

Minutes - Congregational Meeting

June 3, 2018

Attendees who signed in: Debbi Nadell, Les Schwartz, Mimi Epstein, Susan Brenner, Bob Epstein, Cindy Merrill, Gloria Halper, Ken Lerner, Fran Weick, Elianne Lieberman, Andrew Gordon, Marjorie Walters, Phil Walters, Lee Gordon, Miriam Reshotko, Ed Reckford, Nancy Becker, Charles Green, Shari Raider, Karen Westerman, Janet Byrd, Alan Cahn, Liz Joffe, Rocky Cohen, Julia Lager Mesulam, Chris Coughlin, Shelley Sobel, Susan Lazareck, Eve Berry, Fran Berg, Nancy Spigal, Sandy Ramirez, Tom Berg, Marian Rhys, Miryam Brewer, Arleen Slive, David Lewis, Rochelle Rosenberg, David Newman, Benjamin Barnett, Aaron Pearlman, Adele Thompson, Roberta Kaplan, Sacha Reich.

Welcome and blessing

Introductions - everyone introduced themselves

Transparency/Inclusivity committee and survey - Fran Weick

Fran provided some background about the group, their goals and mission; Currently there are 5 middle-aged women - looking for diversity and to add new members to work with existing group
Fran shared the proposed mission statement -

The purpose of this committee is to address and monitor policies and procedures to ensure transparency of governance decisions and allow for greater communication between members and governance, and amongst members, so that every congregant feels like a valued member.

Increased transparency will lead to greater engagement of members and promote inclusivity. Transparency is a reciprocal and ongoing process. It is a congregational value that members have greater understanding of the decision-making process within the congregation and that Havurah leadership continues to create avenues to learn about the needs and concerns of Havurah members.

To facilitate transparency and communication between members and Steering, and amongst members, they launched a very brief survey (which was in paper form at the meeting and will be online), to try to understand the best ways for members to ask questions/raise concerns and to learn the answers/response.

Proposed Bylaws - Liz Joffe

Provided some background on governance changes

Explained that building issues now under Hadracha, and it is really a lot, especially since some building issues are emerging around space, safety, etc.

Steering feels we need another cluster with another lead to appropriately address this need and current steering configuration doesn't have the capacity or expertise needed.

Liz shared a visual of new structure with Makom (Home)

Only change is one new cluster, pulling items from Hadracha (Governance)

Liz reviewed the language changes
Mimi Epstein moved that we adopt the by-laws change
The motion was seconded and the changes were adopted without opposition

Music Disappearing Task Force - Shelley Sobel

Shelley explained some background; shared that Ilene would be retiring after High Holidays
Music is an integral part of everything we do at Havurah
Disappearing Task Force (DTF) is being asked to gather information about needs, and then formulate recommendations on next steps for music at Havurah
DTF - Andrew Ehrlich, Laura Ehrlich
Chari Smith was part of DTF but has stepped away, looking for someone else to join core committee. If folks are interested they could connect with Shelly, Andrew or Laura.

2018- 19 Budget - Janet Byrd, Treasurer

Shari Raider is in line to be next Treasurer
Janet talked about the budget process this year, which was a little different than in the past.
Last year's budget was a 14-month budget to adjust budget year to more closely align with the program year. We will now move back to a 12-month budget, starting July 1. It is a little challenging to compare 14 to 12-month budgets, so that is something to keep in mind as we review things.

This year there were committee conversations about what they wanted to see in the budget, however there were still challenges for some committees in trying to plan for 12 - 18 months.
Janet expressed appreciation to Karen Westerman and Ed Reckford for the many hours they spent working on the budget

Janet explained the budget structure.

Budget reflects some new programming such as Ma'avar Committee which will be having classes with a professional facilitator and Spiritual Life which has requested money for Shabbat lunches.

There is also under High Holiday a \$5000 contingency which could perhaps pay for childcare, or movers.

