

BHBE Board Minutes Zoom and In-Person 7/19/23 @ 7:30 PM

Present: Steve Levin, Fran Diamond, Harriet Robbins-Ost, Jessica Littmann, Marsha Lyons, Gail Swerdlik, Adam Goldfarb, Greer Braun, Leah Buchbinder, Judy Levey, Robin Smulson, Carter Greene, Ira Dubin, Harris Miller, Carla Banoff, Ira Zagorin, Cynthia Lerner, Joan Meyers, Bev Reinglass (Zoom), Minnie Goldsmith (Zoom), Elly Rousso (Zoom), Jay Goldstein (Zoom), Jon Clemons (Zoom)

Excused Absences: Fred Rosenwasser, Ellen Sered, Carol Pellish, Shoshanna Reynolds, Larry Plawsky, Dan Meyer, Sam Rodin, Zvi Tannenbaum, Dan Chodrow, Gail Schnitzer-Eisenberg, Rochelle Leff, Keri Bahar, Steve Bucksbaum, Allison Kamen

Clergy and Staff Present: Rabbi Crane, Michael Kahn

Congregants Present: Lia Niederberger

Gail Swerdlik moved to approve the minutes
Jessica Littmann seconded.
They were approved unanimously.

Rabbi Crane - Rabbi's Report

Began with his D'var Torah

Has spent the summer connecting with community members, preparing for the Jewish new year, solo clergy member while Cantor Roytman is on sabbatical. until August 1s.

Summer events/activities: Tisha B'Av, July 27th, a wedding was recently celebrated and the family has joined BHBE; Ice cream social, Thursday, July 20th at 6:30 PM in Rabbi Crane's backyard. Friday, July 28th, Families with Littles program before Shabbat. August programs being planned. Intro to Judaism Class, Talmud class, etc will continue to meet.

Cynthia Lerner - President's Report

We discussed the building. Working with David Cohen and Wayne Caplan to look into development of our property.

Look into real estate broker (both are at no cost.)

RFP sent real estate brokers to find out whether our building is saleable.

Committee to review RFP responses. Must have board approval. We have a responsibility as board members representing congregants. Minutes are posted on the website for congregants and their opinions are welcome.

As our options are being investigated, we need to stop rumors.

Many community and religious organizations are facing similar issues like us with old buildings. BHBE is not closing; our community will stay together as we go into the future. Optimism, hope and sustainability for BHBE. It was suggested Cynthia Lerner write a letter to the congregation for clarity and to quash rumors.

No final decisions can be made without the approval of the board and then the congregation must also vote.

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago sponsored a meeting on July 7th for synagogues of the North Shore—congregational Rabbis and presidents were invited to attend.

Hope to see all board members at Shabbat in the Shade on Friday, August 25th. Saturday, August 26th, past president's plaque will be dedicated. Past presidents are invited to attend Friday nights as our guests and participate in the Shabbat service. PP's have also been invited to join us at the board drop-in on Sunday, August 27th.

Registration information is on line and hopefully all of the board members have already gone online (or called the office) and re-registered.

We are collecting \$36 for good and welfare in case there's an emergency involving a board member. Checks, Venmo and Zelle can go to Cynthia.

Every board member should contribute to the high holiday appeal. Please let Michael and Cynthia know if you want to be an anonymous donor to provide a match of any kind.

Michael Kahn - Executive Director's Report:

All board meetings will be hybrid except the winter months (December through March), when they will be exclusively Zoom. New member joined us and is on the board. See board information via your ShulCloud account as a congregant.

Parsonage is tax exempt. We have a loan held against it from an anonymous congregant. Employee handbook will be updated in collaboration with Paychex. It will be shared with the staff and board.

Michael met with the ADL as we're a Signature Synagogue (Kulanu group from ADL to deal with antisemitism) - no connection to our Kulanu Committee. Need a liaison for our group. A Request for Proposal (RFP) for a broker was sent this morning. Three brokers have already contacted Michael.

Last year, we had 315 paid family units. As of July 17th, 90 paying members have renewed. Need everyone to renew and we will carefully track our considerations. We automatically renewed the members who receive complimentary memberships, employees, and chesed (34). About one third of our membership has renewed. 43 email only. 2 out of 12 friends renewed. 23 children so far renewed in the Academy. 23 family units overall have asked for financial consideration (\$44,000 for this). 4 Academy students' families have asked for help with the Academy.

We'd like our dues paid by the end of the year for our cash flow. Exceptions will be made for hardship cases with membership.

Alarm systems - ADT operates burglar system; Johnson Controls operates our fire system. Will come to repair. Plumbing and HVAC issues recently by Percy's office. We maxed out our credit card of \$35,000. HVAC works in the office, Men's Club and Youth Lounge.

Parsonage had a sewerage water issue. Needed to be sanitized and repaired. Added a new cleanout in the front lawn. No insurance because it was below our \$10,000 deductible. There is a plumbing issue at BHBE apparently due to a washing machine owned by BJE.

Shoshanna Reynolds VP of Membership will welcome new members. Cynthia will invite them to Shabbat in the Shade, the gift baskets we distribute this year will include stuffed Torahs; we are also going to be sending out new baby gifts. Greer Braun will send a card from Sisterhood to welcome people.

Adam Goldfarb - Treasurer's Report:

To meet with Kesef and get information from our systems. Michael to add him.

Jessica Littmann - Vice President's Report:

Finished cleaning the building and academy. Thank you to Lee Schwartz, Irene Jacobson, Susan Lieberman. No longer in violation of fire code. They will look at all wall displays in the building to update them and rearrange wall art.

Greer Braun - Sisterhood Report:

Preparing for the new year. Rummage sale drop off on Sunday, July 30th. Sale is Sunday, Aug 6th and Monday, August 7th. Holocaust museum visit on August 21st. Other fundraisers include: Challah, new year's cards and plant sale. Working with Hedva and the Academy.

Joan Meyers mentioned the new year's greetings. Jessica requested something be posted on social media advertising this.

Robin Smulson - Ritual Committee:

Will set up a Minyan app to help fill Minyan services. Provide information of when you'll be available to have at least 10 people.

Old Business/New Business

Adam Goldfarb asked whether we can reconnect with BJE to bring in new congregants. Would it be our membership VP? No invitation since the Covid era. Important that we do outreach to BJE. Rebecca Annesfeld is the BJE director. Rabbi Crane mentioned they're all invited to our Families with Littles programs. Steve :evin will assist with outreach to the BJE.

Keep in mind that religious observance in general is decreasing.

Robin Smulson motioned to end the meeting.

Joan Meyers seconded

Meeting ended at 8:42 PM