

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



Brith Shalom

Board of Trustees- Meeting Minutes

Date	March 23, 2017	Time	7:00 pm -9:11 pm
Staff	Rabbi Teller, Cantor Levine, Larry Estes	Guests	
In Attendance	Jeffrey Actor, Debi Mishael, Ellen Feisinger, Ken Podell, Milton Mosk, Dani Roisman, Steve Rubin, Allan Goldstein, Iris Fisherman (Amy Halevy on the phone)		
Next Meeting Date	April 6, 2017 ** special	May 18, 2017 GENERAL MEETING	

ATTACHMENTS TO MINUTES

No.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Agenda	Agenda for General Board Meeting
2	Sabbatical Report	Rabbi Teller provided 2 page report/reflections
3	Budget Presentation	Fiscal Year 2018 Revisions to Proposed Budget (v4)

TZEDAKAH COLLECTED AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING	\$29
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MEETING ACTION ITEMS

No.	Action Item	Owner	Date
1	Assist with Oneg Sponsorship solicitation	Iris	
2	Form a Visionary Committee for future relationship with BMS	Debi	
3			
4			

MOTIONS OR DECISIONS MADE	1 ST / 2 ND RESULTS
Additional (early) Board Meeting on April 6 at 7:30pm to further discuss the budget.	

I. President's Welcome

A. **Approval of Minutes** -Approved

B. **Observations** – Jeff was asked to participate in a “Moot Beit Din.” A Judaic judicial mock court. 25 different schools came in to Houston for a Shabbaton and the students were given a case prior to arrival. Jeff said it was one of the most exciting things he has been asked to participate in...it was academic Judaic exercises. Rachel Siltan-Robinson, Mike Engelhart, Gavi Roisman, were also asked to judge. It was dynamic and exciting. Jeff also welcomed back Rabbi Teller from his Sabbatical.

II. Clergy and Education updates

A. **Rabbi – Sabbatical report** – (Shared at the end of the meeting) Rabbi commented that he met many Rabbis along his Sabbatical and many noted that they wish they had the opportunity to take a Sabbatical. He thanked us

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again for making this possible. He presented a prezi video about his visits to “Best Practices” congregations and experiences.

Best Practices discovered on Sabbatical Journey included 4 main areas

- I. Space, Environment, Location
- II. Led Shared Ownership
- III. Intention- Purpose, Meaning, Spirit
- IV. Music

Rabbi began in New York at Machon Hadar –Niggun Intensive, HIR Avi Weiss’s Shul, Romemu: Rabbi David Ingber. He pointed out some unique features of each location. After New York he went to LA to visit IKAR with Sharon Brous. She works with Hillel Tigay who has a very contemporary music approach. He also went to Colorado and visited HEA (Hebrew Educational Alliance) with Rabbi Bruce Dolin and OLALA Jewish Renewal rabbinic retreat. In St. Louis Rabbi attended the SLBC-Song leader’s boot camp. Rick Recht is building a network of song leaders and emergent congregations. Pure energy can describe SLBC. Finally stop on the journey was joining the Israel Mission. Rabbi visited Kehillat Tzion: Rabbi Tamar Elad-Appelbaum, Sha’arey Chesed-shtibl and culminated his Sabbatical with the Houston Mission to Israel with davening at the kotel.

Jeff thanked Rabbi Teller for sharing his experience and asked him to let us know how we can help him integrate his new vision into the CBS community going forward.

- B. **Ed Director - updates (just the cliff notes)**- Recently hosted a USY convention. It was wonderful. Jonas Actor helped and Mark thanked Emma Feisinger and Anna Blum for their assistance also. Young Professionals will have a mock seder with Cantor Levine.
New Member’s Brunch Sunday morning at 10:30 am. Please attend to welcome them or share your committee information. Men’s Club is preparing breakfast.

III. Old/New Business/Reports and Updates

- A. **Results of USCJ General Assembly Vote**- We discussed this at a previous meeting. The USCJ (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism) proposed changes to the bi-laws concerning membership of Non-Jews. The resolution passed fits well with our current practices so there is nothing for us to do at this time. The resolution was geared to non-Jews who are part of an interfaith marriage or on the journey to becoming a Jew and in the process. We have not addressed the possibility of a non-Jew joining on their own. It may arise at some time in the future. Rabbi mentioned that the USCJ resolution passed by a large majority. Brith Shalom did not officially cast a ballot. (See <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1KpoQnyFcljQjBBZDI1bktJNOU/view>)
- B. **Kitchen Discussion** –Years ago there was some research done about modifying the kitchen. It was put off to the future. This may be the time to take another look at that. Several members have brought the idea of remodeling the kitchen to the board. A walk through was held with Larry and Ken Podell. Nothing has been decided. Larry has been authorized to look into some plans. Jeff approached Sisterhood with the possibility of addressing a matching grant to kick off the kitchen renovation. Jeff is asking for board members to assist the facilities committee to work on this project.

