

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



Brith Shalom

MEETING MINUTES- BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date	Thursday, December 17, 2015	Time	7:02 pm -8:45 pm
Staff	Rabbi Teller, Larry Estes	Guests	
In Attendance	Jeffrey Actor, Debi Mishael, Milton Mosk, Moshe Even, Ellen Fiesinger, Aaron Howard, Steve Lerman, Sheldon Weisfeld, Allan Goldstein, Dani Roisman, Iris Fisherman, Karen Bernstein, Stephan Rubin, Steve Conaway, Jacobo Goldberg, Amy Halevy (via phone)		
Next Meeting Date	January 21, 2016		

HANDOUTS AT MEETING		
No.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	FPC Report	Facilities Planning Committee/Subcommittee on Security Needs at CBS
2	Motion 1	Motion on Life Insurance address
3	Motion 2	Motion dealing with open carry law
4	Motion 3	Motion on security personnel
5	Finance	Cash Flow: July 15-Nov 15

TZEDAKAH COLLECTED AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING	\$
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MEETING ACTION ITEMS			
No.	Action Item	Owner	Date
1	Contact Larry Estes if you can help with the Phone-a-thon Sunday	All Board Members	ASAP
2	Solicit at least one ad for the Cantor's Concert (See Stephan R. if you have questions)	All Board Members	ASAP
3	Membership committee report next at next month's meeting	Peter Gingiss	January 21

MOTIONS OR DECISIONS MADE	1 ST / 2 ND RESULTS
CBS Board of Trustees (Board) approves and authorizes its President or his designee to take all necessary and appropriate steps to provide an updated mailing address and to execute any appropriate documents evidencing the mailing address. (see full motion text below)	Dani Roisman/Aaron Howard MOTION PASSED
Resolved , that with the exception of active military personnel, Congregation Brith Shalom is officially declared a weapon-free zone. Be it further resolved that this policy actively communicated to the congregation and to appropriate security personnel and law enforcement.	Dani Roisman /Moshe Even MOTION PASSED
Resolved , that the CBS Board of Trustees (Board) approves and authorizes its administrative professional staff to take all necessary and appropriate steps to provide security personnel, all of whom are armed during the periods of time when a large group meeting, program or event occurs. 1 st Sheldon, 2 nd Ellen.	Sheldon Weisfeld/Ellen Fiesinger MOTION TABLED

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- I. **President's Welcome** Jeff made a tzedakah appeal.
 - A. **Minutes for approval (Nov meeting)** Moved and 2nd. Approved
- II. **Clergy Report/Educational Report** - Rabbi Teller spoke about his involvement with teens involved in a 12-step program with the Church next door. One of their steps is to speak with clergy and he is participating once-a-month. He is inspired by his involvement and the depth that religion can play in the life of those in crisis and searching for guidance. -Cantor Levine is on vacation this week and Rabbi Teller will be out from Dec 22-Jan 5. Rabbi reported on Cantor Levine's work with the Chai Initiative. Sage Shabbat which will honor members 80 years and above is scheduled for January 23.

III. Financial Report

- A. **Update: Cash flow status** -Jeff reported that we are going to get a different glimpse of the budget each month. This month is a cash flow status. Milton wants to provide a good look at the finances and in the past we have not seen this type of view. The cash flow sheet was distributed and Milton explained it. Money in the Endowment does not count towards cash on hand. Cash on hand at the end of November is negative and we borrowed from our line of credit. Historically, we have a positive cash flow for the first 6 months of the year. This year our situation is worse. We are not receiving receivables as quickly as we have in the past. One of the ways to combat that is a phone-a-thon to call folks to ask them to consider paying in advance. We currently have \$230,000 in outstanding receivables. This amount reflects pledged dues with only a portion of the amount being in arrears. Our line of credit is half the size it was with the old loan so this can potentially be a real cash flow problem. Contact Larry if you are interested in helping with the phone-a-thon. Larry said there are not too many who are 60 days or more in arrears. (Milton was asked for endowment balance and total debt and AR balance on future finance statements.)
- B. **Status: Houston Jewish Community Foundation – Life & Legacy** - Happy to report that we have reached our goal for this year and we are the top synagogue in this city for Life and Legacy. We are at 23 currently.
- C. **Resolution: Life Insurance declaration-** We have an insurance policy the synagogue owns on a member. We need to validate the address of the congregation and it must be done by a corporate resolution.

