

## **Steering Committee Minutes December 11, 2018**

Attendees: Susan Brenner, Deborah Eisenbach-Budner, Galit Reilly, Rachel Pollack, Tom Berg, Miriam Reshotko, Bill Kwitman, Chris Coughlin, Julia Lager-Mesulam, Benjamin Barnett, Shari Raider, Liz Joffe, Adela Basayne, Ken Lerner, Aaron Pearlman  
Guests: Shelley Sobel, Debbi Nadell, Eve Berry  
Absent: Teri Ruch

6:37 pm Meeting Convened

### **Blessing**

#### **Staff Implications for Events**

There was a brief discussion about the lead up to the Tikkun Olam Chanukah Fair and Celebration. As a community we need to be aware of the benefits and costs to staff and others about the last-minute requests to the office when there are big events. For the Chanukah event there were a lot of last-minute requests to the office to copy things and people coming in to make copies without checking if there was time to do so. Adela will develop some guidelines about using the office copier, including suggestions for training members about the guidelines. We may also want to consider budgeting for committee copying needs.

#### **Drash – Susan Brenner**

#### **Leadership Development – Debbi Nadell, Shelley Sobel, Eve Berry**

The committee members came to Steering to share their proposed mission and their focus for 2019. There were some suggestions to the proposed mission which the committee will integrate. The committee has done a needs assessment – talking to cluster and committee leads and has developed a list of possible trainings for committee leaders to fill gaps. For 2019 the committee will focus on committee support and launching new leadership training through the Dorot group, probably starting in the fall.

Steering supported the committee's request to move to Hadracha cluster and supported the intent of the mission and focus of the committee. The committee will edit the mission statement based on feedback.

### **Retreat Planning – Shelley Sobel, Adela Basayne**

Shelley, Adela and Wendy Weissman have been planning the agenda for the January 27 planning retreat. Shelley distributed list of committee leads being invited for Steering Leads to review and update. Adela discussed pre-work that participants will be asked to do, and the importance of clusters having meetings in early January, if possible. It is important to reflect and share learnings, or we keep doing the same thing. Makom is a new cluster, and the Personnel Committee is a new committee, so both will need support.

### **Membership discussion – outreach vs focus on current members – Ken Lerner**

Where should we focus limited resources to develop and sustain programming? How do we want staff to prioritize their time? It is a legitimate question about whether we are really trying to grow, or do we focus on Panim el Panim – connecting our members, so our members have a deeper connection to the community. Can we do both? What does stopping outreach actually mean in terms of programming and effort? Leads to the question of what do we want to be? As we consider the tradeoffs, we need to consider fiscal implications. The current budget projected 415 families, but we are not at that number yet. We do have some membership drops. People do have exit interviews, so we have a sense of why people leave. Membership size is a key issue for Makom as we consider long-time building needs. If we move to gain more space, we will definitely need to grow. This question of focusing on growth vs retention is part of long range planning, and it is time for us to start putting together the next long range plan. There was a suggestion to perhaps start with a Disappearing Task Force (DTF) on growth and membership size. Deborah and Tom Berg have done work on this topic in the past, but it would need to be refreshed. The Past President Council is meeting in January and Ken and Julia will see if any of them are interested in participating in the DTF. Galit might also be interested.

### **Shabbat School Proposed Registration Policy – Deborah Eisenbach-Budner**

Deborah explained the current process, and the need for a revised policy to set clear parameters on the timing for registration. There is currently a May 1 enrollment deadline – if you are a Havurah member and you indicate interest, your child(ren) have a spot. After May 1, registration is on a space available basis only, and Deborah has the discretion to take into consideration the grade's group dynamics, the new family's potential match with the existing group, and any other information she thinks might be relevant. Deborah proposed a policy that keeps the May 1 date, has registration on a space available basis from May 1 – August 1 based on Deborah's discretion, but no enrollment from August 1 – May 1. There was some discussion.

