

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



# Brith Shalom

## MEETING MINUTES- BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date	September 22, 2016	Time	7:02 pm -8:11 pm
Staff	Rabbi Teller, Cantor Levine, Larry Estes	Guests	
In Attendance	Stephan Rubin, Milton Mosk, Debi Mishael, Jacobo Goldberg, Morris Narunsky, Dani Roisman, Iris Fisherman, Allan Goldstein, Karen Bernstein, Rhonda Kaplan, Dori Wind, Ken Podell, Aaron Howard		
Next Meeting Date	October 20, 2016		

### ATTACHMENTS TO MINUTES

No.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Agenda	Agenda for 9/22/16 meeting
2	Finance Report	Balance sheet for FYE 6/30/16, Actual vs Budget FYE 6/30/16
3	Membership Report	Membership Analysis for July & August
4	Flyer	Community Wide Program addressing Suicide Prevention

### TZEDAKAH COLLECTED AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING

\$31.00

### ACTION ITEMS

### PERSON

Contact Hollis Hendrickson to usher for HH	All board
Attend slichot service and community suicide prevention program	All board
Come to Enhancement Day to help on Sunday,9/25	All board
Complete staff surveys if you have not already done so	All board

### I. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME (Jeff was out tonight and Stephan Rubin conducted the meeting.)

Meeting began with Larry presenting a birthday cake and song for Steve Rubin's birthday.

Steve welcomed everyone.

Minutes: APPROVED Unanimously

### II. CLERGY REPORTS

A. Cantor Levine Reports: Religious School (Ellen Feisinger's father-in-law is in hospital so she is not here to give the report. We send out thoughts and prayers to her.)

- a. Religious School enrollment count is not yet finalized but we have somewhere around 150 students. (53 students are in grades Pk-2.) We have split the 6<sup>th</sup> grade into two classes due to size and other factors. Parents are very happy and it is working well. We have hired Michael Duke to lead several Israel programs for the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade. Kehillah High continues to be successful. Federation is sponsoring technology sessions for the school at no expense to Brith Shalom.

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- b. Teen Torah readers have reached a milestone of having chanted 613 verses of the Torah. We will have a ceremony making the moment on Yom Kippur afternoon. Our current problem is that so many teens are reading that the adults are complaining there are not enough for them! Ten students will be chanting Jonah this year. Four of those students are new to this.
  - c. Young Professionals are thriving and growing with many new members. There is a dinner scheduled next Friday night at Cantor Levine's home with a discussion on Yom Kippur.
  - d. Chai & Tikkun Olam fair was less attended than had been hoped. Cantor will talk about it again during the High Holidays during his speech on Rosh Hashanah. Mitzvah day this year is being coordinated with St. Theresa's. The AA meetings continue to meet here weekly with a growing attendance. Some participants are members but many are those that want to engage in the AA program without the overt emphasis on Jesus.
  - e. This coming Tuesday 9/27 we have co-sponsored (with many other community organizations) a Suicide Prevention Program. This was created to address a growing crisis in our young professional community. Houston Jewish Community has experienced 5 suicides in the past year. Educational programs, counseling resources, support systems and intensive training for professionals in the field are all part of the program. Another program designed for the young professionals is scheduled for November 20.
- B. Rabbi Teller Reports: Updates on interfaith connections- Sisterhood Diversity Outreach committee is working on a program. St. Teresa's Church is coming here for a Shabbat in November and joining us to sponsor Mitzvah Day. Also, we have been exploring mosques locally to see if there are any potential partnerships. Karen mentioned an interfaith women's group in which she participates as a possible connection.
- a. Guess Who's Coming for Shabbos- Membership initiative where friends are asked to invite others to their home for a Shabbat dinner. The congregation will hear more during the HH. Four dates are planned throughout the year. Iris and others commented on the planning meeting. Each home is able to plan according to their needs and customs. Larry reminded us to include the 35-50 age group of folks.
  - b. First Ruach service of the season went well. Lots of people and participation and kids were well behaved. Bar Mitzvah boy was welcomed into the service well. (Milton asked about our reply to the comments at the annual meeting to help control the behavior. Rabbi said we have been addressing this and are working on additional options.)
  - c. HH's are approaching. The report from the choir is that it is expanded from last year. David has been working on deepening the meaning of the prayers for the choir members in addition to just learning the notes and tunes.
  - d. Slichot service this coming Saturday night. The choir and David will participate. A panel to discuss the concept of kavanah will take place prior to the service.

## III. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. Larry reports that nine security officers will be here during prime times of the HH's. Some will be plain clothed. Several will be in the building and some outside the building. Everyone is subject to wandering but not everyone will be wanded. Usher training will be held this coming Sunday. Requests are going out to ask people to volunteer for ushering. Board members are urged to contact Hollis Hendricks to sign-up.
- B. Update on 60<sup>th</sup> Gala Celebration- Stephan reports that 14 sub-committees are working on various parts of the program and celebration. It is all coming together very well. The board and committee members will all be asked to help with gaining ads and auction items. The committee did decide not to do a pictorial directory. More on this next month. Forms for solicitation will come out in October.

