

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Board of Directors Meeting June 4, 2012

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

Also attending: Rabbi Wolkoff, Cantor Rockman, Lynne Weiss-Marshall, Mark Roller, Marty Abschutz

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

The minutes of the May meeting were approved as submitted.

Rabbi Wolkoff discussed the unusual phrasing in the Torah when it describes lighting the candles on the menorah as causing the light to “rise up.” He said his odd construction contemplates both the physical and the spiritual in the act of lighting the menorah. The rabbi said we should be doing more than applying flame. The rabbi said we can give the lights spiritual meaning if we infuse the act with our hearts and souls. Pouring our heart and soul into the act helps make the light – and us – rise in the spiritual sense.

In the president’s report, Bergman advised the board of the rescheduling of the congregational meeting. It is now set for 25 June. He also informed the group of the work of a committee examining the congregation’s constitution for possible changes. Any recommendations of the committee will be considered at a future meeting.

There was a lengthy and detailed discussion on the proposed budget for fiscal 2013.

Marty Abschutz, chairman of the budget committee, described the challenges the budget must contend with for the coming year. Among those are a sharply reduced carry-forward (estimated at \$3,673 versus \$41,000 a year before); change in the Gift-Card program; and uncertainty in the parsonage situation that might increase expenses (without revenue to offset).

Abschutz also described the several assumptions incorporated into this proposal. Chief among those is the calculation of 228 as number for full dues paying equivalent members for budgeting purposes. He described how this number was derived from actual billings over the past year.

Abschutz and Gary Wesalo, the treasurer, also shared additional highlights of and insights into the budget proposal, including:

- The transfer of the financial obligation previously attributed to scrip will account for a significant percentage (5.1 percentage points) of the change in the dues category.
- Dues collection for FY12 likely to come in \$30,000 below budget, hurting carryover and the FY13 budget
- Spending is projected to increase 3.9%

- Most spending is contractual (such as clergy salaries) or at least not discretionary (such as utilities)
- Though the caterer will likely surpass budget forecasts for FY12, there are fewer parties scheduled in FY13, hence lower projected revenue
- Projecting scrip income in the coming year is difficult because the program hasn't been fully defined; still, scrip is budgeted at \$7,500 of the \$31,000 in the fund raising category

Abschutz indicated that at present, the budget proposal contemplated \$585,000 in dues, representing a 15% increase (of which 5.1 percentage points are the transferred scrip obligation).

Several board member expressed concerns about the magnitude of the increase. Some asked whether such an increase might prompt some members to resign. There was discussion about whether additional spending cuts could be found and about revisiting the previous decision to change the scrip program. There was also discussion about the disposition of the parsonage and whether sale proceeds or rental income might help offset significant spending. Some board members asked about religious school fees and whether they should be raised.

The board then focused the discussion on the congregation's dedicated funds and how those accounts might be used to address current needs.

In that regard, Aaron Rosloff moved (Ruth Anne Koenick seconds):

To transfer the amount in the expansion fund into the capital improvements fund and use the equivalent of its proceeds for current year operating expenses

Jeff Schwartz moved to amend the previous motion (Cukor seconds) as follows:

To amend the previous motion such that the amount in the Jeff Schwartz Fund is used to pay for the acquisition of a new memorial board

There was a lengthy discussion on this motion and its amendment, about the dedicated funds in general and about when and how those funds are used. Some raised concerns whether tapping these funds now might dissuade potential donors in the future. It was noted that several of the funds hadn't had any activity in years.

A vote was taken on the amendment. It passed with 19 in favor, none opposed, none abstaining

The amended motion was then read. It is:

To transfer the amount in the expansion fund into the capital improvements fund and use the equivalent of its proceeds for current year operating expenses; and to use the amount in the Jeff Schwartz Fund to pay for the acquisition of a new memorial board

A vote on that motion passed with 18 in favor, 1 opposed.

To help allay some of the budget issues, Schwartz offered to assist in the purchase of a new memorial board for the congregation. He offered to fund that portion of the new board currently not already being funded. Bergman also volunteered a \$1,000 donation to offset some of the budget.

After more discussion about individual dedicated funds and possible use of that money, Howard Hoffman offered the following motion (David Cukor seconds).

