**Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

**Temple Beth-El, Las Cruces, New Mexico**

**MINUTES**

**February 21, 2019**

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| **Trustees Present**: Jeff Brown, Dee Cook, Cheryl Decker, Luke Duddridge, Jeff Lewis, Art Lorbeer,  Michael Mandel, Ruth Rubin, Ellen Torres, Rabbi Larry Karol (ex-officio)  **Trustees Absent:** Pearie Bruder, Diane Fleishman, Ned Rubin, Joanne Turnbull  **Guest(s):** Rose Jacobs, Elliott Katz, Mark Saltman |

**Call to Order:** Rose Jacobs sold JFFF tickets before the meeting began. The meeting was called to order by President Ellen Torres at 7:08 p.m.

**Invocation:** Rabbi Karol led the Board in the invocation.

**Acceptance of Minutes:** Luke Duddridge moved accepting the minutes for the January 17 and January 30 Board meetings. Cheryl Decker seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

**Guest Reports**: Mark Saltman discussed security matters. He met with the Las Cruces Police Department and obtained a contract to hire off-duty police officers for special Temple meetings and events. We must have workman’s compensation and liability coverage, and Mark learned from Pat Campbell Insurance that we have it. The benefits of off-duty officers are that they are armed and in uniform, their vehicles will be present, and they can quickly contact other LCPD officers if necessary. The cost will be $40 per officer per hour plus city fees and benefits, with the total cost being $108 per hour for two officers. Rose Jacobs recommended six hours of coverage for JFFF. This will cost a total of $648. Jeff Brown moved and Luke Duddridge seconded approving this contract for JFFF. The motion passed unanimously. Discussants noted that we can still hire security guards from Security Consultants for other needs, and that an additional police vehicle could be parked in our lot as a deterrent. Mark noted that he is separately pursuing active shooter training, and Board members discussed off-site locations to which TBE attendees could run if needed. Mark offered to speak at High Holy Days about security, and he noted a sign in the Library showing all TBE exit sites.

Elliot Katz discussed ways to create an endowment fund. One method is to ask Temple members to meet as a pair with Temple member families at their homes to discuss Gift Giving to the Temple. Member families could include TBE as a beneficiary in their life insurance, to give an annuity upon maturation to TBE, or to provide funds in other ways. He offered to meet with member families, and Cheryl Decker said that she could provide guidance in revising insurance beneficiaries. Elliot has information from other Temples. Luke Duddridge suggested including Gift Giving in a packet for new members. TBE members visiting member families can help to make them more aware of the Temple’s services. Elliot suggested placing new members’ building funds into a Temple endowment. Poker nights could be one way to raise funds. New members’ building fund payments could flow into an endowment. There could be special dinners with $20 of the ticket price going to the endowment. Elliott suggested creating a Temple Grant Writing Committee focused on grants that can help fund Temple needs. He encouraged us to find alternate uses for the building when it is not currently in use and gave jazz nights or space for small churches as examples of other temples’ fundraising. The discussion noted that although we do not have spare Torahs to lend to other temples for a fee, we need to take every opportunity that we can. President Ellen Torres will put endowment projects under the Ways and Means Committee and asked them to meet with Elliot.

**Rabbi’s Report**. Several religious groups have been invited to attend Temple services on Friday, March 1 for Shabbat Across America. Marshall Voit, who provides music at a Reform congregation in San Diego, will join him in leading our services on Friday, March 29. The Rabbi’s NMJHS *Legacy* article about interfaith services has been published. The Rabbi noted that a congregant will pay for an ad in the Las Cruces *Bulletin* about the Israel Committee’s forum. He recommended that we change our earlier plan by continuing weekly advertisements in the *Bulletin* rather than advertising in their annual Life Is Good publication. Michael Mandel moved to restore the original weekly ads and drop the Life Is Good ad. Jeff Brown seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The Rabbi suggested that we have a policy about ad placements by committees. He and Michael have located Discretionary Fund contributions that were made through December donations but were not listed as Discretionary. The Temple Directory that the Rabbi and Rose Jacobs prepared is ready to be sent via e-mail. He will attend the Central Conference of American Rabbis convention in Cincinnati on March 30-April 4.

