



18 Shoolman Way, Milton, MA 02186

Temple Office 617-698-3394

E-Mail Address: Office@BethShalomBlueHills.org

Web Address: www.BethShalomBlueHills.org

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

SUNDAY, May 7, 2023 10am-11.30am

In-Person and on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2720291898>

Present: 29 Member Units

29 needed for quorum [115 Total Member Units as of May 2, 2023]

1. Meeting Called to Order

10:20 am

2. Rabbi's D'var

3. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the last Congregational Meeting of December 11, 2022

Steve Jacobs, offered

Karen Friedman Hanna, seconded

All in favor.

4. Officer Reports

Steve Ostrovitz, Interim President

Steve described a thriving synagogue life in-person with a Zoom option: musical Shabbats, drum circle, Religious School and intergenerational events, B'nai Mitzvot celebrations, and new initiatives. He notes that membership has grown and that the financial state of the Congregation is also very strong. He also reviewed a busy Board of Directors year, with projects including a gift acceptance policy, a B'nai Mitzvot Team, contract preparation with Cantor Lisa (lawyer hired to create contract, continued conversations with Cantor Lisa), and physical building challenges (water damage and assessment of any possible other issues -

ongoing conversations with Kaplan Construction). He also notes a fruitful discussion with teen congregants who reached out about a desire for a bigger voice in Congregation life. Finally, Steve reminded us that the Executive Board is dedicated even day-to-day to the operation of Congregational life alongside many dedicated Team leads.

Deborah Ala, VP Social Action & Community Outreach

Deborah reports that the many Teams under her leadership are strong with fantastic Team leads. She notes that Chesed reminds us that they're available to help, whether it's you or someone you know who needs assistance (contact: Rabbi B, Janet Petkun, or the office). She also highlighted the work of Membership who has welcomed many interested families, is planning an end of summer open house, and who encourages any new members to join and lend their diverse perspectives to the Team. The Inclusion Team has also been hard at work installing updated signs for all the bathrooms; they note people should use the bathroom that best fits their gender identity (thank you Bill Hanna for hanging the signs and the Ruderman grant for providing the funds). Among other activities, the Team is hard at work applying for another Ruderman grant to fund Fall activities and two upcoming Shabbatot: Pride Shabbat and Juneteenth Shabbat. Social Action is strong under the continuing direction of Jack Levy who reminds us of the many upcoming opportunities to get involved (flier provided at meeting) with a specific reminder to help provide food for the Family Table donations. Finally, Deborah thanked all the Team leaders for their dedication and hard work.

Lisa Sadler, Education

Lisa described the Religious School Team's fabulous work, completed in meetings throughout the year and in hands-on preparation and running of events. She commended Shlomit Hanz (Team Lead) and Cantor Lisa and the whole team for their dedication to the intergenerational and community-oriented work all year long. This year the Team focused on creating and updating policies, coordinating activities (e.g., Purim), and recruiting and organizing volunteers for events throughout the year (e.g., School-led Shabbat). She noted that the Team routinely works with the Rabbi and Temple President. Finally, she noted the tireless efforts of the office - Arlene, Harriet, and Candice - for all their help in making the events run smoothly.

Jay Balaban, Interim VP Admin & Finance

Jay notes that he stepped into the interim role to guide the budget process, where the strong benefits of the margin account have continued to pay off. In particular, the flexibility of drawing out funds and paying them back on a regular basis have been critical to synagogue operations.

Seli Kaya, Treasurer

Seli noted that not much has changed since the last Congregational Meeting in December 2022; the market continues to impact the endowment fund despite its conservative posture. He notes the balanced approach keeping the endowment account growing while at the same time ensuring the margin account isn't too high. He thanked Jay for his efforts in monitoring the situation daily, which has optimized opportunities to keep everything balanced. Finally, he noted that membership dues recently went out and every penny still counts, whether via membership or donations.

Steve Jacobs, Spiritual Life and Ritual Practice

Steve commended a vibrant Team that participates with continued energy. The Team is dedicated to many aspects of synagogue life, with a large percentage going to preparations for the High Holidays. This has begun and includes extending Cantor Robbie's contract. It also includes the Rabbi and Team working to improve the service based on a variety of feedback. He also noted that they're hoping to get further attendance for Shabbat and looking for ideas from Congregants on increasing attendance. Finally, Steve described a coordinated effort with the Inclusion Team to provide several additional large print Siddurim (prayer books)..

