

Congregation B'nai Tikvah

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of August 1, 2011

Board members attending: Gary Bergman, Aaron Rosloff, Gary Wesalo, Renee Juro, Marcie Kfare, Dave Cukor, Art Cederbaum, Mark Kasdin, Mirah Becker, Dan Reininger, Andy Ross, Linda Fellen, Arnold Miller, Ben Gottesman, Doug Smoller, Michael Weiss, Bill Greenberg, Lauren Cohen, Rob Blackin, Jeff Schwartz,

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

The meeting was called to order by President Gary Bergman at 8:00 p.m.

The minutes of the July meeting were approved as submitted.

Cantor Rockman opened the discussion with some thoughts about Tish B'av, which he described as neither well-enough known or understood. The message for the future we can take from Tish B'av is that G-d is not indifferent to the fate of his people, the cantor said. There is still hope. He said the messiah is to be born on Tish B'av – we can hope it has happened and that the next year will be a year of joy

Bergman welcomed to the meeting Sara Schindler to represent USY. Hers is a non-voting position.

The financial secretary, Mark Kasdin, reported 391 member families, down slightly from a year ago, and translating to 224 full dues paying equivalent member families. He projected an increase in that number as some of those taking part in the free first-year membership program convert to dues-paying memberships. Kasdin reported also a continued shortfall in collections for the scrip program with about 103 families, or 25%, delinquent in this category.

The scrip collection issue was discussed by several board members. The result of that discussion was a decision to bill uncollected scrip obligations as “past due.”

Kasdin completed his report with a note on the mix of members comprising the congregation. He said the percentage of singles (including seniors) is rising and now stands near 30%. That could have an impact on future revenues and budgets.

The treasurer, Gary Wesalo, said preliminary figures indicate B'nai Tikvah will finish fiscal 2011 within \$28 of budget. Expenses exceeded the budget by about \$47,000, but so did revenue led mostly by increased income from Classical Caterers.

Wesalo advised of plans to solicit bids for an audit.

Regarding activities, Mirah Becker made a plea for more input and coordination as the first step in an effort to widen the variety of activities and address the diverse needs of the congregation.

Lauren Cohen informed the board that the new religious school director, Ann Ruth Nimberg, is getting started. Among the items on the agenda for her and the schools committee is a review of the curriculum for Chai school and the options for special needs students.

For ways and means, Arnold Miller described some of the fund-raising events currently under consideration, including a casino night. Miller also pointed out the benefits of coordinated solicitations for charitable donations of goods and services for prizes at fund-raising events. Bergman agreed to assist in forming a committee to study the matter.

The house and grounds report from Dave Cukor included a discussion about the disposition of parsonage and the intent to rent the property within 60 days after it's vacated.

Cukor also relayed plans from the décor committee, which is formulating a proposal for improvements to sanctuary. That proposal might require funds to be raised if implemented.

Aaron Rosloff said discussions are under way toward the revival of a senior club that would sponsor lectures, events and entertainment.

Bill Greenberg reported that Steve Katz will be the next president of the Men's Club.

Sqarah Schindler said USY is looking forward to great year with a new adviser.

The board acknowledged the significant contributions of the Binder family to the congregation and offered its congratulations to the Binders on the recent marriage of Brian Binder to Sara in Jacksonville, Fla.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m. on a motion from Renee Juro (second by Jeff Schwartz).

Text of President's Report for August

First let me welcome and introduce Sarah Shindler, as the USY representative to board. According to our bylaws, this is a non voting position and similar to our custom of not having staff or clergy attend the closed sessions, this same rule will apply. sorry.

As you know I have rescheduled the board pool & barbeque party for Sunday, August 21st at my house. And I extend the invitation to Sarah and her family as well,

I was recently contacted by Fred Passman from United Synagogue. They are trying to put together a pilot program for training of emerging synagogue leaders. I told him our board would be interested and we would be willing to offer our facilities where feasible.

Last month there was a question about the descriptions of some of the more obscure funds. I had a conversation with Alan Kane and as a result I posted a detailed description of the purpose and use on our website at bnaitikvah.org/kanefund.html

I owe an apology to Ben Gottesman and the EC. To make it short, Ben asked if he could make a motion regarding the use of credit cards, whereby if a congregant would setup an automatic recurring charge, the synagogue would absorb the transaction fee. Since this occurred after we had this month's EC meeting, I made the mistake of informing the EC via email and there were differences of opinion that really need to be discussed in person rather than email.

So I need to remind myself and everyone else that because messages can be easily misinterpreted and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, that's why actual meetings are necessary. I expect Ben's motion to be entertained next month.

On a brighter note, I created a new secured area of the website, which can be access by user id and password, to store certain documents such as, letterheads, office forms, in addition to the board minutes. All the minutes I could find since 1999 are now posted on a special page where all future approved minutes will be posted as well.

I have to say that, I recognize I'm taking on this presidency with the easiest head start in B'nai Tikvah's history. We have a fantastic staff and clergy in place and we couldn't have a more creative and energetic board and dedicated volunteers. So if I can keep my mistakes to a minimum, we're going to have a great year.

Vice President Reports

VP Membership Report – August 1, 2011

I am happy to report that of the 28 families that joined us as free members last year, 14 have become dues paying members as of today. Based on some of the feedback I received during my discussions, I would expect at least one more. We also have 4 new nursery school families that joined that were not a part of the “first year free” membership. The letter for this year’s “first year free” membership went out in June as planned but so far we haven’t received any responses yet.

Marcie Kfare

SCHOOL & YOUTH REPORT – AUGUST 2011

This report is abbreviated since most of my portfolio is inactive during the long summer vacation.

Nursery School

Summer Camp is proceeding smoothly. Enrollment targets have been met or exceeded.

