

Beth El Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes June 14, 2018

Members Present: Abby Steele, President; Neal Goldman, Immediate Past President; Charlie Frohman, Vice President; Rachel Marcus-Hendry Mitchell, Secretary; Chip Morris, Treasurer; Sherill Herzfeld, Stuart Rosenthal, David Marco, MG Orender.

Rabbi Matuson was in attendance. In-coming Board members were invited to attend: Judy De Arman, Grace Belkin.

A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Abby Steele, President.

Approval of May 2018 Minutes: May 10, 2018 minutes were approved and accepted.

D'var Torah: Rabbi Matuson addressed the Board: "The Torah portion this week is timely. There is a serious challenge to Moses's leadership by a very experienced and knowledgeable person named Korach. He had a following of 250 people that had legitimate and reasonable complaints, and some not so reasonable. It also got down to personal issues about Moses. Moses was vulnerable, hurt and angry. He turned to G-d and said 'What do you want me to do?' 'God heard Moses and shortly after the earth opened-up and 250 people perished. The result of this tragedy infuriated the people and they asked Moses, 'how could you do this?' 'In the end I suspect the lesson is appeasement never brings peace.' 'The moral lesson is also unremitting and unrelenting also never brings peace. The Rabbis' concluded that in some way, in-between character is defined. A congregation is defined by who are we.' 'Are we willing to accept criticism?' Leadership is difficult because some might want to stamp out criticism, some might want to appease people, but it's the middle ground that is the most difficult of all. A non-anxious presence is important and to find some way not to be overreactive is equally important. 'May you find your way in between. If your feelings get hurt I pray that you surround yourself with supportive people. And find your way to reasonableness and pray for a way to heal.'"

The Rabbi then recused himself from the meeting.

President's Message: Abby Steele, President of the Board, thanked Cathy Winterfield for everything she has done over the last few years. She was unable to come to the meeting, so Abby postponed a special "party" for her. She also thanked everyone on the Board for their leadership, attendance at our meetings, making presentations to children, and everything else in between. "I agree with the Rabbi, that in everything we do we should have balance in our personal life, balance in our professional life, balance here in the Synagogue. I am glad you are the people I am striving to do that with."

Treasurer: Chip announced that there are no new members this month, but Abby pointed out that several people are intending to join shortly. Chip then passed out the financial Budget vs Actuals from July 2017- May 2018. Although it indicates a net surplus of around \$38,000 will come down to around \$26,000. When asked why, Chip said that normally in the month of June we run a deficit, so he's factoring that in as a projection. MG commented that he has been waiting to hear about a surplus, so that's good.

New Business:

High Holiday Cantor- Rabbi Butensky has signed his contract and will be returning for two days of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Signage landscaping and lighting design- Rachel would like to clean up around the sign, redesign the lighting so it does not obstruct the sign, and landscape around it. Charlie offered the Brotherhood's assistance, MG offered to have someone that works for him redo the lighting so there is no obstruction and so we can create an attractive curb appeal. All of this will be presented through the Facilities Committee, and completed prior to the High Holidays.

Rabbi's Contract – The Rabbi's contract will expire at the end of 2019, and he is interested in extending his contract for another three years. In order to agree to the extension of his contract, he is proposing the following: He would like to create a legacy for his love of Beth El. He is proposing that starting in March of 2019, he would forgo the equivalent of his Social Security. He requests that the Board agree to commit an equivalent amount monthly to pay down the principal on the Synagogue's mortgage. In three years it would amount to approximately \$100,000. He wants to be totally transparent about it, as he wishes the Synagogue to continue to grow and remain solvent. He would like this to be a legacy for our Synagogue. He wants to reach out to the congregation and as well as the wider community to start a dialogue regarding legacy and see if others will step up as well. Sherill will be tapped to create a Public Relations campaign, and another Board member may spear-head this. Neal asked Sherill if she would put something in the eblast that the Rabbi's contract was extended another three years.

Neal made a motion to extend a three-year contract extension to the Rabbi, with a three percent escalator. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Liaison Committee – Abby introduced the proposal that we create a Congregational Liaison Committee whereby congregants can have a venue to voice concerns, complaints or suggestions. This committee will be chaired by Tracy Aquila and will be comprised of two non-Board congregants. We will look at how other congregations are implementing this and develop a Mission Statement. It is a great way for congregants to have a voice. Also discussed was holding the meeting during the day so older people can attend.

There was a motion to create a Liaison Committee, it was seconded and unanimously approved.

Board Committee Chair Reports:

Sisterhood – Sherill is going to Chair the Fashion Show. She floated November 1st as a possible date for the event. Bobby Adler has agreed to co-chair Sisterhood with Vickie Kennedy.

Brotherhood – Reported by Charlie, that they are looking for more participation.

Other Matters:

MG brought up that there was some talk in the community about the Synagogue being perceived as a more Conservative Temple. There was some discussion about there having been no changes in the synagogue's worship practices in many years, but possibly various Cantorial Soloists and the HH Cantor resonate differently to some congregants.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Board will be, July 14 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Marcus-Hendry Mitchell

Rachel Marcus-Hendry Mitchell, Secretary