

Congregation Beth Shalom

Annual Meeting Minutes- June 8, 2021

Board Attendance: Marla Cooper, Ed Sobel, Faith Silver, Jerry Simonowits, Cindi Viviano, Lori Barbanel, Jill Downard, Steve Bernhardt, Barney Kantar, Hyphen HP, Beth Ledger, Mark Lipman, Hollis Sherman, Miriam Siltan, Allan Tocker, Sharon Rosengarten, Rabbi Michael Beals, Seth Bloom and Karolin Lipman.

Call to Order: The virtual meeting was called to order by President Marla Cooper at 7:00 pm. The meeting was attended by approximately 100 members.

The Star-Spangled Banner was sung by Rabbi Beals.

D'var Torah: Was provided by Rabbi Beals. Rabbi spoke of what to do after the crash; the breakdown in our support systems. He specifically noted that flexibility of Judaism allowed changes to adapt to changing realities. He compared that to the challenges we faced and met during the COVID-19 crisis. For next year, our task is to connect with all congregants with both tradition and change.

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the June 9, 2020 Annual Meeting were approved as provided.

Tribute: This meeting had a special focus to honor Arlene and Bob Davis, z'l and to posthumously provide the Etz Hayim Award. There was a photo tribute of both of them. JFD Chair, Richard Levine spoke and talked of their efforts on behalf of Create a Jewish Legacy. They were one of the first to sign letters of intent. Bob served on numerous Boards and Arlene taught at CBS, Adas Kodesh and at the Albert Einstein Academy over a period of 35 years.

Matt Meyer, New Castle County Commissioner, presenting the award, spoke of his personal experience with Arlene who was his teacher. Her contagious enthusiasm brought Judaism to life for him.

President's Report: President Marla Cooper suggested that the year was highlighted by transition and gave thanks to clergy, staff and lay leadership. Ralph Downard led us early in the pandemic and a leaf in the Tree of Life is being placed in his name. We had a Pandemic Task Force to create systems and procedures to keep us safe during this period. Much of our interactions during the year were virtual but we now anticipate gradual transition to virtual as well as in person meetings and observance. We conducted High Holy Day services for approximately 1000 people all virtually.

Special thanks were given to Cantor Elisa who has now left CBS but is still connected and supporting us. Rabbi Beals was thanked for his being a source of strength, inspiration and comfort.

New Executive Director Shari Dym was a great addition to our leadership in a challenging time. She accomplished so much and we welcome her into the CBS family. We expressed appreciation for the former Director of Administration, Matthia McCracken, for the 5 years of service she provided to CBS.

During the past year CBS was able to get 24 new families to join as members and we have a stable membership census which is unusual during times of shrinking synagogue membership.

We successfully transitioned our recordkeeping and other office functions from ChaverWare to Shul Cloud.

With the departure of Cantor and Education Director Elisa Abrams Cohn, a Task Force was convened to seek options of how to proceed with restructuring and staffing these functions. To accomplish this, we are in the midst of a search for an Associate Rabbi to focus on education and Committees to address how to provide cantorial support.

We are in the midst of planning for a year-long centennial celebration and seeking to eliminate a burdensome debt overhang from our mortgage.

Financial Report- Treasurer Lori Barbanel shared details of our budget and financial state. We have assets at yearend of \$5.6M and net income last year of about \$2K. We were successful in raising \$144K through our Annual Appeal, our biggest fund raiser. Delaware grants were received to provide support to deal with COVID-19 and for some technical improvements. Our largest expenses are salaries (65%) and the mortgage (13%). The mortgage balance is \$2,072,178. Ability to pay off this would make funds available for more programming and improvements. Collection of dues is on target as well as expenditures. We were successful in these areas in 2020 and are on track in 2021.

Executive Director Shari Dym started July 15, 2020 and much has happened since she arrived. She has brought the staff safely to the building as COVID-19 is abating. To do this she had created individual work spaces and laptops to allow for remote work. She headed the transition from ChaverWare to Shul Cloud. She introduced all the staff members to the meeting as there are several new members of the staff. She was able to overcome physical plant problems including leaks and structural issues. All were repaired. A new cleaning staff is in place and working very well. We have received a FEMA grant to increase security. A garden beautification effort is underway.

Sisterhood President Beth Ledger presented a check for \$11,100.

Men's Club former President David Fruchtman who served for many years was thanked for this service. New President Allan Tocker presented a check for \$5000.

The Gift Shop had the best year ever and presented a check for \$6000.

The Daily Minyan presented a check for \$3000.

Awards: The President's Award was presented to Beth Ledger.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Andy and Hollis Sherman.

The award for Excellence in Education was presented to Sharon Rosengarten.

The slate of Executive Officers and Board Members was unanimously approved as follows:
Marla Cooper- President, Ed Sobel-VP Administration, Karolin Lipman- VP Member
Engagement, Hollis Sherman- Secretary, Faith Silver- VP Programming, Jerry Simonowits- VP
Religious Life, Lori Barbanel- Treasurer, Jill Downard- Assistant Treasurer, Barney Kanter-
Immediate Past President.

Board Members: Allan Tocker (Men's Club), Beth Ledger (Sisterhood), Hyphen HP, Rhea Levy,
Jeannie Winnick, Shulamith Shafer, Howard Zucker, Cindi Viviano, Seth Bloom and Josh Slomich.

Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned by President Cooper at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Bernhardt, Secretary