

September 24, 2019

Temple Beth El Board of Directors
Minutes of Meeting Approved)

Covenantal Community

Commitment to Diversity

Caring Community

Warm and Welcoming

Jewish Living Made Accessible and Relevant

Fosters Dynamic Spiritual Growth

Focus on Learning

Focus on Community

Pursuing Tikkun Olam, repair of the world

2018-2019 Board Goals:

Communication

Engagement

Philanthropy

Temple Beth El Board of Directors Meeting Minutes for September 24, 2019, APPROVED

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Attendees: President - Amy Harrington, Executive Vice President – Josh Karter, Vice President of Communications - Michelle Dennis, Secretary – Judy Yokel, Immediate Past President -Scott Roseman, Vice President of Operations – Gus Gold, Vice President of Fund Development - Margaret Gordon, Vice President of Engagement – Melody Randel, Vice President of Human Resources-Robyn Slater, Vice President of Education - Shani Ginsburg, Vice President of Social Justice – Ziesel Saunders, Members at Large - Miles Dolinger and Doug Sommerville, Congregant Facilitator - Nathaniel Deutsch

Non-voting members: Senior Rabbi – Paula Marcus, Executive Director - Tanya Lorien

Absent: Associate Rabbi – Shifra Weiss-Penzias, Treasurer/Finance Committee -- Paul Jacobson, Engagement Director -- Melissa Sunberg.

Visitors: Carolyn Coleman

1. Roll call and approval of agenda2 min.

APPROVED.

2. Drash/Jewish Journey – Tanya Lorien10 min.

Tanya had a very secular childhood, and there were no Jews where she lived. Her grandfather declared himself a Jewish atheist and the family moved to an agricultural area in California. When Tanya was 11, a new rabbi came to town and gave B’nai Mitzvah classes. All three Jewish kids in the area signed up, including Tanya and her brother. Tanya had a Bat Mitzvah, and after high school, she went to Israel for two weeks and stayed for almost two years. When she returned, she lived a secular life until 13 years ago, when she began working at Temple Beth David in Saratoga. She discovered that a piece of her had been missing and was able to fill in that part at Beth David. After 10-11 years there, three years ago she began attending graduate school at Spertus Institute in Chicago, in a 2-year program in Jewish Professional Studies that met every 6-7 weeks. She learned a great deal about Jewish history and developed a new respect for the complexity of Judaism. The graduate program has been a fantastic experience for Tanya. Her next career move was to become Executive Director at TBE, and she is finding that to be another fantastic experience!

3. Approval of minutes from August 27, 20192 min.

APPROVED.

4. Approval of consent agenda.....2 min

a. Green Team Temple Beth El Environmental Policy

Board members thanked Miles for his extensive work revising the draft policy. He has gone back and forth with the Green Team on the policy changes, and the document is now finalized. Some items supporting the policy are already in process by the Green Team.

b. Approval of back minutes: June 2019

c. Approval of back minutes: July 1, 2019

d. Social Action Proposal: TBE to endorse National Religious Campaign Against Torture

MOTION by Scott Roseman to approve the consent agenda. Seconded and APPROVED.

5. Cemetery Update – Gus Gold5 min.

There is an extra parcel of land at Home of Peace that is not suitable for regular graves as it is very sloped. Gus discussed the idea of using this extra parcel for natural burials which involve no caskets, no liners, and not necessarily a marker for each buried person. Another possibility is a halachic compost burial. The idea of natural burial is to have the smallest footprint on the land. The sloped parcel is currently completely wild and natural, and we could clean it up and leave it looking like a natural forest. There is a natural burial cemetery in Mill Valley called Gan Yarok.

Gus reported that the Cemetery Committee wants to obtain and file a current survey of the cemetery that would establish the legal boundaries of the property. For this purpose, they plan to use a portion of the \$25K that is earmarked for cemetery improvements. Using the parcel for natural burials would be a way for TBE to increase cemetery revenue. The Committee does not need the Board to approve this action, but Board members expressed their interest and support of the idea.

In addition, Nathaniel mentioned that Terry Spodick has been in touch about the possibility of digitally mapping the cemetery, and he is looking into this.