Phyllis is planning another successful year of nursery school. Teacher contracts have been concluded with all returning staff.

Wondergrass, i.e., artificial turf, has been installed in the nursery school/camp play area

Religious School:

Shoshanna's resignation became effective July 31st. She was very cooperative in passing the torch to our new director, Ann Ruth Nimberg.

Ann's first day being under contract to CBT is today.

Ann is planning to host an in-service day at CBT for our teachers as well as for local-area religious schools during the latter half of August. The topics to be presented will be: 1. Bullying and Discipline; and, 2. Special Needs Instruction.

Contracts have been concluded with all returning staff.

Ann is looking for 2 Chai School teachers.

Ruth Anne and I are continuing our efforts to collect overdue religious school tuition from last year.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Schwartz

Vice President of School & Youth

Activities

Hello Members of the BOD:

What follows is a brief update:

Topic to Discuss at Meeting: Calendar. Emphasize the need for all members to be aware of the array of activities that are scheduled each month and to understand what is occurring and whether other committees can be of service. Board members are encouraged to think beyond their immediate silo, that is area of interest and/or responsibility, and attend and support each other's programs as much as possible.

Adult Education: Met with Rabbi. Met with Cindy Gittelman. Still need to meet with the Cantor.

In the process of putting together new Adult Education Committee—so far have 6 people, not including board members, have volunteered to work together to shape future enrichment opportunities at the synagogue. Need to recruit a representative from the Sisterhood and the Men's Club. The first meeting of this new committee will take place in August.

Social Action: In the process of identifying key players in this area. Once contacted we will have a conversation about how to use the VP of Activities portfolio as an organizing umbrella such that the good work that is already taking place in this area can be expanded and publicized through posters and brochures or take away bookmarks. Adult education programs will also be included in these take home materials and posters.

Bikur Cholim: This program is doing a fantastic job reaching out to members in need.

Calendar: Completed.

HAKOL: On break for the summer.

Thank you. If you have any questions please let me know.

See you all tomorrow night.

Sincerely,

Mirah Becker

VP of Activities

Report from Administration:

Parking Lot - August we will start getting our estimates lined up and set a start date for the work to begin.

Exterior lights in parking lot and Temple grounds: Paper work has been submitted for state rebates and we are hoping to start work the beginning of Sept. We will also be adding a light on the exterior wall where parents pick up their children from Hebrew School. It has been pointed out and confirmed that it is very dark, and is a possible safety concern. We are looking at any other dead spots in the lot that might need a lighting upgrade for safety issues.

Caterer - Evan is on vacation and will be submitting his concept for the Kiddush room at our Sept. board meeting.

Ritual - As usual, the Ritual Committee has the High Holidays extremely organized. We do need every board member to sign up and help out. A list will be either emailed to all, and/or passed out at the Sept. meeting. Gary and I have spoken to Evan about moving his catering equipment in the Kiddush room in a more organized manor and we will be setting up tables and chairs in there for people to talk. We hope that by having a "chat room" off the lobby we can keep people out of the lobby if they want to talk and this will keep the noise level to a minimum. The ushers will try to direct talkers to the Kiddush room. I think it will be easy since the room is right there instead of setting up a room in the Hebrew school wing. I also plan on providing some sort of snacks (not on Yom Kippur, obviously) in the room and that will also help to keep talkers in there and the noise level in the lobby at a minimum. Also I was informed that any past youth group members that need a place to pray on the holidays are welcome at CBT. We are on a list but no one as ever taken us up on this, so if you know someone do not hesitate to contact the office or Marci. It has been decided that no one outside of the CBT community will be allowed to do Hagbah for numerous reason, but we are opening it up to any and all CBT members that want to learn how to do it properly. A notice will also be put in the Hakol. If you or anyone you know is interested contact Marci or Phil. Next meeting we will be discussing the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process along with the honor giving system. If anyone has thoughts on this feel free to give me a call.

Parsonage - The house has had an initial inspection. A list of what needs to be done to bring the house up to renting or selling condition (based on a board decision) is being determined and we hope to start work sometime in Sept.

Cemetery - Looking for someone to head this committee, taking suggestions if anyone has someone in mind please let me know.

Decor - The Decor committee was looking at replacing ceiling tiles and painting the walls of the sanctuary. Since they started discussing this after the budget was done, it was not included in this year's budget. There are many things that need to be updated in the Temple, but the sanctuary is the main focus of our building, so we are going to focus on upgrading the sanctuary. I (with the EC's permission) have asked the decor committee to come up with mock-ups to refresh the entire sanctuary from floor to ceiling instead, of doing a piecemeal job. Lets make our sanctuary as beautiful as it deserves to be. This will include reupholstering the pews, new paint, new carpeting (not on the Bima, as it is new), a home for the beautiful menorah that is currently on the floor of the Bimah, new ceiling tiles and hopefully new lighting. This process will take at least 6 to 9 months along with getting costs and fundraising ideas. The goal is to start work next summer and try to be done in time for the holidays in 2012 (due to our fiscal year ending July 31 this might not happen, but it is good to have goals). Phyllis Safeer is running this committee and is excited to work on this project. We are hoping to have this tied into the new Torah push, but not to be part of that fundraising effort or to be run at the same time. This will start when that is done. *Does not a new Torah deserve a new and beautiful sanctuary?*

Budget - The new budget starts Aug 1. Just a reminder to everyone that is responsible for a budget...please keep accurate records, because this year you will need to submit your budget and what you are spending the money earlier than in past years.

Solar - We are on hold based on the board discussion last month. Still talking and listening to solar companies and will revisit later in the year.

Thank you and as always I am available for any questions or thoughts on how to make CBT run more efficiently.

David Cukor