Whereas the Congregation Brith Shalom (CBS) owns that certain life insurance policy insuring the life of one of its members; and **Whereas** the insurance company providing coverage needs to validate CBS's address and requires a corporate resolution to be part of any form submission.
Now therefore, Resolved, that the CBS Board of Trustees (Board) approves and authorizes its President or his designee to take all necessary and appropriate steps to provide an updated mailing address and to execute any appropriate documents evidencing the mailing address. Dani 1st Aaron 2nd. **Approved**

IV. Old/New Business/Updates

- A. **Update: Cantors Concert** - Stephan reports that the committee is working well and \$117,000 has been raised in pledges and donations. David Krohn is energized and dedicated and is pouring his heart and soul into this event. It has great personal meaning to him. We are all encouraged to talk to others about this. It will be a multi-media presentation. It should be very well attended. Stephan encourages all board members to not only contribute but to find one ad each. Contact those businesses you patronize. David was appreciative that the Board has funded the "free" tickets and he is using that information to encourage other donors. We have surpassed the goal for the Board. Marilyn Hassid (Assistant Executive Director from the JCC) has agreed to send the information to her 3,000+ contacts. Additional publicity scheduled for Jewish Herald Voice and maybe for the Chronicle as well.
- B. **Policy – President's motion** - Jeff presented a series of issues for the board to discuss. In order we will address:
 - I. Policy on Weapons for the Synagogue,
 - II. Facilities committee looked at changes in Gun Law and how it affects us,
 - III. Current security procedures.

This is a motion that has come to the Board after much research and discussions (>13 months) from the Facilities committee, the clergy, the EC and with input from many congregants. Jeff presented the following motion:

Whereas a Texas state law that will take effect on January 1, 2016 regarding open carry possession of concealed hand guns; and **Whereas** reflecting the Synagogue's traditional role as a spiritual place of religious safety and sanctuary, and recognizing that the Synagogue serves as an institution of education. **Now therefore, Resolved**, that with the exception of active military personnel, Congregation Brith Shalom is officially declared a weapon-free zone. Be it further resolved that this policy actively

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communicated to the congregation and to appropriate security personnel and law enforcement. Dani Roisman 1st, Moshe Evan 2nd

Discussion ensued. How this policy will be communicated to the congregation and community was one issue discussed. The usage and types of signs was discussed. Also discussed was the opinion that making us a gun-free zone does not meet the goal of increasing the safety of our synagogue. Jeff received quite a bit of feedback from various congregants on all sides of the issue.

Dani called the question, Karen 2nd. VOTE: 7 against / 4 in favor / 0 abstentions. Discussion to continue. Motion to table the discussion. VOTE: 6 for / 3 against / 0 abstentions

Moshe and Stephan presented the Facilities Planning Committee (FPC) report. The committee interviewed informed individuals. They have done a thorough job in researching the issue and the changes in the Texas Law. FPC was asked to look at synagogue security. The open carry issue came up as a main concern. Stephen discussed the desire to non-politicize the issue and to address security. He worked with the head of our security company to evaluate the use of guards and general security of the synagogue. Stephen tried in all conversations to steer clear of the political debate and focus on safety. Jeff reiterated that the board asked the FPC to come up with a position independent of what other Jewish organizations in the community are doing. However, this information was provided but not used in determining a final decision.

Stephan reported that the final policy recommended by the committee centers around the Synagogue being a "School." Both the GMS Preschool and the Religious School make the synagogue building a school. The law states that guns are not allowed on school premises. The GMS has a charter that includes it in a special category under the Texas law. The need for a sign is mitigated because we are a school. The **committee recommends increasing clear and conspicuous signage that informs the public that CBS property includes a school or educational institution on its premises, no other action should be taken by CBS.** (See Report presented by Stephan and attached.) This recommendation has an element of "Shalom Bayit" in that it meets the basic needs of those on either side of this issue. Focusing on school signs instead of gun-free signs allows us to keep the building gun-free without getting into 2nd amendment issues. Rabbi thanked everyone for keeping the discussion respectful and for everyone's willingness to listen to each other. He fully supports the synagogue being a place of peace and security.

