

## MINUTES

### Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Temple Beth-El, Las Cruces, New Mexico

Date: November 17, 2016

**Trustees Present:** Allen Blum, Ann Berkson, Sue Brown, Pearie Bruder, Dee Cook, Diane Fleishman, Renee Frank, Jeff Lewis, Ned Rubin, Ellen Torres, Erich Zameret, Rabbi Larry Karol (ex-officio)  
**Trustees Absent:** Michael Lieberman, Susan Michelson  
**Guest(s):** Leora Zeitlin and Julie Seton

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

**Invocation:** The Rabbi gave the Invocation.

**Acceptance of Minutes.** Ellen asked for acceptance of the minutes of the October 20, 2016 meeting. Allen Blum moved to accept the minutes, Pearie Bruder seconded. Minutes were accepted as corrected.

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

- A. **Rabbi's Report.** (Highlights) Complete report is attached.
1. TBE and the Adult Education committee will host "Humble Enough? An Interfaith Conversation" on Sunday November 20, 2016 at 2:00 pm.
  2. Rabbi David Paskin and Rabbi Menachem Creditor have assembled songs by various Jewish musicians to publish an online album dedicated to hope and healing in uncertain times. My song, "Natatah Simchah V'Libi" (You Put Joy in my Heart) is included in the album.
  3. The Las Cruces Bulletin has asked me to write a monthly column for the religious pages of their newspaper. I will, as always, keep in mind the importance of being a reasonable and responsible voice for the greater community and in representing the Jewish community.
- B. **President's Report.** (Highlights) Complete report attached.
1. Today marks the anniversary of the day I almost died many years ago, and I am overwhelmed with emotion and gratitude for my life and
  2. There have been many wonderful services and successful TBE activities to report on Since we last met, the following events occurred: 1) many wonderful Shabbat services; 2) the Matzo Ball Open Golf Tournament at Red Hawk, which was a fun and engaging event; 3) the Renaissance Faire Pastrami Booth, where TBE got to resurrect our much loved food booth at one of Las Cruces' special events of the year; 4) two meetings of the ad hoc Leadership Committee headed up by Jim Rosenthal; 5) our Grant presentation to the Jewish Federation of El Paso's grant committee; and 6) our Special Congregational Meeting on Nov 10.
  3. I want to thank all of you for your participation and support at the Congregational Meeting. I thought that it gave members of the congregation an opportunity to discuss the issues and to clarify some points. 57 votes were cast, with the Rabbi receiving 72% of the vote, reelecting him as our Rabbi. When the vote was announced, people seemed genuinely pleased and gave the results, and

gave the Rabbi, a round of applause. I again want to thank Gil and Becca Krebs and Margo Leverett for volunteering to provide a delicious bounty of refreshments that everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

**C. Treasurer's Report.**

1. The URJ has accepted reduced dues of \$4,000 in lieu of the \$5600 they had billed.
2. First quarter income and expenses have been reported, and while income was greater than expenses for the quarter, we are facing a shortfall for the year if we don't make changes.
3. A total of 25 congregants haven't paid their pledges either this year or last year, and this amounts to about \$25,000 in lost income from member pledges.
4. The Matzo Ball golf tournament brought in roughly \$9900, with \$4300 in expenses. \$1,000 was presented to Maria Vasquez, ED of Habitat for Humanity. That leaves TBE approximately \$5500 or so. The income and expenses haven't been fully worked out for the booth at the Renaissance Fair.

**Committee Reports: See Full October/November Committee Reports in Attachment**

- A. Youth Activity Committee. (Moved up on agenda to present after Invocation.) Leora Zeitlin, who has been involved with the youth activity groups for 20 years, and Julie Seton, the current Youth Activities Committee Chair, made a brief presentation to emphasize the role and importance of the youth groups, BETY and BEMY, and their being engaged with the National Federation of Temple Youth, NIFTY.
1. Benefits include:
    - Helps kids not feel alone or isolated, being only Jewish kids in schools & peer groups. Helps strengthen their identity, especially helps against rising anti-Semitism on college campuses.
    - Helps them make good friends that last over time and carry over to college years and beyond.
    - Helps to prepare the kids for stronger participation and leadership in their Jewish community.
  2. The issue is lack of engagement, participation, involvement. Fewer kids are participating – too many competing interests, not enough priority given by parents or by congregation.
  3. They are asking for support of the Board with higher emphasis placed on the youth groups and involvement of the youth. Lyn Butner, the SW Regional Director for NIFTY will be in Las Cruces December 4 from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. There will be a bagel breakfast for parents and adults; then she will meet with the high schoolers, and the middle schoolers next. There will be a Tikkun Olam field trip in which kids can decide what they want to buy for charity. Board members are asked to be present for the bagel breakfast (at least representatives of the board) and to encourage greater participation by parents and teenagers to get more involvement.

