

**Congregation B'nai Tikvah Board Meeting
Minutes of Meeting
September 10, 2001**

Attendees:

Cheryl Asnis	Rabbi David Eligberg	Cantor Bruce Rockman
Janice Baer	Mitch Frumkin	Harold Schneider
Arie Behar	Madeline Gaynor	Lisa Tannenbaum
Gary Bergman	Cindy Gittleman	Gary Tinkel
Elliot Danto	Dan Greenberg	LouAnne Wolf
Marc Dillman	Naomi Jackenthal	Keith Zimmerman
Jerry Edley	Mark Kasdin	
Hadas Elami	Jodi Marcou	

Not Attending:

Larry Cohen	Ann Gold
Harvey Finkelstein	Jerry Kaminsky

Non-Board Guests

Marc Binder	Aaron Rosloff
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Call to Order [Mitch Frumkin]

Meeting called to order at 8:03 PM by Mitch Frumkin.

Approval of Minutes of August 14th, 2001 Meeting [All]

Two corrections to the minutes of August 14, 2001:

- 50+ Club gave a \$500 voluntary donation to the synagogue
- Sisterhood: while sales of flowers were good, they were not great, and they hoped for and expected more support from the Board.

Motion for Approval of Minutes as corrected [moved by G. Tinkel, second by G. Bergman] Minutes Approved [18 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention]

New Business [All]

1. Per Mitch, the Rabbi will stop by later in the meeting, but will not be able to stay due to the death of Jodi's grandmother.

2. High Holiday Seating:

A. Behar passed out his Administrative VP's Report, including a copy of the seating plan for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. He indicated that he and Hadas had arranged for the North Brunswick Fire Marshal to come to the synagogue and review both the room and the plans for High Holiday seating for his commentary.

The Fire Marshal indicated that the minimum distance required for aisles between the 'columns' of chairs is 36 inches. He also indicated that there should be no dividers separating the seating from the doors.

Because of this, he asked for a motion to reverse the previous motion of the Board (August 10th) in regard to the size of aisles and rows (which would cause us to lose substantial seating), change the size of aisles to 44" and of rows to 22", to remove all objects (i.e. dividers) from near the doors, and to enshrine

these numbers under the auspices of the Ritual Committee in perpetuity (as long as municipal codes are adhered to).

Question [J. Baer]: What was the distance of the rows last year? Answer: 22".

M. Binder: the size of the pew rows is approximately 18½ inches.

J. Baer: the rows seem narrower in the moveable chairs.

Question [D. Greenberg]: Where are we at with guest tickets? Can we afford to lose the extra seats? Answer: to date we have sold 104 guest tickets; last year we sold a total of 160. since we still have a week to go, it's hard to say.

J. Edley: since people move the chairs as they get up and sit down, we end up with less space than we start out with.

M. Gaynor: the pews are deeper than the chairs, therefore they seem (and are) roomier.

A. Rosloff: we are asking for trouble. Changing from a six-foot aisle (which was adopted last meeting) to 44 inches is much too tight. It's important to realize that the fire marshal doesn't make the rules – he just tells us what they are. 44 inches is too tight – it's dangerous.

M. Frumkin and A. Behar: last year's aisles were also 44 inches – this is no change.

H. Elami: the diagram that was distributed (attached hereto) was an exact copy of last year's setup. The diagram was made so that the seating configuration could be 'restored' before Yom Kippur after the caterer removed the chairs for an event.

E. Danto: Despite our adopting it last meeting, we have never had a six-foot aisle.

Motion [moved by K. Zimmerman, seconded by J. Baer] to reverse the previous motion of the Board (August 10th) in regard to the size of aisles and rows (which would cause us to lose substantial seating), change the size of aisles to 44" and of rows to 22", to remove all objects (i.e. dividers) from near the doors, and to enshrine these numbers under the auspices of the Ritual Committee in perpetuity (as long as municipal codes are adhered to).

