

TEMPLE SINAI BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
February 19, 2020

Present: Ellen Agler, Michael Baratz, Lori Berman, Naomi Camper, Laura Croen, Andrew Engel, Laurence Freedman, Gary Friend, Nancy Golding, Cathy Goldwyn, Hannah Goldstein, John Hellerman, Katie Herman, Kenneth Jaffe, Julia Kepniss, Nancy Liebermann, Deborah Lewis, Matthew Pachman, Deitra Reiser, Catherine Ribnick, Rebecca Robins, Jonathan Roos, Elizabeth Rose, Todd Rosentover, Stephen Sacks, Marcie Solomon, Seth Speyer, Laura Steel, Michael Sussmann, Lisa Tucker, Regina Ziegler

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Deborah Lewis at 7:50 p.m; (Delayed start, following Rabbinical Candidate presentation and D'var Torah)

D'var Torah: Nancy Golding Prepared D'var Torah (Thank you, Nancy), but agenda item skipped due to prior Rabbinic Candidate D'var Torah Presentation

BOARD OPERATIONS AND GENERAL BUSINESS:

- **Board meeting minutes** – the January 2020 Board meeting minutes approved, with following modification: Andrew Engel was in attendance at January meeting.
- **Membership report** - the Feb 2020 membership report was approved. Outreach to new members invited (Ellen Agler)
- **The Financial Report** reviewed by Marcie Solomon. Highlights include: (1) Member commitment income down 3%; (2) Importance of raising additional \$28,000 in donations for the annual fund, noting challenge of securing annual fund commitments while actively engaged in capital campaign; (3) Anticipation of difficult budget process for FY 20 and potential need to tap surplus fund for as much as \$150,000, depending on hiring and staff expenses during the balance of the year; (4) Finance dashboard #7, members at risk, noting Ellen Agler's considerable outreach efforts with at risk congregants, keeping FY 20 numbers to the lowest recorded level; (5) Upcoming revisions to FY 2021 Membership Commitment pledge form – please share suggestions with Ellen Agler.
- **Capital Campaign And Renovation:** \$9.8M in pledges secured to date; special congregational meeting resulted in unanimous approval of construction financing; solicitations continue with a goal of surpassing \$10M campaign goal; volunteers welcome to make asks and secure commitments at all levels of support; Campaign Committee actively seeking a new matching gift and challenge to inspire moving beyond the \$10M goal; expansion and renovation committee meeting February 23, 2020 for latest updates, including on work permits; encourage board members review list of those who have already contributed to the Capital Campaign to note anyone missing and contact chairs to discuss outreach.

UPDATES AND DISCUSSION:

- **World Zionist Congress Election** (Miriam Daniels): Discussion of importance of this once every five year election and the impact participating has on the Jewish Agency & distribution of \$1B in funding for programs in Israel as well as the Reform Movement in Israel; strong encouragement for all congregants to participate in the online election prior to the election closing on March 11; vote by visiting Zionistelection.org; strong suggestion to vote for the Reform slate, which includes several members of the Temple Sinai community, including: Rabbi Hannah Goldstein; Liz Dunst, and Rabbi Jonah Pesner.
- **Religious School Report** (Cantor Robins): A comprehensive update was provided on the activities of the religious school, including focus on highlights of (1) social emotional responsive classroom curriculum; (2) content based learning in joyful environment; (3) developmentally responsive teaching to make content significant within limited exposure and timing; (4) Noar evolution to trimester program, elective based experience, and b'nai mitzvah boot camp; and (5) Family learning. A discussion of the biggest challenges the religious school faces included a discussion of competition for children's attention and time and specific space needs being addressed through the capital campaign; and needs for a budget that supports hiring more individuals who serve as full time teachers in other parts of their professional life.

RESOLUTIONS:

- **Birth to Three** (Liz Rose): Addressing Washington, DC educational inequality in earliest years; in 2018 DC Council passed Birth to Three to All DC, but funding was not included; a coalition now including Jews United for Justice is asking Temple Sinai to sign on to the movement as statement of importance of finding funds to help low income children in DC; Temple Sinai's Women of Reform Judaism and Social Action Committee both support Temple Sinai signing on as first synagogue to do so; motion carried unanimously
- **Authorization of Transfer of Funds for Rabbinic Search** (Deborah Lewis): leadership believes the Rabbinic Search can be funded through operating fund. However, if a deficit should occur a request is made to fund search activities through the capital campaign sustaining fund, with a maximum of \$10,000 in FY 20; proposal made to amend resolution to reflect FY 2020; resolution approved as amended.

REPORTS

- **President's Report:** As provided, with additional reference to a committee organizing to plan a celebration of Rabbi Adam Rosenwasser's term at Temple Sinai

- **Senior Rabbi's Report** (Rabbi Jonathan Roos): Highlight on the Rabbi search; reminder regarding Rabbi Roos' two-month sabbatical (beginning March 8); gratitude expressed for colleagues covering so smoothly and with such collegiality, especially Michelle Becker in organizing.
- **Executive Director's Report** (Ellen Agler): As provided.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Personnel matters were discussed.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Seth Speyer, Secretary