6. Building & Grounds Proposal – Gus Gold 5 min.

Gus reviewed the termite report and proposal from Planet Orange, which uses non-toxic methods for termite abatement. It showed that TBE has a serious problem with dry wood termites, but no subterranean termites. TBE has not had any termite abatement since Jane Sable Friedman left her position as Executive Director. The Building & Grounds Committee recommends that TBE contract with Planet Orange to take care of termite abatement and follow-up inspections/abatement. The Board does not need to approve the expenditure of \$2,599, but Board members expressed support for the plan.

7. Leadership Development – Scott Roseman25 min.

Last year, Scott convened a leadership development committee. Carolyn Coleman was a member of the committee, as were various other regular and drop-in members. The committee developed a list of about 30 people to talk to who were younger and might have a perspective on how to develop leaders. Scott distributed a handout that showed the recommendations the committee came up with.

Following is a summary of points discussed among Board members:

First Topic--Committees

Each committee should have a mission statement.

After people serve on a committee for a term, we don't always cultivate them into other roles. We need succession planning in committees, and at every level.

Need to define which committees are open to anyone and which are not. Isn't the process that the Board appoints committee chair, and the chair then invites people to participate. No, this is not always the process, e.g. the social action committee is open to anyone. We might want to consider changing the process to make committees more open.

Always respond to offers from individuals to serve on a committee. We need to discern when it is appropriate to accept someone's offer.

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Engagement is improving because of Melissa who can engage people, which led to the women’s and men’s writing groups.

In the past, we did a Sunday morning event where all committees had information in the social hall, and we could try this again.

2nd Topic: Geography

Overcome geography by adding Audio-Visual capacity to attend meetings virtually. Also have meetings in other locations, which enhances the experience.

3rd topic: Culture:

Establish child-friendly culture, provide childcare, and allow for children to be more welcome. Rabbi Paula asked for more information on when people feel that kids are not welcome. Scott will have her talk to a couple of people.

Suggested Melissa or someone connect yearly with members to talk about how things are going.

Consider inviting younger adults with children to speak to the Board directly.

If we want to encourage people to be on the Board, we should consider how the Board operates and how it is structured, e.g. frequency of meetings, type of issues discussed at meetings,

General Points

People volunteer when they want to spend more time with other people, doing something Jewish. Relevance and relationships are important. What are the opportunities we can create where people become invested in each other?

At Biennial, heard a talk from a congregation that said they have a person you can go to if you want to bring together some people to do something.

Perhaps Scott and Carolyn Coleman could meet with Melissa to discuss how to move forward. Scott will go back to the committee with these ideas, and work on a more concrete proposal.

8. Membership Update – Melissa Sunberg..... 5 min.

Reported by Tanya in Melissa’s absence... Last year at this time there were 372 renewals for \$580K, and we now have 444 renewals for \$680K. Of 425, 260 have given more than they gave last year. Electronic renewal is going well.

9. Questions on ED Report – Tanya Lorien 5 min.

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TBE has two new staff people in the office, and they are terrific. Marilyn Valencia is at front desk and works on house manager and event support. Cynthia Carman is our accounts admin, handling money, donations, tuition, etc. They are coming up to speed on everything.

TBE has also hired a security guard, Daniel Vasquez, who will work on Shabbats, high holidays, and events. He has been a sheriff in the past. Everyone was very pleased.

Tanya and Paul are working on weighting and tracking of the budget. They will bring first quarter numbers next month. They are making great progress in cleaning up our system.

10. Board sign-ups & Update: Bima/Greeter & D'var Torah – Michelle
Dennis5 min.

Sign-ups for October were done.

11. Rabbinic Remarks10 min.

Rabbi Paula gave many thanks and kudos to Josh about the bimah project. She also reported that the Lifelong Learning Committee is working hard. Lita Miller recently hosted a salon on choral High Holiday music that was very well attended. Rabbi Paula also thanked Nathaniel for all the time he gives to educate congregants. His salons are very popular.

Adjourned at 8:57

Reminders:

Oct. 27th 4:30pm at Temple Beth El – Town hall discussion of experience with Sanctuary

Dec. 17th 6:00-8:00 round table potluck at Amy's

Dec. 18th Alan Miller Memorial TBE