essential that CBS renew his contract, preferably on a long-term basis.”

“Cantor Levine is an A+ mensch.”

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“It is very rare for one person to have all of those talents and the personality to be able to handle any or all of those roles on any given day.”

- WEAKNESSES:
- is not as comfortable working with younger students or young families.
 - does not provide enough innovative programming for the primary school grades.
 - can get stressed in last minute or crisis situations

COMMITTEE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the recommendation of the Special Committee to Review Cantor’s Contract that Cantor Marc Levine be renewed for a term of 10 years with a review plan for transition and succession at year 8. The committee recommends that the contract include appropriate “out clauses” for such circumstances as CBS financial emergency, health concerns that do not allow fulfillment of duties, or changes in clergy. The committee had a positive consideration of an Emeritus contract but does not recommend negotiating that at this time.

Furthermore, after review and consideration of information gathered by the committee, it is the strong recommendation of the committee that the Board of Trustees consider the future hire of a Professional Jewish Educator to fulfill the position of Religious School Director/Young Family Programming in place of the current Assistant Educational Director position. Cantor Levine would continue to be the Educational Director at Large and supervise this staff position. This would have the double benefit of providing more time for Cantor Levine to offer adult education and rabbinical support (deeds that highlight his strengths) while providing a strong support for the growing number of young families attending Brith Shalom.

CONGREGATION BRITH SHALOM CONSTITUTION

Article IX

Section 2. Contract Renewal

- A. The President shall appoint a special committee (and its chairperson) to meet with the Educational Director and make recommendations concerning renewal and terms of contract. The committee shall consist of seven to nine members, the majority of whom shall be members of the Education Council, including members of standing committees of the Education Council. All of the members of this special committee shall be subject to approval of the Board. The committee shall report its recommendations to the Board at a regular or special meeting at least four months prior to the end of the current term of the educational director's contract. If the recommendation of the re-election committee is to be made at a regular meeting of the Board, notice that this issue will be presented to the Board shall be given to the Board no less than ten days in advance of the regular meeting.
- B. At the meeting, the Board shall consider the committee's report. The contract of the educational director shall be renewed if renewal and the material terms of the contract are approved by at least sixty percent of those members of the Board present and voting.
- C. A written renewal contract shall be entered into with the educational director based on the material terms approved by the Board.