Lindsay Rosenfeld, Secretary & Co-Chair of Nominating Team, Offering Slate for EBoard and Board of Directors

Lindsay thanked the Nominating Team, outgoing Executive Board and Board Members for their service. In particular, she thanked Paul Cooperstein, outgoing President, remarking on his service and a donation to the Milton Coalition in his honor, on behalf of the Congregation.

Lindsay Rosenfeld & Ronit Voigt, Co-Chairs

Members: David Ehrmann, Karen Friedman-Hanna, Arlene Klotz

Outgoing:

Paul Cooperstein, President

Steve Ostrovitz, Acting President

Jay Balaban, Interim VP Admin & Finance

Lisa Sadler, Interim VP Youth & Family Education

Board Members: Amy Klotz, Natasha Minsky, Alan Rosmarin, Shelly Charnoff, Pam Shrago (she'll stay on Board as Library Rosh)

Slate offered by Nominating Team

Executive Board Nominations:

President: Steve Ostrovitz

VP Admin & Finance: Jay Balaban

VP Youth & Family Education: Michelle Sturdivant

Executive Board Nominations to Continue in the Same Role:

Secretary: Lindsay Rosenfeld

VP Social Action & Comm Outreach: Deborah Ala

VP Spiritual Life & Religious Practice: Steve Jacobs

Treasurer: Seli Kaya

Board of Directors Nomination:

Member-at-Large, 3-year term: Francine Weistrop (2nd consecutive term)

Member-at-Large, 3-year term: Lee-Anne Jacobs

Member-at-Large, 3-year term: Stacey Solomon

Motion was made to accept the Slate as presented.

David Ehrmann, offered

Karen Friedman-Hanna, seconded

28 votes in favor

29th person present - did not comment

Cantor Lisa, Education Director - Rabbi Jerome Weistrop Religious School

Cantor Lisa started with a question: Start with a question: Can you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot? (Hillel) what is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. all the rest is commentary. Go and learn it.

She described a varied and vibrant year of activities, starting with the creation of a side-by-side calendar to outline Religious School and family events.

She describes regular Religious School Team meetings that were enhanced by new membership brought in by Shlomit, and with the continued guidance of Lisa Sadler. She also noted the importance of enhanced teacher meetings held this year, including a guest speaker on universal design. The focus continues to be experiential learning to connect with Judaism and each other. There were many opportunities to consider what students value and want to do, including during School-led Shabbat. Team Madruchim had two in-house trainings and one at the JCC with other Madruchim across Boston to build on their skills. She highlighted ongoing and essential planning with the office staff to coordinate all events and social programs. Collaborations also regularly occur with the Tzedakah Team, library, House Team and parents to enrich programming. Another addition this year was the Religious School library created with donations. Many guest readers/storytellers also enjoyed time with students as did the challah makers. Shalom Children's Activity Program (SCAP) continues to thrive and offer opportunities throughout the year for families to experience the educational and communal program opportunities offered. Finally, she noted an open invitation to share any idea with her about integrating Religious School activities with any larger Team or other programs. She also asked for the Congregation's help in getting the word out about the open position at the synagogue for a K-2 lead teacher.

Question/Answer, led by Steve Ostrovitz

There was a note about garlic mustard invading many of the plant beds by the patio. Some discussion ensued about ways to get rid of it, possibly with help of the students/youth. The Ground position is open and anyone is welcome to help out or take on the role.

Steve also noted the importance of team efforts and new leadership across synagogue Teams.

Rabb B Report and Final Blessing

Rabbi B noted that the Beautification Team is going to have two new Torah cradles (hopefully for the High Holidays) and new colorful Torah mantles (after High Holidays). He also described ongoing once-a-month services at Fuller Village and frequent musical Shabbat Friday nights with dinner, which has made attendance especially easy for families. He updated the attendees on ongoing conversations with Milton Cemetery about a Jewish section. The request was not seen as good practice, i.e. giving any one group an identifiable section, but the cemetery is cognizant of Jewish custom and willing to work with people as needed. Finally, he happily shared that the most important achievement of the year was fully onboarding Candice -and he ended by saying, Candice is fantastic!

Rabbi B offered a final blessing.

5. Motion to adjourn Congregational Meeting.

Karen Friedman-Hanna, offered
Jay Balaban, seconded

All in favor.

6. Meeting adjourned

11:33am

Respectfully submitted.

/s/ Lindsay Rosenfeld
Lindsay Rosenfeld