

Board of Trustees Meeting

November 9, 2017

Temple Beth Israel

The meeting began at 7:00.

Present. Richard Argosh, Michael Griffel, Jeff Kirtner, Nina Korican, Bruce Kreitzberg, Jessica Lambright, Justine Lovinger, Reisa Maddex, Bella Moses, Nathan Philips, Jared Rubin, Amy Steckel, Pearl Wolfe. Gretchen Leiberman, Talmud Torah director, came to speak about Talmud Torah.

Minutes approval. The October minutes were approved.

Announcements. Pearl stated that the Egan Warming Center will need volunteers. Mindy announced and Nina explained that TBI needs a Reconstructionist plenum representative, the deciding body of the Reconstructionist movement. No one volunteered yet. A new rep is still needed to take part approximately quarterly by phone.

Talmud Torah Presentation. Gretchen spoke about both the state of the Talmud Torah school and also of TT's future. Gretchen explained that large, graduating classes are the main reason for fluctuations in total attendance. New people are being drawn to the program, in part, by recent innovations. Both the Eugene population and TBI's population are aging and that is a setback to enrollment progress. TT is now in its third year of the new curriculum model and some recycling of classes is now possible. Gretchen works to find new ways to engage parents and families. This year, six of nine staff are connected to TBI, not just college students passing through. The summer camp is helpful to TT enrollment. Gretchen sees ample opportunity for new students due to the large number of unaffiliated Jews in Eugene. Gretchen sees TBI preschool as critical to TT and TBI success. Gretchen believes that TT needs to do work around branding. She needs help or support with brain-storming or creating this branding. The mission statement for TT should be reconsidered. TT needs a new logo. Bruce asked if there might be cooperation or synergies between the Preschool and TT to offer. Jared encouraged drawing on TBI individuals who might be able to help with TT branding.

Executive Director report. Nina said that on January 1, 2018 the TBI employee health insurance renewal is due. She would like to consider some of TBI's policy details. Jeff Kirtner offered to discuss some of the details and requirements with Nina. Nina described some details of TBI's health insurance employee benefits. Pearl suggested that TBI work toward greater employee parity and fairness in its long term planning with the health care benefit. Nina will email the Board if she seeks any upcoming change in health insurance policy.

Financials/Membership commitment process. September financials were distributed to the Board electronically. Financials currently look good in general, except for the Preschool.

The Membership commitment committee had its second meeting and will have its third meeting in December with Rabbi Ruhi to help them with the values based decision making process.

Sharing good news proposal. Bella Moses suggested that TBI distribute simchas or good news, in addition to notices of death for members or member families. The idea was well received and the Board discussed the idea of adding TBI notices for other life cycle events.

Open Board position update. The nominating committee has recommended people to fill the two open Board positions. The new application process was a success, involving four congregants. Judy Seasonwein and Debbie Leiman are expected to be our new members in 2018. Jared Rubin will replace Pearl Wolfe as second Vice-President. Bella Moses agreed to serve as youth representative for another year.

Preschool committee update. Nina's report stated that the Preschool's budget deficit for this year may be smaller than originally expected or even negligible. The committee is going to survey to ask what people are looking for in a Preschool. The survey will go out after Thanksgiving and respondents are needed. March 1 is the date for the job announcement. The Preschool website has recently been updated.

Fireplace update. Justine reported that Julee has written an article for the TBI newsletter about the fireplace. Julee would like to have some seed money in hand before beginning solicitations for donations to the fireplace. There is still a question about whether TBI can provide some money for this project. The total fireplace project cost might be around \$10,000. Discussion followed on whether resources for the project should come primarily from donors or TBI funds. Nathan explained some history about the fireplace and building construction. It has long been intended as a fundraising project. The conversation concluded with a consensus toward finding some key donors to help seed-fund the fireplace project with member donations.

Communication policy. Pearl shared the draft of her suggested code of conduct for TBI. The document, produced by Pearl, Jeff and Mindy, is TBI's first known attempt at a code of conduct. Pearl says the impetus of the document is respectful conduct with each other. The document helps guide how to be respectful. The document explains lashon hara (sometimes translated as "bad talk") as a concept and offers suggestions for dealing with it from others and avoiding it. Electronic communication guidelines are also given, including situations where email is not optimal or is inadvisable altogether. Nathan suggested that the draft be edited by the committee for length and that it be presented to the congregation for approval. Other Board members made comments and suggestions about ethical guidelines to include and not include. The document is intended for the entire congregation.

Shabbat at home discussion. Nina asked the Board to let her know if the Shabbat at home idea is still appealing and if so, how it might be tweaked to attract more participants. Participation was down last month.

Proposed meeting changes. To accommodate Jeff's schedule, the proposal is for the full Board to meet first Thursdays at 7:00 and the Executive Committee to meet third Thursdays at 5:30. There were no objections to this proposal and it will become the Board's new schedule in 2018.

Rabbi contract. Rabbi Ruhi's contract expires in spring. Negotiations must be completed by February 15. The Board voted unanimously to extend the offer for a new contract to Rabbi Ruhi. The congregation will be asked to approve the idea of a renewed rabbinic contract on November 30 at the Congregational Meeting.

Agenda items for next month. Nathan suggested that key items from the strategic plan be highlighted for incoming Presidents to focus on.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56.

Recorded and submitted by Bruce Kreitzberg.