

MINUTES
Temple Sinai Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, February 17, 2021
6:30 – 8:30pm

Board members present: Jon Braslaw, Liz Daoust, Laurel Ettinger, Ann Gordon, Richard Hart, Melissa Heller, Neil Jacobson, Josh Kuluva, Laurie Leiber, Jim Manheimer, Rebecca McEntee, Susan Rosenthal, Frances Rotolo, Bart Schenone, Sydney Schimmel, Anne Schmitz, Andrew Shear, Karen Tanner, Karen Tiedemann, Michelle van Tijen, Joan Waranoff, Phil Witte, Eric Zwerling

Clergy and Staff present: Terrie Goren, Cantor Keyes, Ellen Lefkowitz, Rabbi Mates-Muchin

Absent: Calvin Gibbs, Stephanie Ben-Simon, Rabbi Regev (family leave)

Guests: Rabbi Ira Rosenberg, Matti Fromson

1) Meeting called to order at 6:32 pm

2) Rabbi Educator Search

a. Welcome to Rabbi Ira Rosenberg -Rabbi Educator candidate

-Rabbi Rosenberg shared a verse from Exodus re gifts and asked board members to share what they think their gift is to the community.

-Question from the Board re technology – Rabbi Rosenberg likes tech; has learned a lot in the last year. Virtual learning can be very powerful and sometimes fun. Appreciates systems that make things more efficient and simple. Likes to learn and likes to learn about tech. Doesn't shy away from technology.

-Question re how to help kids emerge from the last year in a healthy way. A lot of that work has happened this year already – we're here for them to help provide connections and comfort and communicate joy to them. Provide opportunities to reconnect with safe spaces. Used a group of lay leaders who are health professionals to advise parents and teachers that was especially helpful at the beginning of the pandemic, for example, re language for how we should be talking about it to our children.

-Question re how does experience with special education inform you as a rabbi and an educator. Appreciation for the uniqueness of the individual and that everyone is created in the image of God.

Emphasized that tools are needed to allow individual students to shine. What are their abilities, how do we bring them forward. It has shaped his educational philosophy.

Jon – thank for spending time with us.

b. Search Update - Matti

- Candidates have met with adults, teachers, search committee. Will have an opportunity to interact with kids.
- Invite board members to share feedback with Matti/Sara about candidates
- Search committee will meet early next week to make a decision.
- Board may have a special meeting next Wednesday to receive the committee's recommendation.
- Matti will share CVs but requires the board to keep them confidential and not make informal inquiries per CCAR rules.

3) Approval of Minutes – January 20, 2021

No comments or corrections. Motion to approve Susan, second Laurel.
Unanimous board approval

4) Consent Calendar - Membership report (presented at meeting)

New Members – One new member pressed to join by her 15-year old daughter Lauri L will call

5) Financial report – Sydney Schimmel

- Revenue - Membership and tuition are on plan. Annual giving has exceeded plan.
- Three large legacy contributions \$243,000 will go into endowment which is currently ~ \$1.2 million + \$243k + ~\$700k to be paid back by the congregation (borrowed for capital campaign)
- PPP loan has been forgiven. Will be treated as a grant for accounting purposes.
- Expenses – plans underway to use the building budget for needed repairs
- Finance committee will review anticipated cash surplus and make a recommendation to the board

6) Hot Topics

a. PPP Loan Update – We have applied for second round of loan.

Waiting on the bank. About the same size as last year's loan. Purpose is to stimulate the economy including retaining staff and spending in the local economy. Jon asked should we commit to spending some of the loan money on projects to support local businesses.

Discussion:

There's not a lot of downside. Program is well funded – we won't be taking money from another applicant.

How would we use it to benefit the community? The first loan allowed us to maintain staff. Repair boiler?, invest in technology?

Good time to do some projects while facility is not being used.

Could we do these things with current surplus?

We need a reasonable operating reserve (recommendation for non-profits is 3 months of operating expenses ie \$1million)?

Other suggestions in chat for electrifying boiler, cost benefit analysis recommended, what about kitchen?

Motion to give Jon and Terrie authority to accept the loan Anne,
Second Melissa Unanimous board approval

- b. CERVIS – volunteer management program (Joan Waranoff)
Temple Sinai is installing a portal product for volunteer management to allow members to sign up for volunteer activities. See powerpoint presentation for details. Once it is fully set up it will be rolled out gradually to groups and committees. Board members were encouraged to send questions directly to Joan.
 - c. Laurie Leiber reported that 29 congregants are baking hammentaschen – available to order until Friday. Thanks to all. Jon thanked Laurie for organizing this.
 - d. Strategic Plan Update Richard Hart
About to launch a survey next week. Goal is to gather information to formulate a strategic plan by June. Followed by focus groups in April coordinated by Jessica Natkin. Request the board to share info about the survey and invite friends to complete it. Other research is going on outside the temple membership.
Survey will be open about 3 weeks
- 7) Update from Andrew Shear. Vandalism trial will start next week. It is a jury trial – the defendant was offered a bench trial but he declined. A plea offer was made but he didn't accept it. Terrie and Mir will testify at the trial.
- 8) Clergy Updates
- a. Rabbi Mates-Muchin
 - Talking to congregants about what will happen when we can gather again. There will be some experimenting over the next couple years.
 - Friday night blessing/baby naming for Rabbi Regev's baby in a community gathering Shabbat service
 - Wise aging series tomorrow night Rabbi Geller will present. Getting good at getting old. Check enews for signup.
 - b. Cantor
 - Next music workshop Ira and Julia Levin Interactive and story telling of joy 2/23 at 6:30
 - Purim Schpiel Thurs 6-7. Valerie will chant megillah

9) Program Updates

a. Preschool –

- Teachers are starting to get vaccinated. Everyone is very relieved.
- Contracts for all will go out next week – increasing capacity. Need more 3s too many 2s.
- Starting to think about summer program

b. Religious School -

- Thinking about plans for next year, broad strokes for budgeting, has led to some interesting conversations with candidates. Will get input from new educator even though they won't officially start until July.
- Sunday virtual only, in-person Wednesday. Once a month come together on Saturday. Challenge how to handle kids who need in-person learning but can't come Wednesday. Building would be closed on Sunday. Expected to evolve during the school year.
- Board comment – need to integrate with strategic planning process

c. Youth Program –

- Planning some sort of hybrid program for next year.
- Laurel has been working on Better Together program with teens and elders

d. Other program updates

- Andrew Shear – Rabbi led an amazing Lunar New Year shabbat service on Friday.
- Saturday and Sunday programs for Access including Judy Heumann were terrific

Adjourned to executive session at 8:05

10) Executive Session - Discussed staff issues

Executive session adjourned:

Motion to reinstate raises that were frozen for this year retroactively to July 1 made by Bart, second Frances. Unanimous board approval.

Special board meeting may be needed to review Rabbi Educator recommendation – Jon will circulate some meeting options.

Next BOARD MEETING – MARCH 17, 2021