

BHBE General Board Meeting Minutes 20.11.24

Present: Carla Banoff, Dan Chodrow, Jon Clemons, Ken Cohen, Tim Comar, Fran Diamond, Laurie Feinstein, Adam Goldfarb, Andrea Graham, David Greenstein, Steve Levin, Jessica Littmann, Joan Meyers, Stewart Miller, Harris Miller, David Mogul, Shoshanna Reynolds, Fred Rosenwasser, Gail Swerdlik, Gail Schneiderman, Barbara Ungar, Irv Zagorin

Clergy: Rabbi Crane, Cantor Roytman, Michael Kahn

Congregant: Lia Niederberger

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM

Dan Chodrow motioned to approve the Oct. 2024 minutes.

Tim Comar seconded.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Irv Zagorin motioned to approve the Nov. 2024 consent agenda.

Joan Meyers seconded

The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Mission Touch - Cantor Roytman

Mentioned Cantor's contract (very unique contract - will need a little more time to make the right decision for the congregation and his future).

Branch out to the broader congregation.

Rabbi's Report - Rabbi Crane

Shared his De'Var Torah

President's Report - Jessica Littmann

Please contribute to the sunshine fund - Suggested donation is \$36

Executive Committee Update: The high holiday appeal was discussed in comparison to last year and this year, capital campaign, the building search and the Cantor's contract.

The Rapoport Reickiss Firm will be our financial wealth managers (under 1% fee for advisement) as picked by our finance committee (known to work with synagogues and nonprofits). Will have access to our funds and will be monitored. May need the money in the near future. Important that we protect our principal funds (\$4.5 million). We'll cover our endowment, but the rest will go to the building search. Right-size our budget for the long term. The Finance Committee will give a quarterly report.

Building Committee will meet on 11/21/24 to go over costs of renovation. Will conduct a feasibility analysis to see if we can raise the funds for the building they choose to pursue.

The church in Evanston feels like a house of worship. The building in Skokie requires imagination. Both require renovations and accessibility updates.

\$3.5 million at Skokie location, 5255 Golf Road when purchased and redone.

\$4.5 million at Evanston church, 3434 Central Street when purchased and redone.

There's still a possibility that we'll rent short term or long term. (Began to look.)

Jackie is making phone calls to places for a 2026 lease.

Ken Cohen shared our post-it note questions.

Achieve a fundraising buffer through our capital campaign based on commitment.

We will schedule a learning session on the balance, profit/loss and budget with Adam Goldfarb. High holiday appeal is very important.

We'll arrange a meeting with the committee overlooking our items.

Also, have walkthroughs of synagogues to determine what our space will look like. It'll be for 362 days a year. We'll be elsewhere for the high holidays.

Post-it Note Questions - Appendix

What will happen if we don't find a place to go?

What is the minimum amount of money that we want to keep invested?

What will the situation with accessibility be?

With respect to the amount of work that will need to be done, which option seems most feasible?

Consideration of space (not too much for where BHBE congregation is) is important, but will there be enough extra space to accommodate increases in congregation size without a major rebuild?

Are spaces for social events and separate spaces for learning being considered?

Will we do a formal security study?

Has the other group dropped out of the "triangle" building offer?

What is the major consideration of the buildings? ie - size? - Buildings?

What is the usable square footage of the Unity Church?

What are the top three criteria for selecting a building?

What are the top three priorities as we evaluate a new building?

Will we have enough room for Tot Shabbat, regular Shabbat, Kiddush, etc?

Can we create acoustics in the medical building as we can with the church?

If we rent for HH because the new place is too small, how would we accommodate large B-Mitzvahs?

What is being told to the B-Mitzvah families for 2026?

Will we have a drop off lane?

What will we do if the building is small and we have a large event - ie: 2-3 recent B'nai Mitzvahs?

What will happen to the stained glass windows in the sanctuary and rotunda and other valuables such as bimah items? (2) - building cornerstones, plaques, historical items, etc...

Sukkot

Will there be a main chapel with enough of an atmosphere to evoke piety?

Depending on when we finalize a purchase, is there a possibility we'll need temporary space?

Is it feasible to to rent instead of buy?

When are we going to stop trying to buy a building and switch to looking at rental properties?

When do we decide that we need to rent a home? What is our deadline before we pivot?

Pros & cons of own vs. rent

Where are we in the process/status of the two buildings?

Have we made a decision yet?

How will we fund our purchase?

How much will each building cost to renovate?

What is our absolute maximum we are willing to spend?

Can you tell us how much each building will cost to purchase?

Executive Director's Report - Michael Kahn

Barbara Ungar thanked the staff and clergy for all their hard work during the rummage sale.

Ways and Means - Fran Diamond

Raised \$83,000 so far in 2024 compared to \$123,000 last year

134 member families in 2024, 189 member families donated in 2023.

19 new member families as donors.

83 families that increased their amount.

Cohen and Littmann families are matching donations that increased over last year.

It's around 50%. Goal is 80%.

She will send reminders to board member families who have not donated yet.

Board has donated \$10,000 so far.

Emails to those who donated last year, but haven't donated yet.

Emails to non-donors.

Donate on Giving Tuesday following Thanksgiving.

Phone calls to those who need to still contribute (mid-December).

Remind everyone on charitable donations for taxes.

We're counting pledges and contributions.

We're running behind because the high holidays began on October 1st.

Some regular givers are holding back this year due uncertainty with the Cantor's contract and the building purchase/lease.

Suggestion to look into Kol Nidre appeals.

Building update with appeal.

Also separate high holiday appeal and how it works email and in the weekly newsletter on top. Remind everyone in the groups and committees to donate a meaningful contribution and to the "buddy system."

Old Business - None

New Business - None

Adam Goldfarb motioned to end the meeting at 9:10 PM.

Barbara Ungar seconded.

The motion was approved unanimously.