

TEMPLE SINAI BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
October 16, 2019

Present: Ellen Agler, Michael Baratz, Jill Chenok, Laura Croen, Andrew Engel, Laurence Freedman, Gary Friend, Nancy Golding, Cathy Goldwyn, Katie Herman, Kenneth Jaffe, Julia Kepniss, Nancy Lieberman, Deborah Lewis, Matthew Pachman, Catherine Ribnick, Jonathan Roos, Todd Rosentover, Adam Rosenwasser, Stephen Sacks, Perri ger-Silversmith, Marcie Solomon, Seth Speyer, Laura Steel, Anita Stoll, Michael Sussmann, Regina Ziegler

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Deborah Lewis at 7:35 p.m.

D'var Torah: Regina Ziegler

BOARD OPERATIONS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

September 2019 meeting minutes:

Motion to approved carried unanimously.

September Membership report: (Jill Chenok)

Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Membership Chair Chenok highlighted (1) Finder Connection Fair to be held October 18, 2019 at 25 Year & New Member Shabbat; (2) November 8 & 9, 2019 Membership Committee will distribute 51 new member welcome bags; and, (3) Encouraging board members to assist in fully covering outreach to new members each month, making contact as early as possible.

Financial Report: (Marcie Solomon)

Finance Committee Chair Solomon reported that budget was on track, with revenue on schedule and expenses lower than anticipated. Additionally, Religious School enrollment and associated tuition revenue for 2019-2020 ended up being higher than anticipated. Solomon added the Finance Committee is waiting for auditor signoff before following up with lending institutions being consulted on construction financing related to expenses of the capital expansion.

Capital Campaign (Naomi Camper and Andrew Engel)

Commitments have been secured, totaling \$9.2M. The recently announced \$500K match has so far resulted in \$200K in new or increased pledges. Board members are asked to continue their efforts to open doors for campaign conversations. Camper noted there are still 750+ families who have yet to participate in the campaign and that it is essential for personal outreach to be successful in securing greater participation. Camper added the Nursery School Committee made a generous pledge, which is being leveraged to reach out broadly to Nursery School families.

UPDATES AND DISCUSSIONS

Board of Trustees Background Checks:

President Lewis and Executive Director Agler informed the Board there are new compliance requirements that stem from insurance policy requirements for the Nursery School. Driven by liability concerns around potential for molestation and sexual abuse claims related to the Nursery School, moving forward all members of the Board of Trustees will be required to comply with criminal background checks. Steve Sacks reflected that these requirements have increased significantly in recent period for all religious organizations because of liability increases in jurisdictions where the statute of limitations on such claims has been eliminated. Agler reported the background checks will be conducted by Intellicorp, who's routine searches include cross reference to government sanction/terrorism watch lists, social security and address confirmation, and criminal & sex offender searches. All Temple Sinai employees have been required to participate in such background checks for 10+ years. It was clarified that the insurance company does not see results. Only the Temple Sinai Executive Director and President have access to results and hold sole responsibility for deciding what findings warrant reporting – generally limiting issued to be addressed to those that relate to anything that raises concern to safety of members or fiduciary obligations of the Temple Board members were invited to bring specific questions or concerns to the Executive Director and President. Gary Friend reiterated this was common practice in corporate sector. Matthew Pachman offered that if Temple staff comply, the board should as well. Additionally, reference was made to how in the Temple Sinai Nursery School there are regular staff background checks and comprehensive programs on abuse prevention. Agler confirmed background search records are kept under lock for a period of 5 years and then destroyed. Board members who serve more than five years will be required to participate in new background checks every five years.

High Holy Days Greetings: (Laurence Freedman)

High Holy Days Greeting Coordinator Freedman thanks all who participated with the new data collection into google forms and shared that, (1) 87% of outreach was done by email, 3.2% by phone; (2) 1,116

member units received outreach; (3) There were 230 distinct conversations (23% of outreach); (4) there were 17 substantive comments (2%); and, (5) We received four requests for assistance with immediate needs. Issues raised for next year's outreach initiative included: (1) holding members accountable for completing data entry on outreach; (2) assessing if the outreach is an effective use of time for the end result; (3) whether there is a need for an ombudsman or equivalent – someone congregants can turn to for connection to clergy or to give feedback. President Lewis and others expressed deep appreciation for Freedman's enthusiastic management of the outreach.

High Holy Days Logistics:

Additional feedback was offered on logistics for the High Holy Days, including: (1) General praise for security, which was present, provided comfort, yet was unobtrusive; (2) a reflection that seemed to be lower attendance at Bet Am morning services; and (3) questions raised on how to enable late morning Bethesda Chevy Chase High School Service attendees to be back at the Temple in time to participate in Yom Kippur daytime discussion groups.

Congregational Representative Duties:

President Lewis reminded the Board that congregational representative slots remain to be filled at shabbat and b'nai mitzvah services and that those who have yet to sign up will be assigned to open slots.

Reproductive Justice program:

Nancy Lieberman encouraged participation in the October 27 Reproductive Justice Program

Leadership Development:

Michael Sussman shared that twenty-five congregants had been recruited and agreed to participate in the next leadership development cohort.

Temple Sinai Green Team:

Regina Zielger encouraged participation in November 16 Green Team event, looking at four environmental activities the Temple might adopt.

REPORTS

President's Report:

Deborah Lewis confirmed report as submitted and reiterated her appreciation for all who engaged with High Holy Day activities – clergy, staff, committees, volunteers.

Rabbi Report:

Rabbi Roos confirmed report as submitted and encouraged feedback on High Holy Day services and related activities. He reminded Board of an invitation for an Aliyah at the Simcha Torah service and of the November 19 Cantor Croen 25th Anniversary Celebration. Rabbi Roos also shared news of the passing of Board member Liz Rose's brother and shiva plans, offering condolences to Liz and her extended family.

Executive Director's Report:

Ellen Agler confirmed report as submitted.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:55PM

Respectfully submitted, Seth D. Speyer, Secretary