

Peninsula Temple Beth El 2023 Congregational Meeting

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

7:00-8:30 pm

Hybrid meeting at PTBE and by Zoom

Opening Song –

Cantor Elana Jagoda led the congregation in Hinei Ma'tov

Welcome and Call to Order

Roxanne Cohen, President called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm with 80 congregants in attendance (36 in person and 44 by Zoom).

Roxanne shared words of welcome and thanks and reviewed the purpose of the meeting and agenda

D'var Torah and Rabbinic Update

Rabbi Lisa Kingston, Senior Rabbi shared highlights of the first 6 months including onboarding new clergy and working in partnership with the clergy, staff, lay leaders, and congregants.

Rabbi Lisa framed the conversation about the revision of the bylaws in the spirit of belonging, a value that has clearly been important to the congregation. She spoke about the importance of keeping the love of Israel at the forefront of our community values, as well as maintaining our focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging so that all members of our congregation feel as though they have a home here.

Revising our bylaws is only the beginning of creating a sense of inclusion and belonging. Rabbi Lisa shared plans to continue that work through our engagement committee, as well as to start an Israel committee, and invited the congregation to participate in the areas they are passionate about.

Mid-Year Financial Review

Steve Sarver, Treasurer shared a mid-year financial report with PPT slides + Q/A. Membership is up this year after several years of decline. The Chai Giving campaign was the most successful ever with over half of the congregation participating for a total income of about \$200,000. Bright Horizons is opening their early childhood center and we will begin collecting rent from them that will bring in significant income over the coming years. We've had several large donations from members who are inspired to support the congregation at this time. Total income is projected to be \$2,623,409 over the fiscal year. Expenses are projected to be \$2,825,617, leaving a deficit of \$202,207 (compared to an expected deficit of almost \$500,000).

Steve reviewed the temple balance sheet as of December 31, 2022, which is currently in a strong position. The temple recently installed solar panels which will eventually lead to significant savings. Steve forecasts over \$2 million of "free cash" (unrestricted funds) at the end of the year that can help us reduce the deficit over time.

Steve facilitated a brief Q&A on the budget.

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Consideration of Proposed Bylaws Amendments

Roxanne Cohen and Steve Diamond, VP, provided an overview of the proposed bylaw changes.

Roxanne provided context for the proposed changes to the bylaws, sharing why, why now, unanimous support of Board and clergy, and takeaways from “deep dive sessions” with congregants. Roxanne shared feedback from several surveys and assessments of our congregation, including the values we identified as important for our new senior rabbi through the search process, which strongly indicated a desire for an inclusive community. Roxanne shared that there has been general support of the changes but also concerns that tend to revolve around preserving Jewish continuity and support for Israel, and shared two specific examples of PTBE members who had been impacted by the lack of inclusion in the current bylaws.

Steve Diamond reviewed key areas of change with PPT slides, highlighting four categories of change:

- Inclusivity, Harmonize Purpose, Mission, Vision, Values
- Sacred Partnership
- Operational Flexibility
- Corrections, Drafting Improvements

Steve Diamond moved that the proposed amended bylaws distributed in the January 9, 2023 email “Announcement of Special Meeting of the Congregation and Proposed Bylaws Amendments” are hereby adopted as the new Bylaws of the Congregation. **Scott Hartley Seconded.**

Micheal Battat asked to confirm a quorum. Kate Lauzar, executive director, confirmed a quorum.

Q&A and Discussion ensued with several members speaking in favor of the changes, as well as praising the process, and others speaking in opposition to the changes and in disappointment of the process. Questions were asked to both clarify the changes and understand the process.

- **Approval of motion passed** by a vote of 31 in person and 33 on Zoom in favor and 3 in person and 4 on Zoom abstentions and 0 in person and 7 on zoom opposed. (It should be noted that participants on Zoom were allotted only one vote, even if two congregants were participating together.)

Closing

Roxanne Cohen closed the meeting with appreciation to all.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:42 pm

Respectfully Submitted by Mindy Shelton, Board Secretary