

B'nai Tikvah Board Meeting

Minutes: April 3, 2000

Meeting called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Jeff Schwartz

Attendees: A. Behar, M. Binder, M. Dillman, M. Frumkin, M. Kasdin, K. Riemann, A. Ross, H. Schneider, J. Baer, H. Finkelstein, I. Grodzinski, A. Gold, S. Gordon, J. Marcou, B. Rockman, B. Shapiro, J. Wolf, L. Marx, J. Scheuer, Rabbi Eligberg, Cantor Sared-Lever, Nitsat Hadas Elami

Non-Board Guests: S. Rosenswieg

Minutes were distributed prior to the meeting via e-mail. M. Kasdin moved to accept. 2nd by H. Schneider. Motion passed with 4 abstentions.

D'Var Torah: Rabbi Eligberg

While at the recent Rabbinical Assembly convention, standing in area designated for book vendors and, while browsing, was identified by a friend that Rabbi was someone who knew French. Within 5 minutes, reading French translation of Siddur Sim Shalom. What is the reason for a French language translation? It is in preparation to serve the Conservative Congregations in France. Sometimes we don't appreciate the fact that we have become a worldwide movement, growing everywhere in the world. One of the goals that would like us to tackle is to become more aware of how we fit in to the entire World Jewry picture. A proposal will be made to identify a "sister congregation" in France.

Non-Members:

Old Business:

Expansion Committee (M. Kasdin)

- Meeting with architect and have developed 10 year plan
- Meet with caterer on Wednesday evening to determine his role in expansion
- Expansion is approx. 22,000 square feet.
- Dinner meeting with Development Consultants; contract in-hand and ready to be executed
- Initial charges from Development Consultants will be \$75,000 over a 3-4 month period
 - These funds are to come from the monies raised and, if we don't meet our goal, we could have a negative cash situation
 - Campaign kick-off in May
 - They have noted we will know relatively "early" whether we can meet our goal; out clause is provided with 30 days notice
- Architectural charges of approximately \$4000 (previously approved)
- Final budget from Development Consultants:
 - Will use specialist from local area thus eliminating living and transportation costs
 - Re-characterized campaign: 14 weeks of campaign at \$4500 per week. Grand total of \$76,500.

What happens if monies are less than desired? What are contingencies?

- Architect submitted plans. A meeting is scheduled for Wednesday evening to determine best plan if desired funds were not raised. It was recommended to build a master plan and then move backward by the architect. This is the approach being taken.

At this point monies spent: \$15,000 for feasibility, \$3500 to architect. Monies are currently out of budget expenses with no offsetting income. If campaign is successful, additional fees will be incurred (architectural costs, survey costs, etc.).

Congregation empowered us to conduct campaign at December meeting. Exposure explained to the congregation and that the debt would be retired from Capital Fund Raising campaign. Review of board recognized need to move forward with the expansion. Although it was acknowledged that the road will not be easy, there was an overwhelming mandate to move forward.

Constitution Committee (J. Wolf):

Reviewed recommended changes. First article:

Article IV: Membership. Section 2a)

- Discussion on changes relative to extending "privileges" to non-Jewish spouses. It was not clear whether we are doing anything differently than current. The changes were recommended based on feedback from the Outreach committee that there is a feeling of "exclusion" by the non-Jewish spouse. Questions were raised as to how

widespread is the feeling of “exclusion”? Should we explore further before making constitutional changes?

- Recommended this not be a constitutional change.

Article VI

Original... “be deemed not in good standing”. Recommended change was *specific notice be declared not in good standing by a majority vote of the Board of Directors*. Concern that this change makes public the list of the members that are in arrears.

- Recommended that the list NOT go to Board
- When letters go out, definition of good standing should be clarified
- May want to consider that notice go to member 2-4 weeks prior to the meeting
- Constitutional change is not recommended

Article VII (Section 5)

Issue: do you need to be present to vote. The recommended changes allow, at the discretion of a majority vote (75%) of the Board, the ability to have an alternate method of voting (either by proxy or by mail).

- Concern that if do for one issue, will the membership expect it every time?
- Can only a spouse be a proxy?
- Mail ballots are impractical unless you know all the issues and what is on the ballot – we do not always know what is on the ballot since amendments to the motion can occur at the meeting.

Motion (J. Wolf): Amendment as noted be presented at the next Congregational meeting. 2nd Binder. Amendment is worded:

At all membership meetings, a member must be physically present to [have his or her] vote [counted], except that the Board of Directors may prescribe from time to time, by a ¾ majority vote, an alternate method of voting on designated questions. This alternate method will be either by proxy, in which a member who is present also casts the vote of his/her spouse who is not present, or voting by mail ballot. Neither alternate method will diminish the requirement that a quorum be present as prescribed in Section 4.

Vote: 5 in Favor. 11 Opposed. 1 Abstention. **Motion defeated** and amendment does not go to membership.

Motion (M. Binder) 2nd M. Frumkin: Motion as noted above deleting the requirement that the proxy be a spouse to allow for single members to still cast their vote. Vote: 5 in Favor. 13 Opposed. No abstentions. **Motion defeated.**

Article VIII (Nominations and Elections):

It attempts to have fair, open and structured nominating process. It also attempts to accommodate nominations from the floor. Questions:

- Should the board be eliminated from a review? Current constitution does not state that it needs to be approved.
- Prior service needed of at least one year or one term. Should this be within a specified time period.
- Should President be required one-year on the Executive committee and not just a Trustee.
- Is it feasible to include representation from each of the groups noted; recommend wording that one person should be “invited”
- Time constraints are specific on independent nominations but not specific as to when the slate is presented for independent nominations.
- Do we really want to eliminate nominations from the floor?

