

Congregation B'nai Tikvah  
Board of Directors Meeting  
5 March 2012

*Board members attending: Gary Bergman, Gary Wesalo, Renee Juro, Andy Ross, Linda Fellen, Ben Gottesman, Michael Weiss, Rob Blackin, Jeff Cadoff, Mark Kasdin, Lauren Cohen, Marcie Kfare, Jeff Schwartz, Doug Smoller, Wayne Gonchar, Aaron Rosloff, Daniel Reininger Ruth Anne Koenick, Bonnie Kudwit, Phil Welsher*

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

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

The minutes of the February meeting were approved with one change. The minutes will note that Ruth Anne Koenick attended the February meeting.

Rabbi Wolkoff told the board of the story from Purim and the Megillah in which Mordechai asks Ester to intervene against the edict to kill Jews. The rabbi said the story highlights a theme confronted often in society: You can't hide from responsibility. The rabbi said we learn from the Megillah that when you're in a position to intervene, you should. It's the leader's job to take the lead and make things happen.

In the financial secretary's report, Mark Kasdin said the congregation counts 389 member families, down slightly from earlier in the year. He also reported a significant decline in the amounts still owing from dues and other fees. Approximately \$44,000 is now more than 90 days past due.

Kasdin sparked some discussion regarding the congregation's cemetery policy when he shared the request from one member who indicated a desire to terminate membership but retain member rights for burial. Several board members contributed to the discussion, raising multiple issues, including constitutional ones. No action was taken pending the report of the group tasked with reviewing the cemetery policy.

In the treasurer's report, Gary Wesalo said the congregation likely won't be realize much savings if it refinances its relatively high-rate mortgage. That recommendation was based on an analysis from TD Bank.

Meanwhile, strong collections in the month have kept the budget on track. Caterer and nursery school income continue to be strong. Expenses are generally close to expectations.

For ways and means, Jeff Cadoff reported on progress toward the casino night fundraiser, including efforts to secure ads for an ad journal.

For schools and youth, Jeff Schwartz said the school's budgeting process is beginning. Nursery school numbers are looking good with early indications suggesting good enrollment for summer camp.

Sara Schindler reported on a successful USY weekend.

For Sisterhood, Bonnie Kudwit said more than 300 Purim baskets were assembled and distributed.

For the BT DayTimers, Aaron Rosloff reported on two recent meetings and suggested the possibility that the group might open some future programs to non-Jews.

In his report, Rabbi Wolkoff described programs under way and as well as some that he would like to see get started. Among those are a young couples club and a group to represent B'nai Tikvah at AIPAC.

Cantor Rockman's report, in addition to praising the recent USY weekend, offered details on several local interdenominational activities in which he's involved, including a planned thanksgiving service at Six Mile Run Church. He also shared more details on the upcoming Rejoice and L'dor Vador events in December and April respectively.

New business began with the following motion from Ben Gottesman (Koenick seconds):

**Move that the congregation provide members with additional means to fulfill their dues and religious school obligations through automated monthly withdrawals from their bank account or credit card, and that the members not be assessed transaction fees for these automated payments. Members should be encouraged to take advantage of the automated monthly payment option.**

Gottesman offered several reasons to support the motion, among them: the likely familiarity and comfort of many members with such a process; the improved cash flow resulting from automated and regular monthly payments; the prospect that the automated process will keep more members current longer.

Several board members commented on the motion. There were discussions about the relative costs and appeal of credit card versus electronic bank drafts. Some sought more information about the process and how it would be implemented. There were also concerns raised about security and the need to safeguard the credit card information.

The motion passed by a vote of 17 in favor, none opposed and one abstaining

Linda Fellen then made the following motion (Kasdin seconds):

**To abolish the requirement that members buy supermarket scrip for the fiscal year beginning August 2012.**

Fellen said in support of her motion that the current scrip obligation is tantamount to dues except for the fact that the dues are easier to collect. She said we should recognize the current approach is inadequate and inequitable.

Some members suggested using scrip as a means to accumulate value against dues payments. Fellen suggesting leaving that decision to the budget committee as it assesses the impact of this change on fund-raising and perhaps other aspects of future budgets.

Schwartz asked that the question be called (Rosloff seconds).

The motion to call the question passed by a vote of 18 in favor, none opposed

A vote on the motion proper was held. The motion passed unanimously

Rob Blackin said help was sought to make calls to members regarding Casino night.

Koenick said the nominating committee is beginning to ramp up its process toward the next leadership slate.

Koenick moved to adjourn (Hoffman seconds)

### President's Report

First let me welcome our newest Board member, Phil Welsher. Welcome aboard... to the board.

I want to mention that a few people have responded to my Hakol article, requesting volunteers to help with the website. I met with Marty Engel and have sessions scheduled with Michael Cherson and Harriet Cohen. Also, I met with Daniels Reininger's son Michael a few weeks ago and, although he is still in High School, he is working on some very sophisticated new features for the website.

On Sunday, April 15 we are planning to have a Israel Bonds Breakfast, something we haven't had in several years. Our guest speaker will be Art Shamsky who played for the 1969 Mets and racked up some of the most amazing statistics in baseball. It's just a coincidence that he's best friends with one of my best friends in North Jersey. When I discussed this event with Larry Cohen several weeks ago, we wanted to do this in honor of someone in the congregation. He had accepted but, just recently, had to decline due to work schedules.

This created a bit of confusion because the Men's Club president heard about the congregant's decline and assumed the whole thing was called off.

The Men's club will help pay for the breakfast but, there are some minor complications. The first is that Sunday is the first day the synagogue will be open for business after Passover. Meaning, that all the food which will be brought into the building has to be Kosher for Passover. I'm looking for some volunteers to help with food preparation that Sunday morning.

## Report from VP – Administration

**Sorry I am not able to make the meeting on Monday as I will be in Texas for a national sales meeting. Will see all at the April meeting.**

Report from Administration - February for March meeting:

Caterer - Floor, walls and bar are done in the Kiddush Room...ceiling next.

Ritual - Gordon Heit has done a great job stepping up and taking over for Marcie as head of Ritual Committee. Next event Pizza and Megillah reading.

Cemetery - Trying to get everyone together...will happen this month. I have the plans from Mitch and Danny has put together a list of suggestions that the committee will work on and then bring to the board.

Decor - Have put together initial quotes for sanctuary revamp. Going to call in an architect/designer to make sure what we do is done right the first time and we don't make the same mistakes as done in the past. What ever we do will be done right the first time! There is no rush in getting this done and while it will be done in phases we want a complete picture before we start....much more on this in the future.

Youth Lounge - Carpet is done and the youth lounge looks amazing....kudos to the youth committee on there work on getting it done and staying on my back to do the carpet.

Budget - Process will start soon...for those responsible for a budget do not wait until the last minute to figure it all out.

HVAC - Unit replaced in sanctuary everyone is happy for the heat just in time for spring.

Lighting above window in front of the Temple - The blue led lights that Evan installed above the window will only be on if he is having a party or selling a party. If you see them on and neither is going on please let me know. While we want to support Classical Caterers...we are still a temple.

Hot Water Heater- The water heater that the caterer uses along with the two bathrooms outside of the sanctuary is going. It is 15 years old. This is a commercial water heater with certain rating due to health codes. We are determining who is responsible for replacing it. I am working with Evan, the catering committee and the executive committee to figure out the fairest way to replace this. The new heater will be around \$8,000 (first bid, waiting on 2 more).

Thinking about what we can do to make our coat room look a little nicer....please email with any suggestions.

As always I am available for any questions or thoughts on how to make CBT run more efficiently

David Cukor