

# **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation**

## **Temple Ahavat Achim**

**June 13, 2019 / 10 Sivan 5779**

### **1) Welcome, Minutes and Outgoing President's Remarks:**

Outgoing President, Amy Farber, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all those that helped with the evening's refreshments.

The minutes from the 2018 Annual Meeting were approved.

Amy shared some remarks, commenting on the strength of the Temple as seen in its active Executive Committee, Board and congregational committees as well as in the fact that the congregation has recently grown to 190 members. She touched on some of the work that was done this year, particularly in the areas of security, tikkun olam, the updated bylaws and the new strategic plan. The Temple is busy throughout each week with services, meetings, school and diverse programs. Amy pointed out that our congregation is a community with a thriving volunteer culture which enables us, as a small congregation, to keep things running smoothly and to offer a wide number of programs both within the congregation and as a part of the greater Gloucester community. She thanked those that she has worked with, and learned from, throughout the last two years including our support staff, Natalia, Laurie and Frank, the Board and Executive Committee and Education Director, Phoebe Potts, and Rabbi Lewis. Amy is delighted that Eric Kaplan has accepted our invitation to become the next President and looks forward to continuing to work with him throughout the next two years.

### **2) Rabbi's Remarks:**

Rabbi Lewis expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Temple's extraordinary staff and lay leaders. He shared a poem by Yehudah Amichai, commenting that there are two shivas being held this evening and that our thoughts are with these families. He shared a d'var Torah on the theme of the offerings of the Priests in this week's Torah portion. While the offerings were all the same, each had different significances which reflected the giver. So, too, with our volunteers - each is giving a gift of time to our community in their own way and it is important to pay attention to that.

In recounting the year, Rabbi spoke about our very moving Kabbalat Shabbat service following the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, which was attended by 400 members of our congregation and the wider Gloucester community. He hopes to increase our interaction with the wider community in the coming year, especially in the area of addressing climate change. He spoke of the work being done on our new strategic plan and the goals of broader outreach as well as strengthening the bonds within our own community. He also shared that, while he is reachable at any time, he now has designated office hours, Tuesdays from 3:30 - 5:00, during which congregants are welcome to stop by.

### **3) Recognition of Departing Board Members:**

Amy shared the congregation's appreciation to our departing Board members, Robin Cohen, Maxine Rosenberg and Laura Stevens. She also recognized and thanked our departing Treasurer, Debbie Hilbert.

### **4) Nominating Report and Slate of Officers and Board Members:**

Susan Federspiel presented the slate of officers and Board members for fiscal year 2020. She welcomed new Board members Rich Huttner, Ron Newman and Ashley Serotta. She reported that Eric Kaplan will be the congregation's new President, Amy Farber will become a Vice President and Irma Kahle will be our new Treasurer. Amy called for a vote to accept the slate which was approved by the members in attendance.

### **5) Incoming President's Remarks:**

Incoming President, Eric Kaplan, shared a little bit about his background and expressed gratitude to Amy for her amazing work as President of the congregation. He was very pleased to be asked to be President and is looking forward to working with everyone. He commented that there are many roles for volunteers, pointing out the sign-up sheets on each table. He also brought our attention to several wonderful events that are coming up this summer.

### **6) Bylaws Discussion and Vote:**

Sam Silverman presented the revised Bylaws to the congregation for approval. He talked a little about some of the changes that were made and reported that the revised Bylaws were approved by the Board of Directors at their May meeting. After a brief discussion a motion was made to approved the Bylaws. The motion passed. Thanks to Sam and the Executive Committee for their work on this.

## **7) Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Presentation and Vote:**

Debbie Hilbert presented, and explained, the fiscal year 2020 budget. She reviewed this year's budget, reporting that fundraising and membership income is up over last year. She reported that expenses for next year are projected to be \$20,000 higher than income, but that fundraising and higher membership commitments are expected to make up the difference. She also explained how we arrive at our "sustaining level" membership commitment, which will be \$2,100 this year. After discussion a motion was made and the budget was approved.

## **8) Update on the Geller Endowment for the SCRS and Family Learning:**

Ruth Budelmann reported that over \$1,000,000 has been raised to date - a huge accomplishment. She stated that a "mock-up" of a plaque listing all donors that have given \$1,000 or more to the campaign will be put up in the classroom area soon. A final plaque will be created and mounted in late 2019 or early 2020. She also reported that the campaign committee will be moving forward with seeking donors for planned giving. Thanks to Phil and Eve Cutter, Ruth Budelmann, Sam Silverman and their committee for all of their work on the campaign.

## **9) SCRS and Family Learning Report:**

Phoebe Potts reported that there were 65 opportunities for families with young children to engage with TAA this year through Shabbat Circles, High Holidays and Jewish Art for Little Hands. Twenty four families participated regularly in these activities. The school had 27 children this year representing 23 families of which 6 were new to TAA. The school was enhanced by the participation of three madrichot (teen "guides") and our "shinshinah", Michal, a young woman from Israel who was here for the year. The curriculum was also enhanced by music with Bruce Siegel and cooking with Janet Cline.

The staff participated in 36 hours of text study throughout the year as well as 3 trainings on safety.

## **10) Report on the new Strategic Plan:**

Sam Silverman reported that work on a new Strategic Plan commenced in late 2018. Focus groups were held and an online survey was sent to the congregation. The leadership group is now compiling the information that was gathered through the groups and the survey. The group will then develop goals

and objectives to be included in the new plan. The community will be continue to be informed about the progress of the plan. A suggestion was made that our Temple name be changed to reflect “brothers and sisters” rather than just “brothers”.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Susan Federspiel, Secretary