

B'nei Tikvah Board Meeting

Minutes: May 21, 2001

Meeting called to order at 8:04 p.m. by M. Frumkin.

Attendees:

M. Frumkin, B. Shapiro, J. Scheuer, A. Ross, J. Edley, H. Schneider, K. Zimmerman, J. Baer, J. Marcou, M. Kasdin, A. Behar, G. Bergman, S. Berk, A. Gold

H. Nitsat-Elami, Rabbi Eligberg

Non-Board Guests: Marty Abshutz, M. Binder

Approval of minutes from last meeting deferred. Next meeting will be approved at next board meeting.

Two main agenda items:

- Decorations of social hall
- Budget

D'Var Torah: Rabbi Eligberg

Went to presentation earlier last week from "Partnership for Environmental Quality". The Partnership is an interfaith group created in 1992 with mission of environmental stewardship, common to most of the traditions. An item focused on last couple of years relates to choice of energy, particularly from renewable energy sources.

This generation has opportunity to do significant healing. For example, in W. PA, there are strip mines which are left like an open wound. One strip mine in PA that is now the site of the world largest wind farm and thus create renewable energy. We have taken an emblem of misuse of land and using it in a responsible manner.

The NE is a "nasty place". 2/3 of the elements that lead to smog, allergies etc. are the production of electricity. There is an opportunity for families in congregations to make a "green energy choice". An organization will analyze institution's energy consumption and give an assessment of cost to procure green energy. It is estimated that for the average household (~750 KWH), the average increase per household is \$12-15 per month. The difference in any one household to purchase energy from a "green producer" is the equivalent of not driving a car for a year (12,000 miles) or planting 600 trees.

If the congregation were to decide to move in this direction, people who produce green energy will pay the congregation \$20 for every household that switches over to their service. A smaller amount is being explored for each subsequent year. This provides us an opportunity to make a difference in the planet and might be worthy of further exploration.

Recommended that the Rabbi work with VP-Admin and Administrator to explore further.

DECORATING COMMITTEE: Proposed upgrade to facility

Motion: J. Baer. (2nd G. Edley) *Accept the recommendations of the decorating committee as demonstrated by Les/Evan.*

Committee met with interior decorator that decorated the social hall and kiddush room. Classical Caterers reviewed planned décor changes.

Walls: Draped effect, color on color. Columns will have "stone" finish paper with crown molding in a cherry color.

Mirror by bandstand will be coming down.

Back curtain of congregation will be beige tweed (facing the sanctuary) and brown tweed will face social hall.

Dance floor will be granite. Dance floor shape will move to octagon.

Plan to do in July during the month when no events (July 9 – July 30).

Sanctuary will also be painted.

VOTE: **Motion passed** unanimously.

Point of information: need to identify alternate locations for kiddush during redecorating.

BUDGET Presentation/Revisions (M. Abshutz)

Recommending a \$40 per year dues increase.

Reduced fund raising line from \$20,000 to \$16,000.

Proposed cantorial package is equivalent to current cantor package.

Increased makelah line by \$2000.

Added \$5000 into mortgage line to reflect refinancing.

General fund "reserve"

Questions:

- Will people look at dues increase due to the building fund?
- Fundraising: will we reach the \$16,000? Is \$16 high on the expectations – our ongoing fundraisers are down?
 - Committee did discuss the fact that the base fundraisers are between \$10-11,000. This would require an additional \$5000 from other activities.
- HHD Pledges: we were pleased this year that collected same amount, however, this year we have a different economic situation and billings have begun on the expansion. Should we assume that we would stay flat?
 - Committee did agree that was one of the risks in the budget. Budget is 6% below 2000/2001 collections.
 - Pledges have been relatively stable over the past few years.
- Summer camp expenses:
 - These monies are to reinstate camp for summer 2002
- Fundraising: up until past year, we never had a "big event" in mind.
- Capital Campaign: There has only been one family who asked to defer their payment. Everyone else has been paying. Research also said that Capital Campaign do not usually impact High Holiday campaigns.
- Setting up "new reserves" account: Board would act upon to spend for specific projects of roof, parking lot, and operating fund. The general operating fund would be a "new fund".
 - Should we set up a new reserve (i.e. hold back the excess) or should we not raise dues?

Motion (M. Dillman, 2nd H. Schneider) Accept budget as submitted.

VOTE: **Motion passed** with one abstention.

Nominations Update

The slate is almost complete. Extended invitations to two additional trustees. We are still looking for VP-Ways and Means.

- Difficulty is lack of plan beside ongoing "static" fundraisers.
- Challenge is also constitutional change that in order to be a VP you must have been a trustee in the past.
- Individuals feel that they are personally responsible if they don't make the numbers
- Even if you have volunteer, it is difficult to have volunteers to help

An issue before us is current by-laws that state we must notify the congregation 45 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the proposed slate and budget. This timeframe was developed to allow those not nominated to express an interest in serving and having their name on a ballot. The Annual Meeting is currently scheduled for June 11th. President Frumkin would like to send a letter to congregation acknowledging that we are in violation of the by-law but, unless someone objects, move forward with the Annual meeting as planned.

Motion (A. Ross 2nd G. Edley): *Send letter to congregation that we recognize that we are not providing the required 45 days notification of the slate but moving forward with meeting on June 11. The letter will also note if anyone objects, they are to notify the synagogue and the requisite 45 days will be provided.*

- Could we have gone to the congregation without a complete slate? Yes.

Motion: Carried with one opposed.

Jay Scheuer requested to address the board:

Over past month has been very upset. Asked to be on board in coming year, but has refused. Reason for disappointment comes to three points:

- Process used in the hiring of a replacement for our current cantor. Have we moved back on the Congregation's desire for a full-time qualified cantor? It is unclear whether proper due diligence was conducted.
- Disturbed by the procedures – bypassed the search committee and allowed acting Ritual chairman to come up with a flawed presentation. Not all members were notified of meeting.
- Synagogue direction
 - We talk but often times no action is taken. We appear to be a rudderless ship. Use the phrase “the next level” without any real meaning.
 - What does this mean? What are we looking for? What is it we want to do? The next question is how do we do it?

While coming up to the end of this board – challenge to the next board: Come up with the idea of what we want to be; what is that next level that we talk about and how do we get there.

A. Ross:

Challenge the board to double-check the processes!

Cheer and Sorrow:

Refuah Shelayma (Get Well wishes)

Hamakom Yenahem

Motion to adjourn: A. Ross, 2nd L. Marx **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.