M. Binder: Removing the dividers (i.e. the screens) from inside the doors will impact significant numbers of people who will be naturally distracted from the services as people enter the sanctuary. When the doors open, it's natural for people to look up to see who's coming in. Can we amend the motion to drop the language on the removal of the dividers?

A. Behar: It is a code violation to have them.

E. Danto: The dividers have immensely improved the quality and decorum of the service. Were the dividers set up to actually show the fire marshal?

A. Behar: No.

J. Baer: Did the fire marshal actually say that it was a violation or that we just shouldn't have them there?

A. Behar: It is a violation.

Question is called by J. Edley, second by M. Kasdin.

Motion to reverse previous standards and set new ones under the auspices of Ritual Committee Approved [9 Yes, 6 No, 4 Abstain].

M. Binder: In light of this motion, please assign extra ushers so that the Ritual Committee can maintain decorum. We also need to try to keep the area between the doors (in the lobby) free and clear of people as much as possible.

Dvar Torah [Rabbi]

At the beginning of this week's torah portion. it says that today you are all gathered in the presence of the Lord your G-d: your leaders, those in your command, all men women, children, sojourners guests, etc. The torah talks of everybody, from the lowest to the highest of professions. Why? So that you will all become His people. The covenant is with everyone. The commitment made is with those that are here and those that are not here.

The point is that every single member of the Jewish community is part of the covenant; if even a single person is not included, then the whole covenant is not complete. That's why every Jewish person is important and counts.

One of the ways we can show our commitment is to be counted as part of the Solidarity for Israel March to be held in New York on Sunday, September 23rd. Every single person needs to stand up and be counted. We have arranged for busses from B'nai Tikvah – the cost will be \$10 per person, including lunch. If we are serious about being Jews, we all need to come to this once in a lifetime event.

Question: Will the members of USY be joining us? There will be at least 20 USY'ers there.

M. Frumkin: Whatever the cost is above \$10 per person, the Rabbi will make it up out of his discretionary fund. Please try to be there.

President's Report [M. Frumkin]

1. Aaron Rosloff sent a very touching letter to the board. (Aaron read the letter to the board.) He is very honored and touched by the board's action in accepting his \$1,000 offer for the last stained glass window, but he must decline this gift. The Rosoloff's will gladly contribute the full \$3,500 cost of the window in honor of their parents. He and Millie have tremendous very feelings of gratitude; thank you very much for the kind offer of the \$2,500 gift, and thank you very much for the second plaque.
2. The board had asked John Wolf to return and report after he met with Gary Tinkel and Ann Gold – that has not happened yet; John will make his presentation next month.

3. The dedication ceremony of the cemetery markers was well attended by the Rabbi, Cantor, and members of the congregation; there was even coverage in the local newspaper (very nice photo).
4. The new stained glass windows will be dedicated on the Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.
5. K. Zimmerman is heading up Super Sunday for Middlesex County this year. It is on October 28th. The whole board should make the effort to support this cause by volunteering to make calls on that day [sign up sheets distributed]. Question [J. Edley]: are there other things that we can do besides making calls? Answer: Yes; Keith will keep everyone abreast.
6. There has been correspondence between the mayor of Ramla (who will be visiting in December) and various people here. Mitch would like us to know if there is interest in reaching out to them by becoming sister cities. Per Mitch, Bette Koffler has spoken to Debbie Johnson (mayor of South Brunswick) about this.

Question [J. Baer]: What does this entail? Answer: we really don't know yet. C. Gittleman: possible emails, letters, pen pals, etc.

Motion [moved by J. Edley, second by G. Bergman] to empower the president to look into what it would entail.

A. Behar: he was in Israel last month and met with the mayor of Ramla – he was almost pleading for support – the feeling of being alone in the world is terrible – it is terrifying them. They need any kind of support we can muster.

M. Gaynor: Is this where Arie was born? Yes

Motion called [by K. Zimmerman]. Approved [yes 19, No 0, Abstain 0]

Financial Report [G. Tinkel]

Membership is now 443 families, which is 312 Dues Paying Equivalents.

