

Ohavi Zedek Synagogue
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 19th, 2015

Present: Miriam Sturgis, Jeff Potash, Michael Schaal, Abby Rosenthal, Mitch Cypes, Joey Bergstein, David Borsykowsky, Vivien Rabin Brown, Gary Visco, Elizabeth Kleinberg, Peter Pelaia

Phone: Basha Brody

Absent: Sharon Panitch, Joanna May, Peggy Munro

Guests: Naomi Barell, Melanie Kessler, Lise Bornstein Malter, Michael Rosenthal, Deb Lashman, Mark Green

Meeting was quorate and called to order at 5:41 pm

1. D'var Torah from Rabbi Jan on the building of the Mishkan

2. January Minutes

Michael moved to approve the January minutes, seconded by Miriam. Approved.

3. Joint Urban Ministries Project (JUMP) Food Drive—Lise Bornstein Malter

Lise announced the annual JUMP Food Drive. She gave out shopping bags with the list of items requested that will be donated to those in need. We are asking for 100% board participation. Empty bags will be left out in the synagogue for congregants to take, fill and return, through the end of March.

4. Hebrew School/Chavurah Education Presentation—Naomi Barell, Melanie Kessler
Naomi and Melanie presented a curriculum they are working on for an alternative Hebrew School track. If approved, this track will be offered to students, in addition to the regular track. The second track will involve educating and engaging parents more—e.g., parent meetings, family education sessions.

They want to find a way to keep more families involved after the bar/bat mitzvah. Currently, there is a program, led by Melanie, through the OZ Richmond Chavura and Naomi and Melanie hope to bring this into OZ, as an alternate track. The current thinking is that it would start in 6th grade. It would be more about building Jewish identity and less content-oriented. The plan is that it will help renew the parents' link to Judaism. There would be times, throughout the semester, when students/parents from both tracks come together for retreats and to work together.

Naomi and Melanie will continue to work on this and bring more details back to the Board. The Hebrew School committee and Religious committee will also be asked to provide input before the final Board approval.

5. Executive Director's Report

- Peter reviewed the current financial outlook. While financials remain strong there is some early indication that we can expect lower than expected revenues in several areas (membership pledges, annual appeal, Hebrew School Tuition, High Holy Day Seats, etc.). The net result of these various issues is that revenue will likely increase less than we had hoped this year. The gaps are not enough at this point for alarm. At this point we would expect to still come in with a balanced budget, but probably a much smaller or no surplus as in the previous few years. Other than issue items we've already discussed (dropping Hebrew School enrollment, declining holiday attendance) the drop in other giving is probably tied to the number of additional asks over the last half year (for Scholar in Residence, Playground, Kitchen, Mural, etc.).
- Two new members, Bob Fishel and Aaron & Sarah Cohen, were approved.
- There is a Shabbaton being scheduled for March 13 through 15 with Rabbi Jonah Geffen, a candidate for the position of Senior Rabbi.
- Work will begin in March on the lobby, to prepare for the installation of the Lost Shul Mural in May. Fundraising for this project continues.
- High Holy Day Survey—the draft survey circulated will be sent out shortly to all congregants. No major issues were noted.

6. New Business

Michael reported on the committee that is working to honor Rabbi Joshua. There will be a concert on March 8th being coordinated by Robert Resnik. Other upcoming events include an interfaith seder on April 27 (for the international community), a Hebrew School bagel brunch on May 3, and a Shabbat dinner honoring Kathy Chasan on June 5. The planned gift for the rabbi was discussed along with fundraising. Peter noted that funds would be credited towards the gift and paying for events, with excess to roll into the Rabbi's endowment. Some discussion followed about the best way to fundraise. Information about this will be going in the Voice and will be shared at the events.

Abby reported that attendance at Young Judaea events is up. Last event had over 20 people.

7. Executive Session

Gary motioned and Michael seconded that the Board move into Executive Session to discuss staffing issues at 8:10 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board exited executive session at 9:52 PM.

Vivien motioned and Mitch seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:53 PM. Motion carried unanimously.