- B. Mensch Club Report – Jeff Lewis, Mensch Club Representative. The Mensch Club food booth at the Renaissance Faire took first place for “best food booth”. They took in about \$4500 for both days, but Saturday was an ugly, dreary day, and only \$1300 came in that day. They anticipate a profit, although are still waiting to get all the expenses tallied. Jeff thanked the 25 volunteers from TBE, saying they worked hard and the participation was great. He wished that more people from the Temple would have come to participate and buy sandwiches.
1. The board thanked Jeff for his incredible effort, and congratulated him and the Mensch Club for a very successful re-entry to the Ren Faire. The cooperation between TBE and the Center for Spiritual Living is considered to be a very positive accomplishment, and it is anticipated that future Ren Faires will be even more successful.
  2. Sue Brown suggested that a large banner would help people to find the food booth in the future. Diane Fleishman suggested that perhaps the Ren Faire could be promoted at the JFFF so people will be excited about it ahead of time.
- C. Membership Committee: Diane Fleishman, Chair. Diane reported that there is a boon in new members and inquiries about memberships. She has been following up on referrals, and encourages everyone to give her referrals of potential new members. She is working on setting a date for a New Member Shabbat, and on finalizing the brochure with the Rabbi.

### **Old Business**

- A. Report from ad hoc Leadership Committee. The ad hoc Leadership Committee, comprised of Jim Rosenthal, Rabbi Karol, Renee Frank, Diane Fleishman, Dee Cook, Sue Brown, Terri Sugarman, and Ellen Torres, have met twice and will hold a third meeting on Sunday, December 4 at 1:00 pm. Pearie Bruder has indicated that she would like to join us as well. Ellen reported the group has read articles and is fleshing out what we feel should be done in regard to improving our leadership skills and how we are going to do it. We have written paragraphs in response to an article we read, and we have discussed our thoughts about our goals. We have also talked about how to utilize resources offered by Mike Batkin’s anonymous donor to create a leadership program here. We have discussed the importance of unifying our leadership in order to unify the congregation. An important topic is how we as a board, as leaders, and as a congregation can become more welcoming. We are working on clarifying our expectation of leadership and determining our commitment level. What do we do that reflects our culture and values? We will share our progress and let you know how it goes.
- B. Update on Festivus – The Festivus date has been set for January 21, 2017. Ellen encouraged every board member to help make this Board-sponsored event a fun, welcoming, congregational celebration.
- C. Mike Batkin Offer – Ellen reported that ideas that have been developed on how to utilize grant money from the anonymous donor, and she has spoken to Mike Batkin

about them. He has asked that TBE put the requests in writing using a format he will be sending.

- D. Jewish Federation Grant Proposal Update. Ellen reported we are still waiting to hear back, but the feedback has been good – they are very impressed with the quality of the programs and speakers. They think the “ask” is a little high, but have suggested that some programs might be shared with the temples in El Paso or that costs might be defrayed by charging a small amount for the programs.
- E. Inductive Loop Hearing Support Device—Michael Lieberman/Jeff Lewis (tabled until December or January)
- F. Sign-ups for Board Announcements (ongoing)

### **New Business**

- A. Actions resulting from Committee Reports.
- B. Religious School Committee Members—Clarification of requirement to be Jewish to serve. The TBE Constitution requires that members of certain committees, including the Religious School Committee, be Jewish in order to serve. Yet there are several parents of religious school children who are not Jewish, yet want to be involved. There are a number of “PTO” type duties that the Religious School Committee performs, so it was suggested that a separate PTO be formed for the Religious School that would allow for participation by parents who are not Jewish.
- C. ADA Compliance Standards for bathrooms. The doors are difficult to for people in wheel chairs to access, especially in women’s bathroom. This item is tabled to get recommendations from Jerry Silverman, who is investigating possible solutions.

### **Guest Comments**

- A. Leora Zeitlin and Julie Seton provided their presentation.
- B. There were no other guest comments.

**Executive Session:** The Board went into Executive Session at approximately 8:50 pm.

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

Date of next Executive Board Meeting: Monday, December 5, 2016 @ 6:30 pm

Date of next Board of Trustees Meeting: Thursday, December 15, 2016 @ 7:00pm, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday