



## **Congregation Beth Shalom** **of Brandon**

### **Congregation Beth Shalom Annual Meeting** **May 17, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by the President, Jeff Newman, at 10:11 AM. A certified quorum of 37 family units (27 % of members in good standing) was established. Guests Stephanie Ferry and Michael Freinle were in attendance

**D'VAR TORAH:** Rabbi Torop gave the *D'var Torah*, referring to a passage from the newly published High Holy Days prayer book. A set of the prayer books have been donated to the temple by Diane and Peter Jacobson.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Michelle Dempsey motioned to approve the minutes from the May 2013 Annual Meeting. Gail Verlin seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Amy Weinstein reported that 77 students were enrolled in the religious school this year. They are using a Chai Curriculum. The focus is on Torah, prayer and acts of loving kindness. She emphasized that the students have a good understanding of those concepts, due to the excellent teachers and their hard work: Melissa Villasin, Pam Provenzano, Lauren Weisman, Errol Fishman, Sheila Fishman and Dan Weinstein. Amy also thanked Joan Frankel for being music director and Karen Blanchard for being curriculum coordinator. See her full report filed separately filed with the secretary.

**RABBI'S REPORT:** Rabbi Torop reported the following:

- The retreat was a great success. More people attended this year than last year. There was a good cross section of people; from the young to the now so young.
- We reinstated the 7 PM Family Shabbat service.
- The Religious School is now using new updated children's prayer books. They were donated by Caren and Robert Katz.
- We had community conversations attended by over 50% of our members.

Rabbi Torop spoke about four concepts for the future:

1. Continue to explore ways to diversify our programs outside of the synagogue walls
2. Emphasis on volunteerism
3. Community involvement. She is concerned that we have had a limited involvement in the broader community and in issues of social injustice. Marla Smith has agreed to take over the chair of the Social Action committee. This is an area of unrealized potential.
4. Envisioning our synagogue in the future: membership, financial and programming structure, and buildings.

Rabbi Torop thanked: Jeff Newman, Any Weinstein, Karen Blanchard, Keren Vergon, Sandy Santucci, Joan Frankel and Mags Oldman. See her full report filed separately with the secretary.

**BALLOT PROCESS:** Mags Oldman explained the ballot process. See separate process, filed with the secretary.

The 2015-2016 Slate of Offers was presented to the congregation and unanimously approved.

**Executive Board:** Treasurer, Michael Barnett; Secretary, Dan Weinstein

**Members at Large:** Seth Dugan, Scott Hopkins, Stephen Criden

The following are in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a two year term: President, Jeff Newman; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Gerry Pliner; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Errol Fishman; 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, Toby Koch

Members at Large: Michelle Dempsey, Gayle Borgen and Lauren Wiseman.

The installation of the officers will be on Friday May 29, 2015, during the Shabbat worship service. Keren Vergon and Natasha Rieger were thanked for their long time service as committee chairs.

**SIGNING OF THE CONENANT:** Jeff explained that the brit (covenant) will be signed by every board member.

He said that Board members:

1. Have a fiduciary responsibility
2. Are stalwarts of our core values and principles
3. Are ambassadors for the temple, both internal and external
4. Should help with fundraising and other events.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Treasurer, Michael Barnett presented his report. See his report, filed separately, with the secretary. The budget, income and expenses and balance sheet were distributed to the congregation. These documents were also filed with the secretary. At the end of his report Michael asked if there were any questions.

**Q Steve Feldman-**How long will we need to continue with a negative budget and not putting money into the Essential Building Account?

**A Michael Barnett-**We need big fundraisers and to increase membership. We need to grow our revenue. Then we can start putting money into the Essential Building Fund again.

**Judy Jacobson** commented that she noticed that we had an expense of \$1,300.00 in credit card fees.

**A Michael Barnett-** That is a "cost of doing business". People can easily pay their dues at our website by using Pay Pal.

**Q Judy-** What percent are we charged?

**A Michael-**2 or 3 %

**Judy-** Members should be charged for the fee. Other companies do that. For example: utility companies.

**A Michael-**This subject can be discussed further at the next board meeting. He can write an article to be published in the next issue of the Kibbitzer; requesting members to add the surcharge onto their credit card payments.

**Arlene Slater-** Under expenses are \$4,000.00 for All Jazzed Up 2014. There was no All Jazzed up in 2014.

**A Jeff-** We need a fundraiser for 2015. The line item was just labeled All Jazzed UP. There might be an All Jazzed Up in 2015.

**A Michael-** We can change the name

**Q Judy Jacobson-**There is a line item expense of \$1,000.00 for Social Action.

**A Gerry Pliner-** We raised the money and donated it to charity. This line item is a "wash".

**STATE OF THE CONGREGATION:** Jeff Newman thanked us for allowing him to be President. He said he felt an outpouring of support. This year the theme of the congregation was:

- Community
- Connectivity
- Volunteerism
- Increasing meaning and value that we get from the temple.

Jeff read the lyrics from the John Denver song "Garden Song"

*Inch by inch, row by row, gonna make this garden grow.*

*All it takes is a rake and a hoe and a piece of fertile ground.*

*Inch by inch, row by row, someone bless the seeds I sow.*

Jeff explained that the lyrics are a metaphor. The garden is our congregation and synagogue. The seeds are sowed by every one of us. He thanked the congregation for what we have given to our synagogue. Then he read an expensive list of all the people that have volunteered their time. See list filed separately, with the secretary.

In conclusion Jeff said that he was looking forward to the TU25 party at 5 PM this afternoon. He asked the newly elected board members as well as all the other board members to see Toby Koch after the meeting, to symbolically sign the Brit. A formal copy of the Brit will be at the Board June meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15AM

Recorded and written by Toby Koch