

## MINUTES

### Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Temple Beth-El, Las Cruces, New Mexico

Date: January 19, 2017

**Trustees Present:** Allen Blum, Ann Berkson, Sue Brown, Pearie Bruder, Dee Cook, Renee Frank, Jeff Lewis, Michael Lieberman, Susan Michelson, Ned Rubin, Ellen Torres, Erich Zameret

**Trustees Absent:** Diane Fleishman, Rabbi Karol

**Guest(s):** Patrick Quinn

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by President Ellen Torres at 7:05 pm.

**Invocation:** As the Rabbi was not in attendance, the invocation was given by Ellen Torres.

The board went into Executive Session at 7:15 pm.

#### **Executive Session:**

- A. The Board went into executive session at 7:15.
- B. The Board returned to regular session at 8:10 and continued with the agenda.
  - 1. Dee Cook moved to support the President in signing the Rabbi's contract. Pearie Bruder seconded the motion. The motion passed.
  - 2. Sue Brown moved to accept Joanne Turnbull as a new member. Ann Berkson seconded. The motion passed.

**Acceptance of Minutes.** Ned Rubin moved to accept the minutes, Michael Lieberman seconded. Minutes were accepted.

#### **Leadership / Board Reports**

- A. **Rabbi's Report.** The Rabbi's written report was provided (attached).
- B. **President's Report.** President Ellen Torres reported:
  - 1. Ellen will be attending URJ's Scheidt Seminar for Temple Presidents in San Diego from February 9-12. There are no funds budgeted for this training, but she believes the training will be extremely beneficial, and has paid for the Seminar on her own. She received the small congregation discount offered by URJ. She plans to bring back lots of information that she will share with the Board and congregation.
  - 2. Ann Berkson moved to put money in the budget for next year for the President, or designee, to attend the URJ training for Temple Presidents or other related workshop. Sue Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
  - 3. Following up with the Mike Batkin offer to request funds from the Harry Garbar Estate, no decision has yet been made by the Executor regarding any distribution of funds to TBE. A meeting has been scheduled on February 26 with Ellen (as President), Allen Blum (as Treasurer), the Rabbi, and Mike Batkin (at Mike Batkin's request) to discuss the Batkin Fund.

- C. **Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer Allen Blum reported:
1. As of December 31, 2016, TBE has received a total of a little over \$114,000 in income. Expenses for the same period have been approximately \$105,000. Since 71% of the dues have been collected as of this same time, there is a concern that we may come up short by the end of the year.
  2. Donations received for the Community of Hope Breakfast exceeded expenses by \$253.62. A check has been sent to Community of Hope in that amount with a nice letter wishing them well.

**Committee Reports: Only Committees with Reports Are Shown**

- A. **Sisterhood Report** – Dee Cook, Sisterhood Representative. Dee reported that there is not enough storage at the Temple, requiring some items be stored off site. This is especially problematic with major events such as the JFFF. She recommends the Temple purchase a portable storage unit to be placed on the grounds so that items can be more easily stored and retrieved when needed. This item will be referred to the Building and Grounds Committee for evaluation.
- B. **Mensch Club Report** – Jeff Lewis, Mensch Club Representative. Jeff commented on what a great experience the Community of Hope Breakfast was, and how much it meant to the people who participated.
- C. **Adult Education Committee** – Rose Jacobs, Chair. Tentative schedule of events for 2017:
1. February 12, 2017 -Daniel Chejfac, Director of the Jewish Federation, topic TBA.
  2. March 5, 2017 -Andrea Orzoff - new book published - music & musicians from Nazi-occupied Europe to Latin America. Andrea has the option to sell her book with 10% of her profit on the day of the event to be donated to Temple Beth El, per past practice with all speakers and presenters.
  3. May 21, 2017 - Nan Rubin (PBS Station) topic TBA.
  4. June ?, 2017 - Sing-a-long with Rabbi Karol after Havdalah service.
- D. **Building and Grounds Committee** – Jerry Silverman/Norm Mazer/Jeff Lewis, Co-Chairs:
1. The Security Committee recommended removal of the large bush in the playground area since it could provide cover for an intruder. This task has been completed.
  2. Tree bark mulch has been added to the Memorial Garden Fountain area to finalize that task.
  3. The five heating and air conditioning systems that are located on TBE's roof had their annual system testing and adjustments. The results were positive and no additional maintenance is presently required. Air filters are changed quarterly by the service company, Aire Serve.
  4. Dimar, the company responsible for testing and certification of our fire detection/sprinkler system along with the wastewater back flow system performed testing on Monday, January 16, 2017.
- E. **Nominating Committee** – Jim Rosenthal, Chair. The ad hoc Leadership Committee next meets on January 29. Much of the discussion in these meetings is relevant to the nominating process. As a result, the nominating committee will be meeting much sooner in the year than in past years.

