

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



Brith Shalom

MEETING MINUTES- BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date	May 5, 2016	Time	7:00 pm -9:17 pm
Staff	Rabbi Teller, Cantor Levine, Larry Estes	Guests	Eljay Waldman
In Attendance	Jeffrey Actor, Milton Mosk, Stephan Rubin, Ellen Fiesinger, Aaron Howard, Mitch Kreindler, Dani Roisman, Steve Lerman, Allan Goldstein, Seth Lerner, Jacobo Goldberg, Iris Fisherman, Amy HaLevy, Karen Bernstein, Debi Mishael		
Next Meeting Date	Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be on Thursday, May 19, 2016		

HANDOUTS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING

No.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Agenda	Meeting agenda
2	Minutes	Minutes from March 17, 2016 meeting
3	Shavuot Flyer	2016 Tikkun Leil Shavuot schedule and info
4	Tikkun Olam Card	Prayer for Healing
5	Tikkun Olam	Spring 2016 brochure of activities

TZEDAKAH COLLECTED THE MEETING

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MEETING ACTION ITEMS

No.	Action Item	Owner	Date
1	Notify congregation of the availability of the final Assessment on the Implementation of Interim Plan		
2	Send notification to congregation of the motion to retain current staffing model and the vote to implement will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.		

MOTIONS OR DECISIONS MADE

1ST / 2ND RESULTS

Vote of Confidence for the Financial Affairs Committee and thank you to the committee members for their hard work.	Approved with One abstention MOTION PASSES
Motion to raise current beginning level of Benefactors to \$4,000 starting level. Anyone who is currently not a Benefactor and wishes to become one may enter at the current \$3,600 level for the next two years after which time it will go up to \$4,000. Benefactors will not be charged the building fund.	Mitch moved/2 nd by Steve Lerman 11 in favor / 1 opposed 1 abstention MOTION PASSES
Motion to accept the report prepared by the Interim Review Committee, to discharge the committee and thank the members for their work. (Please note: Accept does not mean adopt or approve)	Stephan moved/2 nd Amy Approve 14 / Abstention 1 MOTION PASSES
The Board has determined that the interim plan has been successful and therefore recommends to the congregation that the current staffing model remain in place and Brith Shalom will not search for a full time cantor at this time.	Stephan moved/2 nd Allan Approve 11, Opposed 1, Abstain 1 MOTION PASSES
Motion to provide a summary of the Interim Committee's report to the congregation and the make the full report available for review in the office. This is the same procedure used for the first report.	Mitch moved/2 nd Dani MOTION PASSES

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- I. **President's Welcome-** Jeff mentioned that the plaque the board voted to purchased for the Tree of Life has been ordered. Jeff mentioned that today is Cinco D'Mayo and Yom Hashoah. Jeff lit a memorial candle and left it on the center of the table. Jeff's family came from Poland and he does not know the extent of the loss in his family. There were four remaining family members and the family is just now expanding and growing to new levels. The family in the US was inspired to pass on values to the growing family and share the traditions of the past. He shared a bottle of Croatian Slivovitz. Brith Shalom hosted a Yom Hashoah commemoration and it was quite meaningful.

Minutes for approval (March meeting) Approved, Accepted

II. Clergy Report/Educational Report

- A. **Rabbi Teller-** He attended Pesach Camp at CYJ. Rabbi Teller staffed it. Many of our members attended plus members from other congregations and cities. A meaningful inaugural year Kehillah High graduation was held at Beth Yeshurun. Two graduates were from Brith Shalom. There were 14 graduates in total. The seniors spoke very articulately about the AIPAC trip and its significance to them.
- B. **Cantor Levine –**
 - I. The Tikkun Olam Committee continues to move forward as a result of the Chai Initiative. Several events have happened and more are scheduled. The committee has finalized a card Prayer for Healing card to give out to people to say for themselves.
 - II. Working with JFS on a Jewish 12-Step program to begin in the near future. This would be a standard 12-Step program with a Jewish sensitivity allowing Jewish participants the ability to engage in a program that meets their needs.

III. Financial Report

- A. **Change in accounting function -**Milton share information about 'Kesef.' It is an outsourcing firm that handles accounting services including Accounts Receivable and Payable, as well as financial reporting. We have decided to go with this firm. They have a great reputation and are compatible with Chaverware and Quickbooks. We have already started the transition. It will be complete by the end of May. Membership instructions will be going out. By June statements, members will see new statements. It will take the place of our current accounting staff person who, by coincidence has resigned her position. She will help with the transition. The cost is about \$4,000 more but it will free up other personnel to do more meaningful tasks. This company already services 35+ synagogues. They are bonded and insured. If there are issues with payments or billing, members will be directed through our phone system to Kesef but Larry will also be the onsite face.
- B. **FY2017 Budget Discussion-**
 - I. Members of the congregation received the proposed budget summary that will be presented at the annual meeting. These letters went out in the mail in advance of the meeting in two weeks. Included in the budget are two significant fundraisers. There was some discussion about specific budget lines. We did a good job collecting annual giving debt this year so next year's budget is projected to be a bit lower on that line item. We collected about 95% this year and have project a 90% collection rate for next year. Jeff requested a vote of confidence and a thank you in appreciation of the work of the FAC (Financial Affairs Committee). Vote of confidence: All in favor with one abstention.
 - II. **Recommendation to restart the Building Repair Fund-** We are planning to have an annual Building Repair Fund. Contributions will be based upon known needs and projected needs (up to \$75,000). We don't have the same line of credit we had in the past (only \$150,000 now). (See handout for more details) Some items we plan to fund include HVAC controls, HVAC unit for kitchen, and security cameras. This fund will be annually renewable. We know we have a need for the next three years but it will ebb and flow as the needs present themselves in the future. There is a meeting on the May 17th to discuss financial questions in advance of the annual meeting.
 - III. **Recommendation to revise the Benefactor program (new Sustainer level and higher level for Pillar)-**The current sustaining member rate is \$2,750. Next year it will go to \$2,975. Building Fund will be \$250 in 2017. (Benefactor members do not pay this amount additionally. It will come out of their benefactor payments.) So, the total sustaining member amount for 2017 will be \$3,225. The FAC discussed the Benefactor Levels. Currently the lowest level is \$3,600. Next year the lowest level will be \$4,000. The last increase was 6 years ago. The question was, "Should we create a new level of Sustaining Benefactors?" Discussion was held. There are about 120 member units who are currently in the sustaining level. There was not a large support for creating a new Benefactor Level at the sustaining level.

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Motion presented by Mitch and seconded by Steve Lerman: Raise current beginning level of Benefactors to \$4,000 starting level. Anyone who is currently not a Benefactor and wishes to become one may enter at the current \$3,600 level for the next two years after which time it will go up to \$4,000. Benefactors will not be charged the building fund. In favor-11, Opposed-1, Abstain-1
MOTION PASSES

IV. Old/New Business/Updates/Save the Date

- A. **Update/report on Fund Development Committee** -Milton has organized a group of people for the Fund Development Committee including (Sandy & Leslie Weiner, Denise and Milton Mosk, Carol Goldberg, Maxine and Steven Goodman (also Ron Moses will help with some plans) plus Jeff, Steve, Cantor. This committed group will finalize a 5-year strategic plan for fundraising and “friend raising” for the future. We have started embryonically with those discussions. The goal is to come up with comprehensive plan to get us to where we want to go both in operating/fundraising budget but also in Endowment and future plans. More information will be available at the June meeting.
- B. **Update: Education Council: The future looks great! Physical space issues and possible solutions** Ellen gave teasers about a less expensive and positive options for the expansion of space. She will provide more details at the next meeting.
- C. **Discussion: Interim Plan Evaluation** – Mitch presented the final report from the Interim Plan Evaluation Committee. Last March 30 the synagogue passed a motion to oversee the interim plan. The committee has been evaluating the plan. The first reports was previously submitted. The Committee evaluated 4 areas (Religious School, Membership Engagement, B’nai mitzvah experience, Shabbat services) The most recent survey focused on RS parents. A prior RS survey was used as the baseline to help evaluate the data. The feedback was overall very positive for the new model of having a dedicated Asst. Principal for the school. B’nai Mitzvah families all reported a better experience and (see report details) Shabbat morning service experience was the only area where there was some dissatisfaction. The feeling is that something should be addressed to elevate the Shabbat morning experience. Jeff asked for questions about the report and then an acceptance of the report as presented. Discussion of the report ensued.

