

Congregation B'nai Tikvah - Board of Directors Meeting - 2 January 2012

Board members attending: Gary Bergman, Gary Wesalo, Renee Juro, Andy Ross, Linda Fellen, Ben Gottesman, Michael Weiss, Bill Greenberg, Rob Blackin, Jeff Cadoff, Mark Kasdin, Mirah Becker, Dan Reininger, Lauren Cohen, Marcie Kfare, David Cukor, Jeff Schwartz,

Also attending: Rabbi Wolkoff, Cantor Rockman, Sarah Schindler, Lynne Weiss-Marshall

The meeting was called to order by President Gary Bergman at 8:01 p.m.

The minutes of the December meeting were approved as submitted.

Rabbi Wolkoff told a story from the Torah of human communications and impact of our words on others. The story was about Jacob on his death bed and his decision to tell each of his sons what he thought of them. It's an important lesson for all of us, the rabbi said. The Torah is teaching us that the way we communicate with people deserves more attention. Most of the time we need to enhance our communication with people and think before we speak.

In the president's report, Bergman said the new year is starting off well: Amanda Dillman has agreed to take on the youth adviser role; Gordon Heit agreed to chair the ritual committee; and Michael Reininger will assist with the website.

Meanwhile, efforts are under way to revive the marketing committee, Bergman said. This will be coordinated with the membership vice president, Marcie Kfare. Bergman said some constitutional issues will need to be addressed in the coming year so that the documents that define the congregation conform with contemporary priorities.

The financial secretary, Mark Kasdin, reported 392 member families in the congregation. He also informed the board of an ongoing effort to devise a formula that would accurately indicate the dues/membership trend. The formula formerly used to calculate "full dues paying equivalents" has been deemed insufficient.

Kasdin noted the approximately \$100,000 past due and still owed from all sources, including dues, religious school fees, gift card obligations, pledges, etc.

Treasurer, Gary Wesalo said the budget has been tracking pretty well so far this fiscal year with revenue from caterer, nursery school, religious school ahead of projections while spending from house and grounds has been over budget because of the costs to replace the heating/air conditioning unit over the sanctuary.

For administration, David Cukor indicated the new heater/air conditioner has arrived and would be installed when mounting equipment arrives.

For membership, Kfare discussed plans to revamp marketing committee and coordinate communications on the congregation's various activities and programs. The aim is to determine how best to publicize what's going on at B'nai Tikvah

Jeff Schwartz reported on behalf of youth and education about busy times at the Religious School ahead of the year-end holidays. He said the Nursery School is in good shape

For ways and means, Jeff Cadoff shared information about the upcoming casino night fund-raiser on March 31. A committee is forming with Rob Blackin chairing. More help is sought.

Rabbi Wolcuff is preparing for classes on rabbinic literature to begin, an introduction to prayer services and other programs.

Cantor Rockman reported on some of the planning already going on toward the next Rejoice Festival. There is discussion about shifting the timing for the event, which in the past was squeezed between the end of summer vacation and the High Holy days. Middlesex County Cultural Arts Committee granted \$3,000 for the next Rejoice. That was down from \$4,000 a year ago.

There was a brief continuation of the credit card billing discussion with more suggestions of potential benefit and support. No action was taken.

Ruth Anne Koenick moved to adjourn (Gottesman seconded).

Ways and Means – January Report

We have received a \$24 check from Laughing Devil Comedy Club in Long Island City, NY. This was compensation for selling tickets to their Christmas Eve & Christmas Night shows.

As previously noted, the main fundraising event is a "Viva Las Vegas Casino Night" scheduled for March 31st, 2012. The event will start around 8:00 pm, and feature gambling tables, food, open bar, a silent auction and journal. The event is being chaired by Rob Blackin (Thank you Rob!) with substantial aid from many others.

We are still in need of volunteers for many tasks, so please feel free to contact Rob or myself to lend a hand. **The committee especially needs folks willing to 'pound the pavement' soliciting donations and ad journal entries.** Any contribution, large or small, will be appreciated!!

VP Activities

Adult Education Committee with input and guidance from the Rabbi wrote up the schedule and PR for the new curriculum being unveiled in January. The new classes and clubs cut a wide welcoming mat through our community with the goal of engaging more of our adults in learning more about our services and traditions. Please support.

Thank you Gary for putting information on website and congregational email.

Bikur Cholim: Working alongside Gary Bergman, the committee wrote a moving article for the January Hakol. The committee needs volunteers to make a dinner when a sick person's family needs support in this way, and to make calls. The Hakol article is meant to generate some volunteer interest among congregants. Any interested persons should call Hilary Friedman, Chairperson.

Social Action Committee worked with needy families through the holiday. Due to the efforts of Janice Baer, annual program a big success.

Well, it has been a busy year for many of us on the Board. I wish everyone good health and much happiness in the New Year. May I never take for granted this special opportunity to work with a incredibly talented team of individuals who all have committed their time so that we have such a vibrant place to worship and call our home away from home. I don't think it is the brick and mortar that make a synagogue in the end, it is the people. I know the Board will do great things together in 2012 by supporting each other and remaining confident in our shared vision.....to the end. Never give up. That, and always be prepared. Advice given to me from several Holocaust survivors over the years that is as wise as it is simple.