- F. **Social Action Committee** - Ned Rubin, Chair. The committee is planning to set up a chavurah focused on social justice. This is a type of fellowship or study group with readings and conversation focused on particular issues. More information will be forthcoming.
- G. **Ways and Mean Committee** – Lionel Jacobs, Chair.
1. **Report by Chair Alison Mann, Biblical Garden & Brick Walkway sub-committee.**
    - a. **Fund**-There is approximately \$6000 in the BGBW. Alison reminded everyone that this fund was begun with the idea it would provide monies for the Temple for many years into the future.
    - b. **Bricks**-The last order of bricks was sent in by Dee. Five bricks were ordered. Bob Kimball agreed to fix the area of sand between the bricks and the walkway, and will ask George Salas to cut the bricks for edging. Frances Williams said she could sell at least 40 bricks and needs to communicate personally with the people, many of whom are former members of the congregation. Dee suggested Frances look at the Memorial tablets in the Sanctuary to see the names of the families who had perished in the Holocaust and whose plaques were put up by their surviving families. Dee and Alison will provide forms for the people Frances contacts.
    - c. **Planting**- The committee viewed the meditation area by the fountain. All the plants seem to be doing well. Howie suggested grape vines and herbs like chives, oregano and basil to be planted in the spring.
    - d. **Shade**- There was discussion about canvas sails to be put up for shade. The concern was that that they would deteriorate within a few years and would need to be replaced. There was also discussion about pergolas and types of wood that would hold up in our climate. Bob explained that even with a covering over the fountain area, the sun would not be blocked; and it would be difficult and costly to cover the whole area, and that the plants needed sun. The committee decided that at this point, it would be better to have a trellis for the grapes on the perimeter of the brick area outside of the plants. Howie will look into the cost and type of trellis.
    - e. **Holocaust tribute**- The committee discussed the type of Holocaust tribute that could be placed in the meditation area. It was agreed that there would be no names of people if a stone tablet was selected, but a quote might be appropriate. Rabbi suggested a quote from Elie Weisel: “For the dead and the living, we must bear witness.” A piece of statuary was also discussed. Linda and Frances and Rabbi will look for some ideas to bring back to the group. Alison will contact the EP museum for additional suggestions.
  2. **Report from the JFFF, Chairs Rebecca Berkson & Aggie Saltman.**
    - a. The date for JFFF is set for April 23.
    - b. Rose Jacobs graciously stepped up and agreed to be this year’s JFFF coordinator after Rebecca Berkson announced the need at the Chanukah event.

- c. Gil Krebs volunteered to take over the production of this year's program book.
- d. Jim Rosenthal agreed to head the effort to setup and tear down the furniture, but he will need assistance to get folks to move the furniture. We will enlist students (BETY/BEMY) and with local Honor Society groups to help.
- e. We still need someone to help recruit sponsorships.
- f. Members will be contacted to assist with the big event.

## **Old Business**

- A. **Report from ad hoc Leadership Development Committee.** Ellen distributed a handout from URJ titled "Training for Congregational Boards." The Leadership team is reviewing this as well, and Ellen asked the Board to review it also. Ellen explained that the URJ Strengthening Congregations program leaders want Board members to reflect on possible workshop topics for an upcoming training.
- B. **Update on FestivUS.** Final plans were discussed for the event to be held Jan 21.
- C. **Jewish Federation Grant Proposal Update.** Ellen, Sue Brown, the Rabbi, Irv Ross, and Jane Grider met to discuss how to best utilize the funds granted, and how to meet the requirements of the grant. They developed a questionnaire to give to attendees of the performances asking them to rate the experience. A tally of the responses will be part of the annual review process for the grant. The first scholar/performer will be Robyn Helzner (Jan 23). The remaining grant funds will pay for two out of the three other scholars-in-residence that the group proposed in the grant, depending on the scholars' schedules—Jewish Comedian, Rabbi Bob Alper, and Jewish Culinary Expert and Writer, Tina Wasserman. If future funds are available, the group will attempt to bring in Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, an expert on ethics and aging.
- D. **ADA Compliance Standards for Bathrooms.** This topic was discussed due to a couple of female congregants in wheelchairs having difficulty maneuvering into the bathroom. Allen Blum met with Jerry Silverman to look at the bathrooms and, after measuring the space and looking at the doors, they confirmed that TBE is in compliance with ADA Standards for bathrooms. While it was determined that the bathrooms are in compliance with ADA standards, the doors are still difficult to maneuver for wheelchair access, and that the only way to solve the problem is to automate the doors. He estimates it will cost \$1400 to automate each door. This item will be discussed at a future meeting.
- E. **Robyn Helzner Performance, January 23, 7:00 pm.** The response has been very positive and a good crowd is expected. This is the first of the performances that will be funded by the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso Grant.
- F. **History Committee Update.** Jeff Brown was asked to chair the committee, but he expressed unwillingness to take on such a role until he had been retired for at least a year. Ned spoke with Nan Rubin, who has archiving experience with the Library of Congress, about chairing the committee. She responded positively, and Ned was urged to follow up with her. Interest has been expressed by Linda Kruger and Frances Williams to be on the committee.

**G. Sign-ups for Board Announcements (ongoing).**

**New Business**

- A. **Actions resulting from Committee Reports.** See notes above.
- B. **Rabbi's 2017 Parsonage Allowance.** The Board reviewed the Rabbi's 2017 Parsonage Allowance. The Rabbi directed the Board to designate his 2017 allowance to be \$19,000. This covers the year starting on January 1, 2017.
- C. There was no other new business.

**Guest Comments**

- A. Patrick Quinn presented information about the process for development of the Rabbi's contract.
- B. There were no other guest comments.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 pm

Date of next Executive Board Meeting: Monday, February 6, 2017 @ 6:30 pm

Date of next Board of Trustees Meeting: Thursday, February 16, 2017 @ 7:00pm, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday