

Temple Shalom Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, April 5, 2021 7:00 p.m. (Zoom)

Present: Debra Levy Fritts, President, Lory Kohleriter, VP, Jeff Kort, Finance Director, Rabbi Andrew Paley, Senior Rabbi, Steve Lewis, Executive Director, Stephanie Hirsh, Jody Pearson, Bob Landers, Diane Laner, Emma Darling, Gail Davidson, Jacque Comroe, Laurel Fisher, Michael Kaplan, Myron Schwitzer, Rodney Schlosser, Roy Flegenheimer, Steve Weintraub, Theresa Myers, Toni Lachman, Zach Palmer, Marcy Finn, Patty Epstein, Barry Epstein, Myron Schwitzer, and Barry Lachman.

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Debra Levy Fritts, President.

D'Var Torah given by Rabbi Paley. Spoke about the end of Passover and the Children of Israel going into the wilderness. Likened to our group being brave, taking on new things, thinking freely, and being free. Now is the time to embrace dynamic thinking and being creative in our approach to congregational leadership.

Acceptance of Minutes and Financial Report: Myron had a question related to the financial report given in the Executive Minutes presented: conversation of reduced dues to the URJ. It was clarified that with temple's budget cuts, the amount of commitment to the URJ for the 2021-22 budget was reduced by \$10,000. No additional cuts to the URJ contributions are being considered.

President's Report/Update: Debra stated according to the Strategic Plan, a Governance Committee has been formed with Shayna Sanborn as the Chair. Shayna is an attorney and a member of Temple Shalom's Shomrei Adamah committee. Debra spoke about the Dallas JCC's Bagel Run which is on Mother's Day, May 9th. Discussion included participating as a Board or a Congregation. There is the opportunity to attend the event virtually and in-person. A decision was not made. A couple of Board Members were hesitant since it is held on Mother's Day. Debra further stated the Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2021 in the evening, and notice of the meeting will be made to the congregation, materials will be on the website.

COVID-19 Update: Barry Lachman, Chair for the Covid-19 Committee spoke about continued uncertainty related to indoor building events. COVID-19 has leveled off and an increasing number of people have been vaccinated. The Committee has agreed to wait on a decision until next month. Barry stated the UTSW Epidemiology Report notes with multiple safety precautions in place, small group meetings could be safe. Jeff Kort asked about the CDC school mandate change from 6 feet to 3 feet. Barry states he is on the side of following CDC recommendations, but it has not been discussed with the COVID-19 committee. Zach Palmer stated the latest survey data from members suggests the congregation is more comfortable with in-person activities. Myron Schwitzer noted the CDC 6 feet to 3 feet recommendation was related to children in school settings, not adults.

Executive Director Update: Steve Lewis announced a two-year lease extension with a 4% revenue increase has been signed with Mercy Presbyterian. Coram Deo Academy will be using the building five days a week. Things are looking great, good relationship, making improvements to the building and hopefully playground.

Budget Update: Jeff Kort stated 88% of Temple Shalom's expenses are fixed expenses and more ways are needed to offset these expenses. Less than one-third (252) of Temple's members are paying adjusted dues. Other line items discussed: credit card fees, building grounds, Ozrim's, and Worship. The budget is unbalanced by \$216. Jeff stated he and Jason Gadsby will find the \$216 cut or donate it themselves.

Membership: Debra stated the Membership Committee is looking at rolling out a new unified membership/commitment form with levels offering other giving options to include the annual fund, sustaining gifts, Brotherhood, and Sisterhood. Rodney Schlosser stated this would be a "Shop for What You Want" – maximum opportunity idea. Add on more/not less. Bob Landers brought up concerns about how Brotherhood and Sisterhood would get their funds from the membership and the timing. Steve Lewis stated Brotherhood and Sisterhood fall under the Temple Shalom Tax ID umbrella and a solution would be found.

Fundraising: For the new fiscal year, the Board will be responsible for raising \$15,000. Ideas for fundraisers include a community garage sale and a gala.

- Theresa Myers spoke about a community garage sale opportunity potentially on July 18th. Theresa and Debra are speaking to other groups who do successful community garage sales. Gail Davidson stated July 18th does not give enough lead time. Jacque Comroe stated that there were several Temple Members who participated in garage sales back in the day. It is a massive undertaking but made a lot of money. Steve Weintraub mentioned he was involved with the sale for three seasons. The Temple had used the indoors as well and had rooms that were geared toward certain items (i.e., boutique in the learning center). Steve stated it is good revenue but hard on the building.
- Emma Darling spoke about a gala for 2022. “50 Years with our Building” gala event. Or “50 Years of Community Building with Temple Shalom”. There would be an auction, food, drink, music. The goal is to bring people back to the building safely, have fun, and raise money.

Discussion: The Board discussed the article “Synagogue dues are dead: What’s the price point at which quitting the temple is impossible?” By Rabbi Paul Kipnes

- Stephanie Hirsh stated she was fascinated by the article. The word affiliation was mentioned. Young people do not want to be members. Referring to people as partners is a better term currently. Case in point, the Gates Foundation calls their grantees “partners” as they are a part of the organization, not just a donor. Questions: who do we talk to? Unaffiliated (and) kids’ friends.
- Bob Landers asked, “what are the reasons members give for leaving?” Steve Lewis stated, younger are choosing not to affiliate. B’nei Mitzvahs are decreasing at a dramatic rate. Younger families are more transactional vs. altruistic.
- Emma Darling stated the young generation does not make the same salaries as their parents. They are getting married later and having kids later. Several of the young members are 5 – 10 years off before having children in religious school. 25- to 35-year-olds want to donate to social causes, want to be heard, want to meet likeminded people. Zach Palmer agreed with Emma and further added he joined the Board and Brotherhood last year and is doing what he can through service work. Millennials cannot afford Dallas (proper) and are moving further out. He suggested less programming with more targeted programming to their group to further ensure feeling of belonging.
- Jeff Kort mentioned pivoting towards less dues: \$1500 and doing more appeals at holidays and when appropriate. Use ways to honor those who donate and potentially raise more funds to cover the loss of membership revenue.
- Rabbi Paley mentioned a Gallup Poll segment showing the numbers of congregants across multiple faith traditions are projected to decline. The struggle is to remain relevant. Must apply the lexicon to synagogue life and change. Key part of success will be that our mission is compelling and that we fulfill the mission.
- Concerns were raised over the board having a fundraising goal. It was interpreted by some that each member must raise a certain dollar amount or donate it vs as a group all volunteering in various capacities toward the fundraising goal. Further concerns: should new board members be notified prior to their service they will be required to fundraise. Debra will follow up with nominating committee, and board.

PhaRoast Fundraiser: Steve Weintraub stated the virtual PhaRoast fundraiser on April 11th is “rolling on the floor funny”. It will be streamed through the GiveSmart platform. There are surprise guests, and great contributions from the Brotherhood and Sisterhood. Auction is online through GiveSmart with excellent items. To date, the fundraiser is doing very well in raising funds. Auction donations include Central Market \$500 gift card, 3-bedroom villa in Cabo stay, artwork, Texas Rangers tickets, etc. Auction closes Sunday, 4/11 at 10:00 p.m. Item pick up is 4/18. Laurel Fisher stated food baskets can be purchased for \$25. Sponsorships available.

Other: Steve W. mentioned the candles Brotherhood sent out for Yom HaShoah. Requested everyone light their candle and to please consider donating to the Brotherhood so they can continue the program annually.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:04