Stephan moved that we accept the report, discharge and thank the committee. Second Amy. (Please note: Accept does not mean adopt or approve) Approve 14 Opposed 0 Abstention 1

Jeff framed the options ahead of us. One, digest and discuss it further, or, two, make a motion and address the next step with the congregation at the annual meeting.

Steve moves : Allan 2nd

The Board has determined that the interim plan has been successful and therefore recommends to the congregation that the current staffing model remain in place and Brith Shalom **will not** search for a full time cantor **at this time. APPROVED 11, Opposed 1, Abstain 1 motion passes**

Mitch made a motion/ Dani 2nd the motion to provide an executive summary of the Interim Review Report to the congregation and the full report in the office. Make available in the same manner as the first report. Discussion ensued about how/when to raise the motion at the annual meeting. We have two weeks to notify the congregation that this issue will be brought to the congregation.

- D. **Flood Response Overview** -Jeff thanked the members who were able to get on a conference call and make calls and responses to members who were touched by the recent flood. We received a great deal of positive feedback from our proactive approach to the problem.
- E. **Rabbi Teller and Sabbatical Plans** – In Rabbi Teller’s contract, he has earned and deserves a Sabbatical. He has deferred it for us in the past but we are happy to be able to fulfill our obligation to provide Rabbi Teller a Sabbatical at the end of this year.
- F. **Committee reports – (as requested)**
- I. **Nominating Committee** - Allan thanked the people on his committee. There are currently 19 people on the board. He thanks Mitch Kreindler for his service since he will be going off the board. Rhonda Kaplan and Ken Podel will be added to the board. He re-nominates the current board members. (See

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attachment.) Stephan Rubin mentioned that Steve Conoway will not be the next Men's Club President, a new person will be chosen soon and the ballot should reflect that.

G. Thank you to Board Members (2015-2016)

H. Save the Date:

I. General Congregational Meeting Scheduled: May 19th, 2016

- I. Aaron Howard mentioned the upcoming Shavuot Program and encouraged all board members to attend.

V. Good and Welfare – Adjournment

- I. Successful Town Hall meeting (3/24/16)
- II. Facility Enhancement Day Sunday (3/27/16)
- III. Interfaith Model Passover Seder – St. Theresa Catholic Church (3/31/16)
- IV. Membership Committee for New Member Brunch (4/3/16)
- V. Elly Sokol (Marcia Sheena award, 4/10/16)
- VI. Men's Club Shabbat (4/15-16/16)
- VII. Mike Engelhart (2016 Texas Association of Civil Trial and Appellate Specialists "Trial Judge of the Year.")!
- VIII. Moshe and Arlene Even proud grandparents!
- IX. Congrats Kehillah High graduates!
- X. Congrats for CBS hosting Yom HaShoah ceremony
- XI. Alan Goldstein and support for summer camp scholarships
- XII. Plaque from Board for Tree of Life
- XIII. Mitch commended the Evaluation Committee for a tremendous amount of work and dedication
- XIV. Eljay Waldman commended Mitch Kreindler for his outstanding leadership on the Interim Review Committee
- XV.

**In honor of the Board of Trustees
Our past, present and future leaders
Thank you for your service**