**President’s Report**. President Ellen Torres asked Michael Mandel to provide $2,500 for Julie Silver’s May 15 performance contract. She discussed publicity and radio ad costs. The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso will cover these costs. Ellen asked Board members to bring refreshments for the social time after the performance. TBE can ask attendees to pay an admissions charge. Ellen noted that special sponsors for Julie’s performance can be listed in the brochure. Ellen and the Board discussed the wording of a letter that will ask congregants for a special contribution to support security at Temple events and to help with funding for operational costs, since we are now facing a troublesome deficit. After the Board went into and left an Executive Session, Ellen thanked everyone for their work that made A Night At The Auction a great success. She thanked the Social Action Committee for arranging the recent immigration forums, and she encouraged Board members to attend the Israel Committee’s forum on February 24 about Israel and Anti-Semitism, the Leadership forum on March 3, and the presentation about the Swastika in New Mexico on March 10 by Richard Melzer of the NMJHS. Information about the Batkin Scholarship will be published in the Adelante. We received an additional letter of appreciation from the Mesilla Valley Hospice for our donation of $1,000 from the Matzoh Ball Golf Tournament.

**Treasurer’s Report**: Treasurer Michael Mandel noted that our dues revenues this year may barely reach the $100,000 level. The Board discussed bookkeeping and noted that some members who have accounting training can help Michael when he meets with our bookkeeper. Michael moved to put all of our cash from the Merrill Lynch account to Schwab, which now pays 2.3% interest. Luke Duddridge seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

Ned Rubin wrote a report about the Adult Education and Social Action Committee’s functions and activities for the March Adelante, and Diane Fleishman has agreed to write a future column about the Membership and Cemetery Committees. Dee Cook agreed to write a column about A Night At The Auction. Dee and Cheryl distributed a handout about this year’s Auction. Including a $2,000 time share sale, the Auction netted $9,630. There were no costs because members donated the dinner items, decorations, etc. Thank you to Dee Cook, Cheryl Decker, Joanne Turnbull, Ann Berkson, Paula Kramer and Rebecca Berkson. The report recommended some small changes for next year, and encouraged collecting ideas such as Chinese New Year, a Super Bowl Party, or a Cinco de Mayo party with a mariachi band. The report recommended adding Wendee Lorbeer to the Core Team.

The Board briefly discussed members who have keys to the Temple. The Nominating Committee is meeting fairly regularly to acquire a slate of interested potential Board members. Jeff Brown said that three History Committee members will meet with NMSU Archivist Dennis Daily about transferring open access TBE records to the Archives. Open access records can be read by anyone with no restrictions. He moved that the Board approve scanning and transferring records that are already available on-line and thus are open access. These include the newsletters/Adelantes, Board minutes, Congregation Meeting minutes, our Constitution, and reports by the President or Rabbi. Cheryl Decker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Discussions about the open-access versus restricted access nature of other documents will be held later. Jeff also noted that the History Day event planned for March 17 has been postponed to the Fall.

The Board continued to discuss different possible mission statements. No decisions were made. The Board Announcements list was distributed.

**New Business:**

Cheryl Decker discussed insurance. She will work with Michael Mandel. The Temple needs to have a comprehensive insurance review each year three months before expirations. The Board asked about roof unit BTUs and whether we might have a concern involving Verizon if the building has a problem and Verizon’s service is cut off.

Art Lorbeer made a thorough utilities report. He encouraged reduced refrigerator usage, although in the short run refrigerators will be full for JFFF. He suggested installing bathroom on-off switches, since the lights are on all the time now. He suggested defrosting a freezer, adjusting thermostats and placing lock boxes on them. He encouraged servicing air conditioning and our hot water heater for efficiency. Art recommended posting signs on doors that would remind people to keep them closed. He suggested checking the regulator valve for effectiveness, and looking for and fixing water leaks. Art recommended investigating options about garbage and recycling and working with utility companies to request energy audits and promote efficiency. Michael Mandel moved to approve these recommendations and place them in effect. Ellen Torres seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Steps will be taken after JFFF. The Board discussed an ideal temperature for services and for indoor work.