Motion: In order for our family cooperative model of Grades K – 6 Jewish education to continue to meet the diverse needs of families, their children and the larger Havurah community, we have the following policy for Shabbat School enrollment: Families must be Havurah Shalom members and register their children for Shabbat School by May 1, to ensure a spot for the upcoming year. From May 1 – August 1, enrollment in a particular grade is subject to space availability, in consultation with and at the discretion of the Education Director. Enrollment in Shabbat School is not available after August 1 for the upcoming year; families are welcome to join Havurah Shalom and fully participate in holidays, Shabbat celebrations, and all other family activities, of course.

Chris made the motion, Miriam seconded

Motion passed with 1 abstention

### **Fundraising – Aaron Pearlman**

Aaron shared that a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is scheduled Sunday, May 19. The fundraising target for the event is \$5K in ticket sales, \$10K in paddle raise. There was a question about whether it would be a welcoming event for families – we need to decide about how the event is structured and understand the ramifications on who will choose to attend.

There were some other suggestions for possibly fundraising. Bill will explore the idea of “rounding up” which he has seen other organizations use for small donation. It was also shared that we could encourage members to donate through Amazon Smile which is set up for Havurah, but there is some concern about highlighting Amazon because of social responsibility concerns about their business practices.

Break

### **Makom (Safety, Neighbors, and Parking) – Tom Berg**

Safety and Values – first meeting was held earlier this month, second one coming up on Thursday, December 13. About 10 people attended in addition to leadership, and people were very engaged. People are concerned, and shared good thoughts. The sense of the group who met was that we need to think about our goals and values, rather than immediately reacting. The plan is to have the second session this week, and the Safety Committee will take the info and develop a plan and come to Steering with a recommendation. The Safety Committee needs some additional members and should be highlighted on the Governance visual.

Parking – meters will be installed in the area by the middle of the summer. Everything west of 18<sup>th</sup> will be metered. Tom talked to the City’s liaison about hours, and they will

work with us. Talked about Saturday with a later start time. Possibility about disabled spot in front of the building. Parking permits and scratch offs might help mitigate the impact. The City committee is going to vote next week, and Adela is planning on attending.

Neighbor (19<sup>th</sup> and Kearney) is upset about homeless encampment in our doorway on Kearney because of the impact on their business. Rachel and Adela spoke to the homeless man and realized that he isn't capable of organizing himself to move. Rachel gave an update on the steps staff has taken, including calling the non-emergency police line who came and explained the options. Staff requested direction from Steering. There was an acknowledgement that this is a very challenging and emotionally hard situation to maneuver. Next steps will be to call the non-emergency police number again, provide oral and written instructions to the people camping that they have to move or their things will be removed. Call the company who will come to remove stuff. Rachel will also explore whether we can turn off the electrical outlet in the courtyard, because that seems to be attracting some people to hangout in the courtyard.

#### **Insurance Policy – Liz Joffe**

Rachel and Liz met with Havurah's insurance agent to review the policy. February 1 is renewal date. The company does background checks for employees, so that might be something we explore in the future. Liz asked about our coverage and if gate would have impact, but the agent didn't think so. Our premium is going down for next year. One area of coverage where we are low is the blanket bond – covers if there is embezzlement – only insured for \$25K. The cost to increase the amount is low, and could be covered within the budget.

Shari made the motion to expand coverage to \$100,000. Bill seconded

Motion passed

#### **Financial Update – Shari Raider**

Shari distributed the financials. Shari would like to meet with each Cluster Lead before the January retreat to help lay the foundation for next year's planning. She will also meet with Staff. The Finance Committee will be sending out budget templates for staff and committees to plan for next year in January or February. The first draft of budget will be discussed in the Finance Committee in March and sent to Steering for an initial review in April.

There was a question about the Endowment Fund and who is monitoring that. We do get statements and Larry Reichman is tracking it. The group reviewed the Funds sheet.

There was a question about whether the Employee Flex Fund should be on the cash report. Shari will check on that.

