

Temple B'nai Chaim

# TBC Congregational Meeting

24 November 2019 / 4:00 PM

## ATTENDEES

See attached sign-in list

**Rabbi Bearman delivered D'var Torah**

**President's Report (Cindy Baulsir)**

- Discussed highlights of the last 6 months including

**Treasurer's Report (Debra Case):**

- Last year, operating gain of \$3800
- Current year forecasting a large deficit due to a decline in membership (135 families currently), RS enrollment of 56 vs. budgeted of 75.
- Good start with donations towards our budgeted amount considering we are only 1/3 of the way through our fiscal year
- Projecting a year-end deficit of \$95,000 based on transferring \$65,000 from restricted funds.
- There were some questions about security costs which were not included in the budget due to decisions about security guards arising after the budget was set.
- Explanation from Cindy as to what got us to this financial point  
3 reasons
  - membership below forecast
  - RS below forecast
  - higher dues relief

URJ numbers for NYC metro area - 1981 1.6m reform members, current - 1.1m families. Overall drop in number of temple-affiliated families.

Younger families trend – engaging in Judaism a la carte, e.g. renting Rabbis to do b'nai mitzvah rather than belonging to a Temple.

We compete with children's sports for their time and energy and also money. Given the choice, many people's financial focus is not with TBC.

Fewer families joining now than in the past.

Families retiring and moving away or in assisted living due to aging demographics.

Some families leaving between years 1 and 3 of membership – we need to look at this trend and understand why it is occurring.

Discussion on why these younger families are leaving. Are families finding things in other Temples that we are not providing?

- Stephen Davis pointed out that we lost a lot of families during the cantorial transition period

- Of the 67 families that left over the last 4 years, at least 1/3 were related to the cantorial transition
- We also withdrew from publicizing and reaching out a lot during this difficult transition. We are now trying to reach out much more with positive PR.
- Our new Communications chair (Michele Bennett) has been very active in putting out press releases since August

**Executive Committee is sponsoring 2 task forces to deal with longer-term strategic issues and asking for people to volunteer to participate:**

- 1) Financial task force - to explore ways to improve our situation; legacy donations, endowments, grants, social hall rentals, sharing our space with another institution - will be focused on our longer term situation
- 2) Membership - how to attract members to our community

**What else are we doing?**

- Board - focused on retention.
- Will create a communication plan - both external and internal. Concentrating on the messaging to be positive in order to attract members.
- Fundraising calls
- Library Hanukkah Hooplah at Wilton Library - Rabbi/Karin - as well as readings at other local libraries
- Security: June Mara and Stephen Davis working on process - training teachers, making kids aware of what to do in different situations, etc.
- Discussion about getting younger family participation in events - this was focus of calendaring, to make sure we add programs that are appealing to all our demographics, e.g. softball game (very well attended) for families
- Suggestion re surveying kids in school to find out what makes them happy when they're here
- We need help in not only volunteering for the task forces but also in the daily running of the temple.

**To a question about updating the Congregation on the teen initiative that was introduced last time, Karin Beitel updated us on our RS happenings:**

- the teen initiative has had some mixed results. There was a successful teen experience for S'Lichot. Some other events had to be canceled due to lack of sufficient interest.
- 11 madrichim this year – of which 7 are 8th graders. They aren't involved in other experiences but they're coming to work in RS which is a positive point of engagement for this age group
- We are opening up L'Taken to 11th-12th graders, and also to kids not registered for confirmation (at a higher price point) to try to get more teens able to participate in this very engaging experience
- We opened up our Education Committee to a lot of people this year and everyone invited accepted - another positive sign of broader adult engagement.

**To a comment about needing engaging programming in order to encourage people to come (giving the example of Wilton Library),** Rudy Escalante pointed out that Wilton Library is a great example of the task before us. A few years ago, they questioned what their role as a library is today in a world that has moved away from books to online communication. Their transformation has not happened overnight and these things take a long time to brainstorm and implement. We at TBC need to reinvent ourselves in the same way, which will take time.

- URJ can bring us examples of what synagogues are doing that's successful, rather than just looking in our area at neighboring temples
- A suggestion was made to make our new bylaws available to congregants who want a copy.

Cindy presented the minutes from the 5/29/19 meeting: Motion made by June Mara for approval, Bruce Miller seconded. Approved with 4 abstentions.

Cindy asked for a call to adjourn. Dina Guminis made a motion to adjourn, June Mara seconded it at 5:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by  
Kiki Cahn

Temple B'nai Chaim  
Congregational Meeting  
November 24, 2019



	Name		
1	Linda Baulsir		
2	DEBRA CASE		
3	Sue SPECTOR		
4	ROA MILLER		
5	<del>Debbie Miller</del> <i>Debbie Miller</i> $\rightarrow = 1$		
6	<del>Steve Van Winkle</del> <i>Steve Van Winkle</i>		
7	Sue Hagan		
8	Michael Woffman		
9	David Abraham		
10	Barbara Dibny		
11	DINA GUMINS		
12	David Busch		
13	Kathy Chin		
14	David Lewison		
15	Stephen Davis <i>Telley Busch</i>		
16	<del>JUNE MATA</del> <i>JUNE MATA</i>		
17	<del>MARY &amp; Jane Almont</del> <i>MARY &amp; Jane Almont</i>		
18	EUSE SERBY		
19	Jamie, Rachel		
20	<del>Diane Boronba</del> <i>Diane Boronba</i>		
21	<del>Tom Ditzin</del> <i>Tom Ditzin</i>		
22	Richard Bleem		
23	<del>MIC J. SCRUTON</del> <i>MIC J. SCRUTON</i>		
24	<del>Bryne Hupp</del> <i>Bryne Hupp</i>		
25	<del>Jonathan Forder</del> <i>Jonathan Forder</i>		
26	<del>Diane Brumagh</del> <i>Diane Brumagh</i>		
27	<del>Julie Green</del> <i>Julie Green</i>		
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