Several additional items were postponed to the next meeting, including a report about computer licenses for religious institutions; selecting a second representative to the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso; selecting our Good Deeds Day; and an update on URJ dues.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

**Date of Next Executive Committee Meeting**: **Monday, March 4** @ 6:00 p.m. at Temple.

**Date of Next Board of Trustees Meeting**: **Thursday, March 21** @ 7:00 p.m. at Temple.

**Future Dates: Executive Committee on Mondays**: April 8, April 22

**Future Dates: Board of Trustees on Thursdays**: March 21; April 18

**Date of Annual Congregation Meeting**: Thursday, May 9

**Date of New Board Meeting**: Thursday, May 9 after Annual Congregation Meeting

Respectfully Submitted, Jeff Brown

**Committee and Group Reports – February 21, 2019**

**Adult Education Committee**, Chair, Ned Rubin: Report is attached to Social Action Committee report.

**Budget Committee**, Chair, Allen Blum: As we enter into the 8-month of the TBE approved budget for 2018 - 2019, the Budget Committee will begin the process of developing the 2019 – 2020 budget. This preliminary budget development will first review the current state of the 2018 – 2019 budget and then make determinations as to TBE’s requirements for the forthcoming financial year.

**Building and Grounds Committee**, Co-chairs Jerry Silverman, Norm Mazer, and Jeff Lewis:

The activity over the last month was comprised of the typical type of things that we do, i.e., toilet repair in the Women’s bathroom, trim shrubs, fix this and that, and general cleanup of the building grounds.

**History Committee**, Co-Chairs Jeff Brown, Dee Cook, Linda Kruger, Susan Michelson, Nan Rubin: The Committee decided to postpone its March 17 History Day until the Fall due to a competing Jewish event outside the Temple. Dennis Daily, the director of NMSU’s Archives and Special Collections, agreed to lead History Day in the Fall, and Jeff Brown and Dennis found a time for a potential meeting about TBE materials and the NMSU Archives. Jeff contacted the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati to discuss the types of historical records that might be open to viewing by anyone, and the History Committee began discussing this same topic regarding TBE records. The Committee will plan for the March 10 presentation by Dr. Richard Melzer about “The Swastika in New Mexico Cultures and History.”

**Mensch Club**, Representative, Art Lorbeer: Members volunteered for February and March Friday night Shabbat Services. The Club approved a full page JFFF ad. The February 13 trip to the Space Museum in Alamogordo was a success. The Club received a $200 donation for work done at congregant’s home. The Club discussed placing an ad in the E-Blast and Adelante about the Mensch Club and our activities. A lunch to include deli sandwiches, peppers and onions, coleslaw, pickles, etc. to be served after adjournment in celebration of the completion of modiﬁcations made to for safety when using the meat slicer.

**Nominating Committee**, Chair, Jim Rosenthal: The Nominating Committee is currently contacting individuals about candidacy for the board of trustees. President Ellen Torres, representing the Nominating Committee, will discuss with the board this week a proposal that we consider nominating a snow-bird as a trustee candidate *if*we are unable to identify or recruit sufficient candidates for the board. We believe that these individuals, while here only half a year, are deeply committed to the temple and share deeply an appreciation for the profound role it plays in their lives. Most are present fall through spring and could "attend" board meetings via skype the rest of the year. We are holding our next leadership workshop **"Exploring our Temple," on Sunday, March 3 at 2:00**led by Rabbi Karol, Ann Berkson and Susan Brown. We believe this interactive workshop, including a tour and small group sharing of thoughts, will be of great interest to congregants as well as temple leaders.

**Security**, Chair, Mark Saltman: Mark met with the JFFF people and discussed TBE security protocol for the event. At the next Board meeting he plans to present a copy of the contract between TBE and the City in order to employ off-duty LCPD officers to work the JFFF. He is waiting to hear from one of the LCPD active-shooter instructors regarding that training and will let the Board know as soon as he hears back.

