

Beth El Board Minutes 9/13/2018

Board Attendees

- Jim Billings
- Yaakov Cohn
- Aaron Friedman
- Ellen Glickman-Simon
- Judy Goldberg
- John Harper
- Toby Kopman
- Justin Lewitus
- Laurie Margolies
- Helen Shik
- Jen Stevens
- Marcos Szydlo
- Susan Tohn
- Lizza Sandoe
- Judy Sletzinger
- Roberta Unger

Other Attendees

- Rabbi Josh Breindel
- Janet Buchwald
- Beth Schine
- Carl Offner
- Ann Barysh
- Gary Bean

Agenda

- Hebrew with Janet 10 min
- Rabbi's report: 10 min
- Report and request by Sanctuary Committee: Carl Offner and John Harper
- Beth's report: 10 min
- Feedback from those involved in Rosh Hashana logistics: Judy 30 min
- Responses to emailed reports: 10 min

Board Votes

- MOTION: The Board of Directors of Congregation Beth El supports the current effort of the Sanctuary Committee to raise money for the Sanctuary Project fund at Beth El for the purpose of providing aid to and advocacy for vulnerable immigrants and refugees. We urge all our members to contribute to this important effort.
 - This differs from previous motion with the focus on money. More like an implementation of previous motion. John Harper says this protects us as a tax-exempt - cleanest way is if money comes to Beth El for its own purposes. Also good to give check to Beth El to give to another 501c org. This establishes this activity as part of our mission/purpose. Finance committee has suggested legal counsel on a volunteer basis.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

Discussions (excluding any votes/decisions)

Rabbi's Report

- Staff retreat - 2nd time with this particular consultant.
 - Help staff become familiar with each other's styles, help jell as team.
 - RJB met individually with all staff since.
- Various committee meetings
- Open door events on pause until after the festivals - useful
- Worked with Tim and Shoni, under Helen's oversight, on outreach before High Holidays - videos. Will continue similar after High Holidays.
- Selichot - SB and Arnie Zar Kessler led. Larger crowd than anticipated. Generally positive feedback.
- Weekly Torah study – one-shots through High Holidays, after High Holidays will offer his own cohort. Intends to be distinct from what already exists, narrative through midrash. Accessible and engaging for all backgrounds.
- Lots of High Holidays prep.
- High Holidays feedback - some surprising, some practicable. Curious to see what he hears after Yom Kippur.
- Religious school - this Sunday/week
- Sukkot - ???
- Tashlich this Sunday - Lorel, Scott, and Rabbi Josh Breindel

- 2 baby namings and an auf ruf.
- Rabbinic Advisory Group - normative practice, feedback from individuals can be awkward. Will continue talking with Judy about this.
- Personal update: closing date moved earlier. Move still first week of October.

Report and Request by Sanctuary Committee (Carl Offner and John Harper)

- People from Sanctuary: Carl Offner, Ann Barysh, Gary Bean
- Review of Sanctuary status.
- Diego Low - MISN (MetroWest Immigrant Solidarity Network), Framingham organization.
 - Through this, Beth El placed in contact with Salvadoran family. Other organizations helping this family as well. Lawyers feel it is unsafe to speak of identities and any updates of family. El Salvador dangerous place; we have reason to believe family would be killed if sent back to El Salvador. Puts a human face on the problem, which creates a political climate in which change can be justified/encouraged. Various Beth El members have been helping. Food, clothing, dental expenses. Judy S. is point person.
 - Family A asylum hearing scheduled end of March - if not granted asylum, there is an appeal process.
 - Accompaniment - accompanying undocumented or refugees to court because ICE hangs around to try to pick them up. This is a powerful protection.
 - Oct 7, 2:30 - Training by MISN - Ann B is point person
- Political - avoiding partisan. Discuss policy. Weekly stand in Sudbury center protesting the separation of children (Fri 5-6pm). Adding signs to get out to vote. Point to sources of information rather than endorsing candidates.
 - “To bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance” - G. Washington
 - We have obligation to support immigrants. Gary B is point person.
- Money for Salvadoran family - we have a sanctuary fund and we need more. \$15K is best estimate. Plan to ask for individual donations. Support Gabriel de Brito, DACA, to complete his studies at Mass Bay, \$2K estimate. Asking for board support individually and collectively.
- Ann B - ultimate goal is to have goals of sanctuary to be uppermost in minds of congregants. Need of education and commitment from our community.
- Motion for Board [above, in Board Votes]

Administrator’s Report (Beth Schine)

- 269 Households - moving target. Some will resign and some will join.
- Financial commitments
 - 143 households full and 12 of those above.
 - 26 households paying 3% of income.
 - 59 people request adjustments.
 - 6 free members (5 are through education programs).
- Beth may want help contacting not responsive folks.

- High Holidays: 55 pre-register for services. Of those, 115 tickets requested (soft number). Of those, about 28 registrations came (about 50 people). Largest number heard from current member, 3 were former members. 15 people who did not pre-register - 5 former members, 5 heard from current, 1 unidentified friend
- See report for lovely e-mail re: Josimar and leaf blowing.
- Effect of free High Holidays offer: impression is numbers were larger
- Pre-registrations: website and members saying someone was coming? Pre-registrants are people whose tickets were NOT sent through a member. Do we know guests of members? Not yet.
- Follow up to High Holidays free tickets: Susan Tohn following up with people. Please contact Susan if you are willing to follow up with people. Script to be crafted. E-mail to everyone who came, with info about Sukkot and Simchat Torah?

Feedback from Those Involved in Rosh Hashanah Logistics (Judy)

- More greeters needed for Yom Kippur: 2 Kol Nidre and 2 Yom Kippur. We need at least 3. For each service, we need someone who can stay for the whole service and go to the other service for themselves.
- Parking and people arriving early - first Rosh Hashanah service ran late, so second service arrived before end of first service. Craig all over this - bus here for all of Kol Nidre, same for Yom Kippur day (before 1st service).
- Transition between services has changed - additional parking lot director in town hall parking lot and communication between parking directors here and the town hall lot. Lot at Beth El will close and people will be directed to Town Hall where they can wait or get on bus to Beth El. Not allowing people to hover at Beth El lot when there is no place to go. Drop-offs at Beth El won't be allowed? Beth to talk with Craig about that.
- Board member feedback about Rosh Hashanah:
 - Buzz around RJB departure to kid service
 - Inspiring to feel how full it felt with kids there before they left
- Fragrance-free section:
 - Reason for it - several members for whom it is life-threatening to be around people wearing fragrances. Not about preferences or even allergies. They could have seizures and actually die.
 - Suggestion of usher at that section. Placement and quality of signage.
 - Proposal that we don't wear scents, strong perfumes in this building - not a decision for tonight.

Discussion of Email Reports

- Sheila's report - interesting about younger people and what they are looking for.
- Tikkun Olam report - mention of transgender. Some events for the ballot issue approaching.
 - Oct 7 - canvassing, Oct 21 - teaching even
- Inclusion committee theme - mental health initiative. Roberta to co-chair, looking for a mental health provider to share the chairing.

- Much of the fall will be education around mental health: help people understand what it's like to live with mental illness, autism, and substance abuse AND how to support and respond to someone who is struggling with these issues.
- This has been a taboo topic at Beth El, so exciting for Beth El to explore.
- Wants board support as emissaries.

Medical program

- Loads of people in last 2 weeks before school started. Record high levels. Very crowded.

Reports and Attachments

- Youth and Family Education Committee report
- Tikkun Olam Committee report