### **Minutes**

Liz moved to accept the November 2018 minutes, Chris seconded  
Minutes accepted

### **JCPA Resolutions – Ken Lerner**

Nancy Becker, Havurah's representation to the Jewish Community Relations Committee (JCRC), shared three resolutions that are going to national plenum of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA). Portland's JCRC is part of that national organization, and each community's JCRC can vote on the resolution. As Havurah's representative, Nancy was asking for input from Steering about how she should represent our positions on the resolutions. This year's resolutions are on:

- Civil discussion around Israel
- Holocaust Education
- Rohingya genocide

After some discussion, Steering guidance to Nancy was that there were some concerns about the resolution on civil discourse because it might stifle important conversations about Israel's actions, and gave her permission to work with other JCRC members on alternative language that will allow for open conversations including different perspectives on Israel's actions. The other two resolutions would have our support.

Adjourned 9 pm

## **Hadracha Report December 2018**

### **Personnel**

Questions for Rabbi Benjamin's evaluation went out but there was poor response and the questions were resubmitted. The process for Deborah's evaluation is still in development.

All of steering have been requested to create descriptions of their jobs and responsibilities to inform future volunteers who might be interested in taking on those necessary positions.

Liz has recruited two or three members to be on the personnel committee, but it is has not yet begun to meet or consider the work the committee should be addressing.

## **Gesher**

Wendy, Adela and Shelley are planning the retreat with support from the Gesher team. Gesher had another full meeting to revise the agenda for the retreat. Adela will speak to Steering about our homework to be done before the retreat. We will likely be addressing the Gesher retreat at the January Steering meeting as well.

Dorot is in the early stages of development and Keren McCord and Hank Kaplan have agreed to be the leaders. A continuation meeting is scheduled this week with Rabbi Benjamin, Deborah, Adela and Debbi Nadel to make further plans.

## **Past President's Council**

Myriam Brewer is organizing a Past President's Council for early January. Ken will be drafting the agenda.

## **Plenum Rep**

A decision has not been made yet about how to proceed with our new plenum rep. We continue to debate whether it makes sense to have co-reps since two people have expressed interest. Contact will be made with them to determine whether they both would welcome this and feel they can work well together.

## **Staffing DTF**

Due to work commitments, Chris will be stepping back from the onboarding team. Shari will continue with Julia until February when the Staffing DTF will disappear. Supervision of Adela will then move to monthly meetings with Julia and Miriam.

## **Finance**

As of November 30th we have 396 total Memberships. These numbers includes 21 new memberships and 14 drops. Our 2018/2019 Budget is based on 415 Memberships. Our current dues adjustment rate is 29.9%.

This month the **G/L redesign** will be completed. This means updating all the accounts in Shul Cloud, Quickbooks and Excel.

Budgeting timeline will be discussed at the Steering Committee meeting.

## **Transparency/Inclusivity-**

No specific update this month.

## **Policy- no update this month**

## **Nominating**

Leadership Development has completed its needs assessment for current committees, checking in with cluster leads and committee chairs to learn what is working well and where committee chairs might need support. They interviewed several leaders and have developed a good sense of which clusters and committee need support. They have also developed lists of potential volunteers to contact about assuming roles on Steering in the coming year and have plans to start contacting those prospects this month.

## **Avodah Report**

**Dec. 2018**

**Submitted by Susan Brenner**

## **Machzor DTF**

The Machzor DTF held its first meeting in late Nov. Members reviewed its mission and goals, which are to vet possible books and aid the congregation in selecting a different machzor in time for the 2019/5780 High Holy Days. They also considered a couple fundraising techniques such as “buy one-donate one” and asking those with additional means to contribute directly to a campaign. The DTF held a brainstorming session to think of which qualities and attributes they’d like to see in the next machzor. Some examples include gender-neutral English, clear, easy to read Hebrew and English text, physical weight and size of book, and inclusiveness to the world and matriarchs. Next steps are to open up the process to the congregation via Survey Monkey allowing people to rank criteria in importance and value. Currently there are seven possible machzorim to evaluate. The DTF will narrow these down to three to present to the congregation for their input. Stay tuned for more updates over time.

