

Board of Trustees Meeting

June 15, 2017

Temple Beth Israel

The meeting began at 7:05 pm.

Present. Richard Argosh, Michael Griffel, Jeff Kirtner, Nina Korican, Bruce Kreitzberg, Jessica Lambricht, Justine Lovinger, Reisa Maddex, Geraldine Moreno-Black, Bella Moses, Nathan Philips, Julee Raiskin, Rabbi Ruhi Sophia Motzkin Rubenstein, Jared Rubin, Mindy Schlossberg, Amy Steckel, Pearl Wolfe.

Torah Study. Finding moral guidance in Numbers, in the state of the world, in our own lives.

Open Forum. No attendees.

Minutes Approval. May minutes were approved.

Dues Model Discussion. Amy Steckel explained that we currently combine the sliding dues scale and traditional dues model. Amy introduced the voluntary commitment model. Mostly Conservative and Reform congregations use this because it is more engaging for the communities and makes some people feel more welcome. No financial documentation from families is needed. The “sustaining amount” is derived by total revenue needed divided by member households. The same thing can be done for Talmud Torah fees and other programs. Most of 57 other congregations have found the voluntary commitment model to be successful. Major synagogue donors and patrons need to be contacted before making the plunge to a new approach. A committee should be formed to study and plan this idea for TBI. Becoming more financially transparent is usually a side effect of adopting this model. Amy thinks this idea could be added to the TBI website this fall. Another idea is to make a custom of having members telephone households that have just completed their annual membership pledges. Amy roughly calculated that TBI’s sustaining amount might be about \$2900, including all programs, but \$1800 if Talmud Torah and building assessment and other programs with fees are removed. Hybrid models with sustaining pledges combined with a building assessment fee is also possible. Encouraging members to increase their pledges over time has been one of the challenges for some congregations using the voluntary commitment model.

Financials. Amy spoke very briefly about May highlights of the May financial report.

TBI Theme of the Year. Mindy’s idea with stating a TBI theme each year is intended to lead members out of social and niche “silos.” It helps to give people a theme, concept or motivation originating from Jewish values, as a backdrop for all members in all programs. This can lead membership toward common thinking and motivation without adopting new programming. It builds community. Mindy shared three of her ideas for initial themes. Mindy explained how Talmud Torah or Welcoming Committee might incorporate some of the themes. The Board weighed Mindy’s theme suggestions and discussed which one might be best. Mindy will consult with Rabbi Ruhi more about best themes and send a survey to Board members to vote on.

Regugee Resettlement Coalition of Lane County. This program is overseen by Catholic Community Services. Roz Slovic has encouraged TBI to join this coalition. The coalition would like TBI to sign on as a partner with other faith

communities. Mindy sought Board support for TBI to join this effort, though there are very few refugees to resettle in Lane County right now. The Board voted unanimously to join this coalition.

Rabbi Report and Cantorial Internship. Rabbi Ruhi mentioned the success of Judy Boles effort with Latinx before the Lane County commissioners and made a big impression. Also mentioned Ishtar meal preparation and bonding.

Rabbi Ruhi asked the Board to confirm Evlyn Gould's role and title in the community to support Evlyn's internship as a cantor. The Rabbi will contribute \$1000 from her own discretionary fund to support the otherwise unpaid internship. Justine volunteered to act as a Board liaison to Evlyn's work while Rabbi Ruhi is on maternity leave. The liaison will be able to give Evlyn feedback about community response to her leadership. Board members asked about this situation setting precedents for future interns. Discussion ensued. Voting was unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report. Nina said that the auction was a big success. The net event gain was similar or higher than in past years. The "mitzvah moment" fundraiser went to the general TBI fund and not Talmud Torah. 2018 TBI auction will be on March 11. The auction had 20% fewer people, but made money by way of lower expenses. The Rabbi's pre-event fundraising toward matching funds was one reason for the event's success. Other reasons for the auction's success were briefly discussed. Jared suggested that there are community members who may feel that the auction is not financially accessible. Nina acknowledged that the ticket price for the auction is inaccessible to some, but that the price is set about as low as it can be. Ideally, we do want the auction room to be populated by people with the resources to bid on auction items.

Talmud Torah Report. Jess shared a summary of Talmud Torah students' response to a Gretchen survey about learning and connection to other students. Overwhelmingly, students are replying that they've made friends, had fun and learned. Due to changes at Talmud Torah, parents are now expected to sign up for things. Jess said that more congregants will be needed to teach Talmud Torah classes in the next school year. Teachers should bring energy and enthusiasm to teach kids two hours per week.

Executive Session.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Recorded and submitted by Bruce Kreitzberg.