**Sisterhood**, Representative, Dee Cook: TBE Sisterhood Council decided at our November 2018 meeting to forgo our December 2018 and January 2019 meetings.  Our next Sisterhood Council meeting will be held February 28, 2019 at 6:30. Lynn Zeemont was able to secure the Picacho Hills Club House for TBE’s Passover Dinner.  More details on the event will be shared later.

**Social Action Committee**, Chair, Ned Rubin: The Social Action/Adult Education committee recently presented a two-part program about immigration. By all accounts, this was an extremely successful Temple Beth-El experience for our congregation and the community. The impetus for the first part of the program arose from a class taught by congregation member Joanne Turnbull for our religious school. On the first night, Nan Rubin presented an enormously interesting and engaging program about Emma Lazarus, her life and her poem inscribed at the base of the Statue of Liberty. She then presented us with the history of the Statue of Liberty, from its inception in France to its placement in the harbor in New York. The audience of just under 65 people was then able to spend some time studying and analyzing Lazarus’ poem, *The New Colossus.*

On the second night, held during the following week, the presentation was to an even larger group of over 70 people. The evening began with NMSU professor Dr. Neal Rosendorf discussing the history of immigration to the United States. We then had an extremely engaging and enlightening panel discussion. The presenters included Mark Saltman, an Assistant United States Attorney; Barbara Mandel, an Assistant Federal Public Defender and Judge Robert Brack, United States Federal District Court Senior Judge for the Southern district of New Mexico. With great heart and compassion, each described their individual roles, observations and responsibilities in the current immigration system of the United States. The presenters not only spoke about the law, but each described individuals with whom they had encounters through their respective roles in the system. This included family members separated from their children at the border as well as human traffickers, drug smugglers and other criminals. The information was extremely informative and provided much insight into the current debate about immigration. The panel stimulated many questions from the audience.

Another part of the evening had been planned for participants to formally examine their own and/or their family’s immigration history, but the preceding presentations were so fascinating that we simply ran out of time. Some participants, however, did provide answers to questions about themselves and their families. These people shared that the countries of origin of their families included: Russia, Poland, Germany, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Lebanon, Syria, Spain, Denmark, Ukraine, Lithuania and England. Languages spoken at home after immigration included: German, Pennsylvania Dutch, French, Spanish, English, Danish, Yiddish, Arabic and Russian. The main port of entry for almost all who answered that question was Ellis Island although a few entered through Virginia and El Paso, TX. The decades that people and families entered the U.S. ranged from the 1600’s up through 1976. Most of these people worked as laborers, farmers or tradespeople. The incredible diversity of immigration experience reflected in this small sample is apparent. Almost everyone at the program had family members or relatives that “yearned to breathe free” and risked much to come here. They almost all saw the “Mother of Exiles” lifting her “lamp beside the open door” as they ended their journeys sailing past the Statue of Liberty to begin new lives in the United States.

**Strategic Planning Committee**, Chair, Renee Frank: the Strategic Planning Committee will plan its next meeting.

**JFFF**, Co-chairs Francine Feinberg and Rose Jacobs: JFFF is proceeding without any concerns.  The website has been updated [www.lcjewishfestival.weebly.com](http://www.lcjewishfestival.weebly.com).  We are seeking sponsorships and ask members to approach any businesses they patronize if they are interested in being a sponsor.  We are also seeking items to sell at the Bazaar.

**Ways and Means**, Co-Chairs: Dee Cook, Cheryl Decker, Joanne Trumbull: On Friday, February 15, the Ways and Means Committee met to discuss changes to and pros and cons for the 2020 Night At the Auction.  Future meetings will be held to start planning and organizing that event.  We are meeting with a TBE member to discuss ideas for future events.

**Wednesday Breakfast Group**, Chair, Phil Alkon: Presentations will include February 13, Gary Sandler, “How to Buy a House With (Almost) No Down Payment;” February 20, Judy Cota, “How to Prepare for Retirement;” February 27, George Hackler, “The Doc Noss Gold Treasure Story;” March 6 , Seth Hall, “Home on the Range;” and March 13, David Lynch, “How to Disrupt Aging.”