Move to initiate the following changes to funds existing in the CBT accounts:

- **Bronfman fund – use \$234 for education expenses and close the fund**
- **Ritual – use \$2,291 to offset expenses already incurred in the ritual category**
- **Religious school special fund - use \$7,000 to offset religious school spending**
- **Accept a gift from Gary Bergman for \$1,000**
- **Arnie Miller Fund – use \$865 for Jewish enrichment in the nursery school**
- **Kane Endowment – use \$5,000 to offset operating expenses**
- **Sons of Tikvah fund – use \$1,000 to offset operating expenses**
- **Social Action fund – use \$1,000 to offset operating expenses**

A vote on that motion passed with 18 in favor, 1 opposed

Abschutz indicated he would incorporate these changes into a new budget proposal. He said the dues impact will be lessened in the next iteration.

There was an ensuing discussion around the sustainability of budgeting process. One possible proposal floated was to initiate a prepaid dues policy in which members pay in advance for each year. This would make dues income more predictable. There was also discussion about ways to trim expenses.

In the financial secretary's report, Mark Kasdin said the congregation counts 385 members, 79 of which are on special arrangements. There are 59 senior members paying full senior dues (30 seniors are on special arrangements). He said \$80,000 in dues and \$9,400 in school fees are still owing from this year.

For administration, Cukor informed the board that there has been no change in the status of the parsonage. A committee was formed to investigate options. If necessary, a special congregational meeting will be convened to discuss sale or other major changes contemplated.

(Written report from USY is appended below.)

Cantor Rockman in his report shared plans for the "People Are Hungry Every Day" event which will include local clergy along with Sons of Tikvah and the Crossroads South jazz band. Rejoice is seeking volunteers.

Ruth Anne Koenick provided an update on plans to raise funds to purchase a new Torah scroll. A committee is being formed. Contract talks are beginning with a sofer. She said the plan now is for a kick-off for the project in October.

Schwartz moves (Koenick seconds) a motion regarding bank accounts for Youth activities:

Move that board pass a resolution authorizing TD Bank to change signatories on the Youth Committee checking account to give signing authority to Jeff Schwartz, Ruth Shindler and Barry Safeer

The motion passed by a vote of 19 in favor, none opposed

Cukor offered a motion (Koenick seconds) regarding an extension in an amendment to the caterer's contract:

Moves to extend the amendment to the caterer contract for one more year to provide for a payment to the congregation of \$9.50 per child per bar mitzvah.

That motion passed by a vote of 19 in favor, none opposed.

Cadoff offered a motion (Koenick seconds) to revisit the scrip program:

Move to reinstitute the Gift-Card program to make it a dues reduction program. Congregants buying scrip receive credit equal to the scrip discount against dues providing they don't make the purchase with a credit card. The maximum benefit a congregant can accrue is \$120 for families and \$60 for seniors and singles. Any additional scrip purchased will accrue to the congregation as fund-raising.

Questions were raised about the budget impact of the change. There was discussion about how scrip proceeds might be re-allocated and about incentivizing the program.

The motion failed by a vote of 3 in favor, 14 opposed.

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Lauren Cohen (Linda Fellen seconds).

Report from USY

Hi Gary,

I will not be at tonight's meeting as I have Senior Awards at my school.

I just wanted to give a quick recap for the past month. If you could please read this at the meeting, I'd appreciate it!

On May 19th, NSBUSY hosted our annual Rock-a-Thon. We rocked out to music, hung out with friends, and had a blast. Other chapters were invited and several other people attended from the region. There were 55 kids in attendance and we raised over \$1000 for SA/TO!!!! This successful event was planned by Jason Shindler.

We also just had our chapter elections and have elected the new NSBUSY board for the 2012-2013 year which will be headed by Arielle Weg, new chapter president. Everyone is very excited to plan for next year and a big congrats to them all!

Tonight, there is an ice cream social where the 8th grade Kadimaniks have been invited so they can get excited to be in USY next year! Lastly, next Friday will be the first ever USY and Kadima End of the Year Banquet. We are very excited for this event and USY and Kadima families have been invited.

I just wanted to take a moment to thank everyone on the Board of Directors for being so warm and nice to me this year at meetings. I enjoyed being at the meetings and having the opportunity to speak on behalf of USY. I hope everyone has a great summer and I look forward to seeing everyone around the temple. Thanks again!

Sarah Shindler