We brought back some ex-members into the fold – some of these were on special arrangements. Thank you very much to Hadas for dealing with this.

This time of year is "let's make a deal" time, which means that a lot of people are calling right up until the last minute. Gary is getting fewer calls than before, which means that Hadas is fielding them and doing a great job. Last month we had anticipated holding back 30 – 40 tickets for non-payment; we are actually holding back less than 10. Great job!

Treasurer's Report [M. Dillman]

What is not in the attached report is nursery school income of approximately \$28K. We are cash positive – with over \$100K in the black.

The cash situation is also good – \$183K in available funds, after taking out various sequestered funds.

Expansion Committee Report [M. Kasdin]

He spoke to Mike Soriano (architect) last week – Arie, Mitch and Mark were shown part of the bid package last week. We should get the complete package any day. Next order of business after review is to get bids.

Men's Club Report [J. Edley]

No meeting this month, there will be one next month. Men's Club will be putting up the sukkah.

Sisterhood Report [C. Asnis]

M. Frumkin: At the last Executive Committee Meeting, it was decided that to shorten Shabbat service time, Bar/Bat Mitzvah gifts would be limited to one or two people, instead of the three or four that now exist. Email to that effect was sent to both Sisterhood and Men's Club asking their cooperation, and asking whether they wanted to be included in the list of people giving the gifts.

C. Asnis: No problem.

M. Frumkin: Also, they were asked if they wanted to have a representative on the bimah.

C. Asnis: Yes, they would like to have a representative on the bimah every Shabbat.

M. Frumkin: There may be a space problem with every Shabbat, but certainly they will be put in the rotation.

C. Gittleman: Are we open to having the family pick someone to give the gift? Especially if they know the child?

M. Frumkin: The preference is always someone they know. The only thing to remember is that if family wants someone in particular, the family needs to ask them in advance so that they know what's going on.

C. Asnis: The Sisterhood strongly supports the synagogue and they put on programs that have a direct financial benefit to the synagogue – the Sisterhood asks the Board to strongly support their fundraisers, in particular the High Holiday Flower Sale. (Sign up forms were distributed.)

E. Danto: The paid-up membership dinner has always been closed to synagogue members – even when there were speakers that would be nice for everyone to hear. Will the Sisterhood open up the 'speaker' portion of their dinner so that the whole congregation may benefit?

C. Asnis: Some activities are open to all (e.g. Israeli dancing) – the membership dinner is for members, so that might be difficult to open to all, but she will bring it up to the Sisterhood board.

50+ Club [M. Gaynor]

No report – no meeting because of holidays.

Vice-Presidents Reports

Administration [A. Behar]

Thanks to Hadas for getting all High Holiday materials (tickets, memorial book, etc) printed in-house, instead of going to printer – we saved significant dollars this way.

Ways and Means [J. Marcou]

Scrip and entertainment books are now available Sunday mornings, please participate.

The major fundraiser will be a car raffle – please help out and show your support.

School and Youth [H. Schneider]

Met Steve Springer (new USY advisor) for the first time on Sunday night – seems very dynamic. Looking forward to working with him.

The nursery school enrollment is about the same as last year; 248 kids enrolled in the religious school – looks good!

Activities [E. Danto]

The comedy night is scheduled for April 20th, 2002 – comedians are booked.
There are classes scheduled prior to each major holiday.
We still need chair for adult education and programming.
The Lunch & Learn program is coming back – watch for details.

Good and Welfare [Cantor]

- Refuah Shlemah to Hattie Loewen and Herman Rotter.
- Condolences to the families of: Hesh Kaufman, Morris Haller, Judith Molnar and May Abramson
- Mazel tov to the Rubins (Bar Mitzvah), the Van Hessens (Bat Mitzvah) and the Rekants (Bar Mitzvah).
- Good News: Suse Rosenstock will be coming home Wednesday.

Confirmation of next Meeting

Next meeting is Thursday, October 4th, 2001.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. [Moved by D. Greenberg, second by J. Edley] Motion Approved.
Adjourned 9:20.