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- C. 613 Mitzvah Campaign- Milton reports that we are still in the quiet phase but Jeff will be talking about it during his appeal at HH. We are hoping to close a few commitments before Yom Kippur to announce we have over 1 million in the Endowment. We are \$60,000 away now. The bigger goal is to reach 2.5-3 million by next Yom Kippur. There is about \$200,000 in new commitments to the Endowment and 2 Torah mantels have been sold. A tri-fold brochure will be disseminated with the HH appeal. Legacy Letter of Intent will also be included. (Endowment commitments that are paid over \$5,000 can be counted in the Legacy program. If we reach 18 Letter's of Intent by the end of the year we receive \$6,000 from the Grinspoon Foundation. Now we are working on translating the letter of intents into documenting the bequests. Rabbi commented that it has been a very positive effect of members connecting meaningfully through these donations helping to connect their values to their dollars.
- D. Survey's have been sent out to selected members in connection with a 360 review of the professional staff. We will continue to do this year after year to be able to compare and continue to help staff improve. Please complete ASAP. As of today there are still some board members have not replied yet. If you did not get a link, please contact Milton. All surveys are private and anonymous.
- E. Sabbatical letter has been sent and the feedback is very positive. The congregation is proud to be able to afford our Rabbi this time of spiritual renewal and growth.
- F. Membership Update: Larry reported that this is done monthly. This handout reflects a 2 month (July-August) period. See attached report for breakdown. The form lists the families that have joined and the ones who have resigned. If we know the reason, it is listed as well. The report is broken down by category of giving and reflects that 30% of membership equals provide 70% of our income. We are seeing a lot of singles, young professionals and families joining. Reconstructionist Congregation, *Kol HaLev* closed and we are getting some new members from among their families. This is a great growth for the synagogue but does not increase the financial situations significantly since these are generally not higher paying or benefactor level families. We expect to set up 1200 people for HH. People with a valid ticket from any congregation can attend.
- G. A Benefactor Event is scheduled for November 6 with a Western Theme. Marty Buck is heading a dynamic committee.
- H. Enhancement Day is on Sunday. 17 volunteers are signed up and a number of projects have been identified. Starting about 9:30 after davening. More are needed as there is a lot to do and a limited time to do it.
- I. Community Network- September 27 Suicide Prevention. See flyer and notes from Cantor Levin's report.
- J. Gift Acknowledgement- two volunteers (Nancy Picus and Rhoda Goldberg) are coming in weekly to process donations and send acknowledgement letters. The letters are new and distinct for donors and those honored. Letters are going out more frequently and more efficiently. Jeff signs them all. Jeff is also sending out personal acknowledgements to people who are donating larger amounts. Others commented at the improvement in the new system. Larry explained that \$50,000-\$60,000 per year received this way. Most are in \$18 amounts.

## IV FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Milton reported on the actual-vs-budget. We were projecting an 80k deficit but it came in after a lot of work by the fund development committee and Larry that the actual deficit was closer to 36K. Our line of credit balance is 93K, also lower than we had anticipated. It's not great but better than expected. The goal at the end of next year is to be in a net 0 position. We hope to generate enough through fundraising to 0 the line of credit and start the year without debt.
- B. Balance Sheet was also distributed. Members were encouraged to attend the FAC meetings for a more detailed explanation. Milton continues to strive for transparency and better ways to

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inform the board about the financial status of the synagogue. Some questions were asked about line items.

- C. Line of Credit Renewal- Last year Amegy renewed credit for 150k instead of 300k when our loan was restructured. Larry and Milton are trying to negotiate back to the old amount. This will allow us to be more flexible and help with financial liquidity.

## V. MORE FINANCIAL UPDATES

A. Federal Labor New Rule- FLSA becomes effective 12/1/16. Anyone who earns less than \$47,476, must be an hourly employee and receive overtime pay for working over 40 hours per week. Five of our current employees are affected by this ruling. Independence and authority is also a governing characteristic of the category. We are working to function within the ruling. Three employees will have some revision of their job description but two employees will be subject to this new FLSA ruling. We are going to start with a time study to allow us to plan better and see what type of effect this will have. Blake will probably have overtime due to this ruling. This is an unbudgeted increase. Milton reminded us that we have also reduced the head count in the office so this will impact Larry in terms of his staff resources to complete tasks in a timely manner.

## VI. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- A. Installation went very well. Stephan thanked Rabbi on behalf of Jeff.
- B. ADL & AJC PROGRAMS Carol Goldberg is being honored 11/17
- C. Carol and Michael chairing annual No Place for Hate Gala
- D. Troy Feisinger's dad in hospice. We send them our thoughts and prayers.
- E. Carlotta Axelrad's bother also in hospice and we send our prayers to them.
- F. Condolences to Amy on the loss of her mother.
- G. Thank Nancy Picus and Rhoda Goldberg for their volunteering with donation acknowledgements
- H. Jeff was thanked for his good work in adding a personal touch to donation thank you notes
- I. Gavi Roisman and Cathy Podell were recognized and thanked for preparing a great Ruach Dinner
- J. Steve and Ken were thanked for helping their wives with clean up!