We are ending the year on good financial footing, due to elements including:

- Strong fundraising
- Increased membership
- Didn't have Program Director position filled for most of the year
- Higher % of dues paid

Steering is recommending putting \$10,000 in the Prayerbook Fund to start to accumulate money to replace machzorim.

Building issues have been identified as a key area. There were issues proposed to address some of the concerns about the building specifically related to the energy survey that was done,

but Steering has recommended waiting until there is a comprehensive review to be able to make holistic decisions.

Janet shared that there is no paid music staff position in the budget after High Holidays. We are in the process of hiring a Program Director and that position is included in the budget. A ¼ time Assistance Coordinator of Education (ACE) is in the budget for the entire year.

The budget anticipates taking a transfer from the endowment, as allowable.

Rich Eichen will be doing a report soon in Hakol about the endowment.

There were a number of questions which Janet answered.

Debbi Nadell made a motion to accept the budget

Phil Walters seconded the motion

Budget passed without opposition

Honoring those leaving Steering

Lisa Cordova- Limud Lead is ending her 2-year term (was not present but mentioned)

Janet Byrd- Treasurer is ending her term

Shelley Sobel- ending her 4-year term as Vice President, Co-President and Past President

All were thanked for their contributions!

Nominating Committee - Debbi Nadell

Debbi reviewed the current status of the nominating committee including the slate. She explained that all members will be receiving an email with the slate. There will be a 10-day period when new nominations can be suggested, and then 7 days for voting.

The slate presented was:

Limud(Education) Lead-Galit Reilly

Treasure- Shari Raider

VP- open still recruiting

Co-President (Junior)- Julia Lager-Mesulam

Co- President (Senior) Ken Lerner

Past President- Bill Kwitman

Q&A/open discussion

A request in community emails was put forth asking congregants to provide questions prior to the meeting in effort to make sure meeting was meaningful for all. No questions had been submitted ahead of time, but there were a wide range of questions and discussion on a number of topics including but not limited to how budget priorities are decided, the Program Director hiring process, current safety concerns, how the Geshar team operates, how the new machzorim will be selected and the Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG) during the open discussion period.

Budget Priorities: This year all committee requests were included in the budget that passed today. We are in a strong financial position, and didn't need to make any decisions between items. However, that is not also going to be the case. If decisions need to be made to cut, eliminate budget lines or not approve budget requests next year, that discussion and priority setting is part of Steering's role, but ultimately it is up to the congregation to pass the final budget.

Program Director hiring: There is a hiring team of Steering members in place (Julia Lager-Mesulam, Janet Byrd, Lisa Cordova, Chris Coughlin). There have been initial screening calls with a number of candidates. We are in the process of scheduling interviews with both staff and the hiring committee for the end of June/early July.

Safety Concerns: There was a request for clarification about an earlier comment about safety concerns. It was explained that people have been sleeping in the courtyard area and that human waste has been an issue.

Gesher (Bridge): There were several questions about the Gesher process, and how it is currently working. It was acknowledged that it is still a work in progress and that we are figuring it out together. It is a cultural shift from a time when Havurah was smaller and if someone had an idea they could just make it happen. Our community is bigger and more complicated, and the goal is to strengthen our community and programming by breaking down silos and working on collaborative projects. The role of the Gesher team was explained, that it is in place to help committees and others work through new systems during this time of transition. It was suggested that the team should be more diverse and should include someone who has been a member for a long time. The hope is that over time the values and principles of Gesher will become more and more a part of our culture and we will not need a Gesher team.

Machzorim (High Holidays prayerbook) selection: Susan Brenner will be setting up a Disappearing Task Force (DTF) to manage the selection process. It was suggested that as part of the rollout that fundraising could launch even before the book was selected, and that the last time members were encouraged to buy their own copies.

MACG: There were some comments about being members of Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG) for many years without having an open discussion about the cost and value of our participation, and that there are a lot of strong emotions on the topic. It was explained that there is a process being laid out this year to allow for a discussion and decision before next year's budget. There was a comment made that it will be important to address the emotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Coughlin