## **Spiritual Life Committee**

The SLC met in late Nov. for the first time since last spring. Items discussed included:

- Revising Electronics policy on Shabbat morning
- Making Shabbat morning services more of an intergenerational crossroads
- Building security during services
- Carlbach music hiatus- implications
- Bringing back a weekly Fri. night service?
- Calendar adjustments

- Joey Weisenberg Shabbaton at Shaari Torah Feb. 15-17 Meet there 2/16
- Bringing Triennial readings into alignment with rest of Jewish world in 2020
- SLC taking over B'nai Mitzvah date assignments beginning with 2020-2021
- Agreeing to meet every two months even if one co-chair is not available

## **Ma'avar**

Susan Lazarek reported on the Death Cafe gathering held Dec. 2 and guided by Buff Medb Neretin. She wrote the following:

There were approximately 11-12 of us around the big table in the office area.

Buff did a wonderful job laying out the ground rules:

Listen carefully. Allow time for a breath or two before beginning one's comments

No cross conversation. No suggestions, handing out of tissues, or hugging (allow the speaker to feel listened to and respected)

Be conscious of the time you are talking: take enough to share your thoughts and be aware that others are waiting for their turn to speak. This is not a problem solving session. What comes into the group, stays in the group.

There were many profound comments, stories and concerns shared around the table.

Only once did Buff have to remind a participant about cross commentary.

I do think that it was a helpful and compassionate way for people to talk about themselves.

There were snacks and coffee and tea available in the kitchen to take before we started. The goal was to minimize the distraction that comes from passing plates, etc.

I would like to see this offered perhaps once or twice a year. Very good process.

## **Jewish Federation of Greater Portland 2019 Legislative Agenda**

### **Protecting Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities**

The Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) supports the safeguarding of Medicaid funding for Oregon's most vulnerable populations, as well as funding for home-and community-based service options. Oregon currently faces a \$830-million Medicaid shortfall for the 2019-21 budget cycle due to the sunseting of

Measure 101's healthcare provider assessment and the expected decline in federal support of the Medicaid population. An 11-member governor-appointed advisory group is currently looking at solutions to this deficit and a recommendation is expected sometime in October.

### **Supporting Holocaust Education in High Schools**

The results of a sobering survey conducted by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany were released this year: Twenty-two percent of millennials haven't heard of the Holocaust or aren't sure whether they've heard of it. Thirty-one percent of American adults (41 percent of millennials) don't know how many Jews were killed in the Holocaust. Forty-one percent of Americans (66 percent of millennials) can't identify what the death camp Auschwitz was. In partnership with the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, the JCRC is committed to reversing this trend by supporting legislation to mandate Holocaust-related education in the state's public high schools.

### **Strengthening Hate Crimes Legislation**

According to the Anti-Defamation League, over the last several years, the American Jewish community has been victimized by hate crimes more than any other religious community. As a member of the Attorney General's Task Force on Hate Crimes, the JCRC supports legislation to strengthen the state's intimidation laws, which are applied in the prosecution of bias crimes.

### **Protecting Workers Against Wage Theft**

The JCRC believes that every worker has the right to live and labor with dignity, safety and hope. Traditionally, victims can file lawsuits to hold bad actors accountable for wage theft, but now businesses are burying forced arbitration provisions deep in employment contracts, denying access to courts and juries. The JCRC is a member of the Oregon Coalition Against Wage Theft, which supports legislation that would authorize whistleblowers who identify violations to join the state attorney general as a party to the case, thereby bypassing forced arbitration provisions that deny victims their right to go to court.

### **Preventing Gun Violence**

The JCRC is a coalition member of the Oregon Alliance for Gun Safety. We are jointly

committed to making Oregon safer by keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and dangerous individuals. The group is made up of businesses, faith communities, service organizations, nonprofits and elected officials. At this time, the coalition is looking at a variety of options for the 2019 session, including safe storage, and the JCRC is committed in supporting that package of legislation.