

How We Began...

To get you familiar with our early history, I have had translated a document, currently framed and hanging at the rear of main sanctuary in the Shul (near the glass doors). Help in translating it from it's original Yiddish was provided, very patiently I might add, by R. Eliezer Gurkov of Burlington, VT. Here it is:

(Pardon the English, we had it translated as close to the original Yiddish as possible...)

These are the laws and rules of Chevra Bais Yaakov (Beth Jacob) in Montpelier Vermont established in the year 1913.

1. The President should be the chairman of all meetings. He opens the meetings. He has to see to it that everything is conducted in an orderly fashion. He calls meetings. When it is necessary he should have two votes.
2. The Vice President takes the place of the President when he is not present. He has the same rights as the President.
3. The Secretary must record in the record books everything which was decided upon in the meetings. The Secretary should keep the books with the Treasurer. He should make a program for each meeting and make sure that the program is followed.
4. The Treasurer should have a record book where he writes all income from the synagogue and the expenses, with the assumption that these expenses were signed by the Secretary.
5. The Trustees should come every Sunday to resolve any disagreements between members. They should see what is important to fix and they have the right to cause an expense to be incurred. (until a certain amount - left blank in our document). They don't have to wait for a meeting (to set this amount).

The Obligations Of The Members

6. Every member must pay dues of 50 cents a month. The members should live well with each other. They should be trustworthy members. If someone has something against some else they have to resolve it in a good way and not fight. And if they can't resolve it without fighting they have to come when the trustees are sitting

and they have to listen to what the trustees tell them—and then there will be peace.

7. If one member will say that another member owes him money. They first have to bring this matter to the Trustees. If the Trustees are not able to resolve this issue then the Trustees will give them permission to go to a Rov (A Rabbi empowered to make decisions with regard to Jewish Law), or permission to go to a lawyer and resolve it according to the laws of the land.

8. For anything which is resolved by a meeting, no one has a right to bring it up again (to raise objections to it). It has to remain as it's written in the record book.

9. Someone who will not obey the rules of the community. The community should reprimand him according to their understanding. And if he will not obey them, he will be removed from the community.

The Rules of The Community

1. All (Jewish) residents of Montpelier have to (financially) support a Shochet (a ritual slaughterer). And this Shochet should also be a teacher (for the children) and he should attend to the Shul. Every resident has to pay a certain, even, amount as much as the congregation should decide.
 2. This is a decision for which the penalty for violating it is excommunication. Aside from the appointed Shochet, appointed by the congregation, no one is allowed to slaughter an animal not for themselves nor for anyone else. Even if he is a resident of Barre or Montpelier (he is not allowed to slaughter for himself). And if someone who is not the appointed Shochet will slaughter then the Shechitah is considered invalid (the meat is considered unkosher).
 3. All (Jewish) residents of Montpelier and Barre have to come to daven on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the Shul in Montpelier in order that there is enough money coming in to pay for someone to lead prayers on the High Holy Days. If, for some reason, someone has to go to another city, they have to pay their share anyway, i.e., as much as the congregation should decide.
 4. These rules have the same strength as all rules of the Knesset Hagedolah (the Great Assembly) and someone who will not obey them is likened to someone who is 'breaking down the fence'—and a snake should bite him. Anyone who will keep these rules will have blessings of good.
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