Motion to un-table the discussion called by: Allan 2nd by Sheldon.
Allan called the question. 2nd Stephen

Motion VOTE: 10 for / 4 against / 0 abstentions. MOTION PASSED

Steven moves that we accept the report from FPC. VOTE: Approved.

Steve motions that we accept recommendation of the report to post clear and conspicuous signage that informs the public that CBS property includes a school or educational institution on its premises, no other signage will be posted. 2nd Aaron and Sheldon in unison. VOTE: 13 for / 0 against / 1 abstention

A motion was presented about security. Jeff is signing a contract with our security company reflecting our desire to have the highest level of security guards.

Stephen reported that security is not just about guns. There are many events that occur outside of religious services and school activities that currently don't have guards. The questions was raised, are our members secure. During small group meetings the front doors are locked and people cannot get in unless someone lets them in or they have a key. When an event is happening and the doors are left open and guards are not present, the building is not as secure as it could be.

Whereas The Congregation Brith Shalom facilities hosts a variety of large group meetings, programs and events for itself, its auxiliaries and committees, and non-CBS groups; and **Whereas** It is in the best interest of CBS that there be sufficient security during those times when access to the facility includes doors that are unlocked so as to allow participants to have ready and free access to the building. **Now therefore, Resolved**, that the CBS Board of Trustees (Board) approves and authorizes its administrative professional staff to take all necessary and appropriate steps to provide security personnel, all of whom are armed during the periods of time when a large group meeting, program or event occurs.
1st Sheldon, 2nd Ellen.

Motion was tabled. Sheldon 1st and Milton 2nd

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The motion will be addressed next month with time to look at some of the relevant issues raised during the discussion including funding and liabilities.

- C. **Info: Facilities – security contract, bimah chairs, stars, and more!** Donors were found to recover the seats on the Bima. After the first of the year this will be handled. Also small stars will be added to the flower holders and to the top of the Israeli flag pole.
 - D. **Ongoing Item: Contract renewal status** Renewal contacts in process for Cantor Levine and David Krohn.
 - E. **Committee reports – (Membership, Sisterhood, RPC, and more as requested,** Sisterhood reports that work is being done to coordinate Mishloach Manot.
 - F. **Mitzvah Day impressions** 107 participated. Report next month from Cantor Levine.
 - G. **RPC made a decision** to provide impetus to Rabbi Teller to be more involved in social issues. Rabbi Teller asked for guidance from the RPS about this. The decision is an encouragement to deal with world events in sensitive way.
 - H. **Membership Committee** – Peter will come next month to share some of his committees work.
 - I. **Adult Education-** Aaron Howard mentioned a series of Adult Education opportunities.
- V. **Good and Welfare – Adjournment**
- A. New Tzedakah Box dedicated at Mitzvah Day – Evens and Goodmans
 - B. Diversity outreach – Nostra Aetate Discussion with St. Theresa Catholic Church
 - C. Still kvelling from little Milty.....Still kvelling from Jake! Mazel Tov to the Teller family!
 - D. May the Force be with you!
 - E. Kuddos to FPC committee for 12 months of work in preparation for this meeting. Stephan reported that working with Moshe and his committee has been a pleasure. It has always been done with respect.
 - F. Hanukkah Men’s Club Hanukkah Dance was wonderful. Many volunteers were integral...Scott Chanin, Sewell Martin, Steve Conaway, Stephan Rubin, **???**others?
 - G. Yom Limmud is coming and great adult education opportunities
 - H. Milton Thanks Lori and Stephan, Etna and Allan for their hard work and dedication to Cantor’s Concert. The committee has been dedicated and is working well together.
 - I. Friday Night Ruach theme is Greece tomorrow night. Lori Rubin and Gavi Roisman are hard at work.

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Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.