Larry has met with the architect that we worked with in the past. The architect will do a basic vision and estimate. Plans, timelines, and costs will need to be gathered. We will also need to address the business model of the kitchen once it is remodeled. Do we go back to the model of having a designated kitchen staff or return to the model of outsourcing the catering? A kitchen committee will need to flush out many of these issues. Most likely, any remodel will need to happen next summer since we would need to work around b’nei mitzvah schedules.

- C. **Budget 2018 presentation** –Milton made a presentation about the budget. He explained the 9 page document which includes... FAC has been working on this for several months and Larry and Milton were working for a few months prior to that. In the past, we have passed budgets assuming big fundraisers and then we operate with a deficit. We need to address and start the discussion that we cannot continue to spend dollars without the means to pay for them. One proposal includes not having Shabbat luncheons any longer. This would be a major change to our programs but the discussion needs to be held. The FAC wants the board to help decide the plan to balance our budget and be fiscally responsible.

One change includes increasing the Sustaining Level of membership from \$2,975 to \$3,100.

4 Windows and 5 Mantels have been sold as part of the Mitzvah Campaign. The intent is to raise \$600,000 over a 5 year period of time. Milton commented that there is a fundraiser in the proposed budget but a date and chair should be found prior to the annual meeting so we are not just using a fundraiser as a placeholder for a deficit.

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Discussion and questions were entertained. Clarification on some of the budget numbers and discussions about FAC proposed changes occurred. Below is a list of changes that are reflected in the proposed budget.

HIGHLIGHTS OF FAC PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BUDGET

- No new computer purchases
- No membership development
- No staff development
- No conference attendance
- No professional services
- No advertising for RS, HH, FNR
- No funding for Kiddush luncheons
- Reduced funding for program related food.
- No funding for repairs/maintenance
- Reduced funding for laundry
- No funding for programming
- S'hood funding for Kiddush luncheons not received

Cantor Levine commented that it is important to thank the FAC for their hard work and dedication in this difficult task. He continued to share thoughts about our "business." Our product is intangible. We are doing very well in many areas. Rabbi Teller celebrated 10 years a few years back. Cantor Levine will soon celebrate his 10 year anniversary with CBS and Larry will celebrate a few years after that. In our community that is special. Cantor went on to give a mini-state of the synagogue presentation about all the wonderful things we are doing and have done.

He included a briefing of how well we are doing in terms of long term financial health including legacy, mitzvah campaign, benefactors, amazing fundraisers for the past two years spearheaded by Lori and Steve Rubin. They were commended again about their dedication. Cantor encourages us to do more fundraising to create an ownership of our programs. By looking only through the lenses of the budget –it does not reflect the actual events. He encourages us to INVEST in our future and not look at it as SPENDING. We are a religiously diverse community and we need more opportunities for programing not a reduction. (See attached report)

Discussion about the next steps. There was some discussion about passing a budget with this board with the provision that the incoming board meet to discuss what they are willing to accept as their charge and call a synagogue meeting within 60 days if changes are needed.

It is necessary to have an early board meeting at 7:30 pm on April, 6 after the EC meeting to discuss more fundraising / budget issues. Ad hoc work meeting of the board. Some discussion about opening this meeting to a few other synagogue individuals who might have valuable input.

Milton reminded us that it has become a standard event to hold an open forum meeting to discuss the budget after the board approves to present the budget and prior to the annual meeting.

Iris volunteered to assist with the oneg sponsorship solicitation.

- D. **UOS-GMS – report-** We have had a landlord/tenant relationship with the GMS preschool. We recently met with UOS representatives. They are not planning to include the preschool in their building plans. GMS has the opportunity to grow forward outside of the UOS umbrella. GMS is now in the process of redoing their charter and becoming a separate entity. GMS has also asked us to think about a vision going forward for a different type of partnership with CBS. We will be looking to participate in a visioning in conjunction with GMS. Jeff asked for board members to sit on a visionary committee. Debi agreed to assist with the Visionary Committee. Ellen Feisinger will represent the Ed council on that committee. Goal is to have the committee in place before the next meeting. Vision in parallel and then together. (Currently the net profit from GMS is \$30,000.) Nada Chandler is the chair of the GMS.
- E. **Constitutional Revisions** -tabled
- F. **Other updates and Reports**-tabled

IV. Financial Info

- A. **Update: FYTD Income Statement/Cash status** -tabled
- B. **Updates: Financial report**-tabled

V. Good and Welfare – Adjournment

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- A. Date of General meeting is May 18th
- B. Next Meeting: April 20th, 2017
- C. Alan also mentioned that Richard Kammerman commented on Jeff's expertise on the Moot Court
- D. Alan's son is engaged
- E. Drove's had twin boys
- F. Anna Blum's grandmother passed away. We send our thoughts to her and her family.