

Board Meeting - 7/12/18

In Attendance:

Judy Goldberg
Rabbi Breindel (RJB)
Jim Billings
Janet Buchwald
Ken Fishman
Neil Frieband
Aaron Friedman
Ellen Glickman-Simon
Sheila Goldberg
John Harper
Toby Kopman
Laurie Margolies
Cynthia Meyersburg
Scott Newman
Lizza Sandoe
Beth Schine
Judy Sletzinger
Marcos Szydio
Roberta Unger
Nicci/Col Meadow

Agenda

Hebrew with Janet

Concentrating on "Masei" - journeys, knowing where you've been, moving in stages.
And camping/encamp

Rabbi's report

Hopes to bring points of interest for board, questions he has for the board - hopefully in advance of the board meeting to remain on same page as President.

Learning about operations and staff, truly impressive office staff - Beth "oh my gosh" and Jane "oh my gosh sub 1"

Meeting congregants, last night with Jim/Rachel.

1 open door/week through High Holidays, will take stock after HH.

Working with Scott on Havdalah for this Saturday

Taking and making pastoral calls, still needs training on Hineynu database

Meeting with other local rabbis next week - strong and mutually supportive ties to other communities, including interfaith

Planning Torah study

Visited the MWFMC - given a welcoming tour, quite honestly was blown away by the scope of the operation - served 71 people last week. A gem for us. Try to educate board and community about what goes down there.

After Lorel's return, will meet with her and begin HH prep.

Will chant at Tisha B'Av.

Personal update: living in Marlborough, family in Berkshires. Family will be joining in 3 or 4 weeks, depends on what is better for the kids.

Strong thank you to Rabbinic Transition Committee for smooth and seamless transition.

Request: wishes to connect one on one with board members, set up a meeting with him through the office, can be here or elsewhere.

Report on From Strength to Strength fundraising: Judy

Met goal and then some. Grand total raised: \$103,300 WOW! Will be to general fund.

Need a director of fundraising.

Temple Administrator's report: Beth

Working with RJB to get him oriented and knowledgeable and it is a quick and delightful process.

2 new members with kids in education programs → 274 current membership

Commitment forms sent - 29 back so far. Plans to track monthly returns

Gala weekend - huge success and budget-wise we covered cost with ticket sales.

Scheduling summer cleaning/repairs

Oneg/kiddush sign up going out soon

HH mailing going out sooner - Craig Ross is new HH coordinator, mailing early next week

Lots of things to respond to: Oneg, HH, Commitment

Proposed resolution on Transgender Rights referendum: John and Nicci

Request that Beth EI led its voice to this issue

RJB: received briefing several months ago about the issue, became a signatory to groups who are trying to retain transgender rights because transgender rights are human rights (b'tselem Elokim).

Nicci: ways to get involved - Metrowest Jewish coalition possibility to create a more organized presence, need a place for a phone bank, Keshet canvassing event (going door to door), sign the pledge and tell 10 friends, Oct 21 - 2nd transgender event here.

October event will be focused more on the heavy, difficult stuff (statistics on suicide, hate crimes, etc.)

People who want the repeal are very strong/hard - vote could be close

Cynthia - give a practical hook to make it more appealing to get out the vote from people for whom this issue maybe isn't their vote

Resolved: The Board of Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley:

- Endorses upholding transgender equality
- Favors Massachusetts Senate Bill 2407 passed by the Massachusetts legislature in November 2016 that prohibits discrimination based on gender identity in public businesses or other places open to the general public
- Encourages members of Congregation Beth El to vote “YES” on Ballot Question #3 (on Election Day, November 6, 2018) to keep this legislation in force and protect transgender equality in Massachusetts

Carries/Passes unanimously

RJB's first motion to sit through

High Holiday ticket policy discussion and decision: Toby

My question: why \$450 for non-member guest vs. \$350 for guest of member or people off the street?

We want to be welcoming. Yet ticket sales is a significant amount of money in the budget. People who have been members in past enjoy HH services and want to attend, so they want to buy a ticket. We want to welcome them back, to become members. There are members who pay dues and receive tickets. What does it mean to be a member and how welcoming should we be to former members?

Proposal: Former members of Beth El who have resigned in the past 3 years may purchase High Holiday tickets at Beth El at the rate of \$450 per adult. This includes those who have been members but have indicated that they will not be making a dues commitment for the coming year.

What are people in this situation doing now? Small handful of people, 4-5 former households. We let people buy tickets for \$350.

Last year made \$8,600 in ticket revenue. Range of \$6,500-\$9,000 in recent years. Not really about the money.

We are trying to move to be more relational and less transactional.

Boundaries of membership is a bigger conversation.

Beth elaborated on how people are welcomed at HH, how people are checked off lists, etc. Names written down of those who still need to deal with financial commitment or unknown visitors for follow up after holidays.

Why are these folks no longer members? → they've lost interest in community but have attachment to the HH

Discussion about charging former members more → leaves not a great taste

Idea of charging non-member for ticket as a “deposit” towards membership

Counterproposal - \$350 for everyone rather than \$450 for former members.

Down-payment idea attached to \$350

Down payment has been informal practice for years, wants clarity to come from a full discussion, what the values are that inform that decision. Members of any other congregation regardless of affiliation receive free tickets. So these are completely unaffiliated folks.

It's so few people; do we really need this?

Mid-40s and under, lots of unaffiliated. Lots of options for no charge

\$350 for the people who are upfront about not wanting to join?

Throw the doors open, take names

One shot deal - free for all this year.

Concurs, and let's talk months in advance going forward

Relationship before transaction, interested in the experiment moving forward. People respond to relationships and not well to transactions

Recap of free policies, agrees that it's a disincentive. One year would be OK, but what about next year?

2 things - advertise the hell out of it AND having a large group of people who are committed to following up with anyone who comes (Membership)

New proposal: For 2018 to introduce the broader community to our new rabbi Josh Breindel, non-members will be given the opportunity to attend High Holidays services for free. The board encourages members to share this opportunity with friends, family, and the community. Donations will be accepted.

1 opposed, 1 abstention

Treasurer's briefing: Neil

Fiduciary responsibility and financial awareness

Person who holds legal or ethical responsibility

Mike J concerned with issues around membership, handles the budget

Neil concerned with financial operation of the congregation (all but membership)

Spending report (monthly), funds report (quarterly)

VPs need to watch their committees' spending

Running at a deficit of ~\$30-\$100K, but we balance budget with funds. How long can we do this? FSTS will cover most of this year's budget deficit.

Equivalent member - pays full dues. Takes about two actual member units to get an equivalent member

Be on alert for what is not for benefit of the congregation

Update on Rabbi Transition: Jim

Open Door evenings - about a dozen events initially. About 14 at Jim's house last night.

People got to have conversations with RJB. Little things came up to acclimate RJB to community and benefitted everyone there.

Community events such as Havdalah, etc. coming up.

Scott's report

To fill in next month, 3 times as long. :)

Sign Conflict of Interest forms, etc - they will chase you down. :)

Attachments

From Strength to Strength fundraising – final report

Proposed High Holiday Ticket Policy

Educator's Report for July 2018 Board Meeting

Tikkun Olam – Civil Rights at Risk in Massachusetts – Letter

Draft Beth El Board Resolution on Transgender Equality

Beth El Organization Chart

Staff List and Contact Information

Conflict of Interest Policy