Will come back to this issue next month with appropriate recommended wording changes. In the interest of time, the remaining recommended changes (as listed below) were distributed for review and agreement at the May meeting.

Article IX: Board Of Directors

Moving from one-year to two-year terms.

Article X: The Officers

Review of books be done by a CPA (and not just “qualified accountant”) at least once every three years (vs current of end of fiscal year).

Article XI: The Pulpit

Adds new section incorporating the employment of a Cantor.

Article XIII: Standing Committees

Adds Historical Committee (as referred to in prior months).

Parsonage:

Clear that we need to litigate against the builder. Motion: M. Binder to initiate litigation against the builder. 2nd K. Riemann.

- I. Millinger will serve as lawyer
- Need to add a closet in bedroom that was omitted from plans
- One car does not fit in the garage
- We are seeking remuneration for the repairs. Costs are approximately \$25,000.

Vote: **Motion Passed** with one abstention.

New Business:

Caterer does not plan to redo the ballroom until next year and thus Interiors Committee will not continue pursuing carpeting. Recommend we clean the carpet (\$600). Funds available in House and Grounds.

Mailings for programming (Harry and Bess) were sent out this week. Thanks to Arlene Frumkin for arranging program with Palestinian ambassador. Over 200 people attended.

Survey from Rabbinical Feedback Committee is in the mail. Please return surveys. May need special meeting to review the results.

May 1st: Yom Hashoah. Ilse Loeb will be speaker. Mailing to go out this week.

Everyone is aware of what happened at the March 7th Council Meeting. Letters to the editors were published. Letter also sent to the Chair of the Middlesex County Democratic Committee. Mr. Luciano requested to meet with Arie Behar, which took place today. It was clarified that he was not representing the Congregation. A minimal expectation is an apology but that does not guarantee support. Mr. Luciano noted that he plans to apologize at tomorrow's meeting. (Post meeting note: Mr. Luciano did apologize at the April 3 Town Council meeting).

Reports:

Financial Secretary (Gary Tinkel)

3rd quarter billing went out along with letters for those that are delinquent. Contacts were also made to those in serious arrears. Twelve families have paid nothing, sixteen families are more than 3 quarters in arrears. We have heard from one of the 12 who paid up all monies owed. Of the 16, 2 have paid or made arrangements. All will be followed with a phone call prior to the April 15th deadline. These numbers are better than prior years.

70-75 people are on forgiveness. They will be receiving notice in the next few weeks relative to the annual renewal/review process.

Treasurer (Marc Dillman)

In throws of budget process. As new information arises, forecasts are being modified.

Income:

- Building fund is positive.
- High holiday pledge will come out where budgeted
- Negative for member dues is understated as all credit card revenues is one month late in posting; this number is really positive
- Nursery school variance is greater than noted. We are plus \$10,000.

Expense

- Miscellaneous expense which will be negative (-12,000) related to parsonage move. Also negative are utilities.

Cash Accounts

- Added as liability (fund) a Religious School "Grant" Account. This will no longer be an expense in the Religious School budget.

VP Admin (M. Frumkin)

- Review of caterer contract resulted in letter to caterer that increases the fees on a per head basis (\$6.40 vs \$6.00) as well as Sanctuary fee (\$256 vs \$200).

VP Activities (A. Behar)

- Harry and Bess
- Glen Bermann
- Klezmer Group
- June 11: White Water Rafting
- July: Miniature Golf Tournament

VP School and Youth (K. Riemann)

As submitted.

- Nursery school enrollment is ahead of same time period last year
- Purim carnival raised ~\$1300.
- Enrollment for Hebrew School went out this week.
- Matzah Factory will be visiting the school w/o April 10.

VP Ways and Means (M. Binder)

As submitted.

- Picnic on May 28th from 1:00 to 4:00 at Reichler Park.
- 50/50 planned, \$50 per chance.
- Garage sale on June 18th.
- "Who Wants to be a Minyonaire" game show planned; no date set.
- Dinner Dance netted over \$1000 for night.

Sisterhood (L. Marx):

June 2 is installation

May 7 is Country Line Dancing

Spring Conference is May 21 in Old Bridge

Men's Club (G. Edley)

No report

Fifty Plus (J. Scheurer)

pass

Rabbi's Report

- Passover is rapidly approaching. Next Hakol will have a Passover supplement including various times for services
- This Thursday, 2nd in two part series on preparing for Pesach.
- Thanks to Bruce Rockman for preparing Yom Hashoah
- Thanks to Ari for Klezmer band to help with Yom Hatzmaut
- May 21st: Philadelphia annual salute to Israel Day. Games, activities, etc. will be on hand at Penns Landing. Watch for details. Leave Bnai Tikvah at 11:00 and return around 4 pm.
- April is National Organ Donor Awareness Month. Addressing the issue once or twice during the month.

Good & Welfare

- Speedy Recovery to Ted Marks and Mark Sherman.
- Condolences to Charlie Cohen (father), Barry Dworkin (Father)
- Mazel Tov to Irwin and Michelle Millinger on birth of Grandson.
- Mazel Tov to Mitch and Arlene Frumkin on Seth becoming a Bar Mitzvah
- John and LouAnn Wolf on Amy becoming a Bat Mitzvah
- Adrienne and Andy Ross (and family) on niece Danielle becoming a Bat Mitzvah
- Harold and Ellen Schneider on marriage of their daughter

Motion to adjourn (11:08 p.m): Ann Gold. Second G. Tinkel. Passed.

Next board **MEETING is Monday, May 8.**