

MINUTES, KOL AMI STEERING COMMITTEE

CONFERENCE CALL, April 5, 2011, 8:15 p.m.

Participants: Susan Freiband, Toni Popkin, Hope Warshaw, Don Kraus, Elizabeth Lower-Basch, Janice Cooper-Levy, Lance Feiner, David Lipscomb, Jane Schulman, Mary Kuntz, Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Laura Dines (later in the call).

The agenda sent by email to participants was approved, with two changes. The item dealing with “Children and family program and services” was moved after the “Treasurer’s Report), and under “New Business”, a Tikkun Olam issue was to be added.

The Minutes of the March 3, 2011, conference call were approved, with no changes or corrections.

The treasurer’s report mentioned two items: a new single member and receipt of \$5000 from Mark Weisenbloom’s will. This fund provides a cushion, and was partly used (\$1,647) to order siddurim and a second set of shiva books. Don would like to see part of the money used to endow an adult education activity. Don and Rabbi Leila will be thinking through on this. The Rabbi will indicate what using the funds for bringing in a scholar in residence every two years would involve. Mary mentioned that since program audit forms have been sent out it would be useful to consider needs of the programs that we already have. At the next Steering Committee meeting there will be a discussion of this issue. Elizabeth also mentioned the receipt of checks and paypal for the Seder.

Hope reported, related to children and family program and services, that a new family with three children is interested in joining. JCEP teachers, along with Rabbi Leila and Hope, will work on the B’nai Mitzvah program using the funds allotted for this purpose. An email has been sent out for a meeting on May 22nd for families of kids who will have a Bat/Bar Mitzvah in the next two years. Participants at the Purim party held on Sunday, March 20th, were entirely JCEP families, perhaps influenced by the adult Purim service on Saturday, March 19th.

Jane reported for the Ritual Committee. She indicated that Carolyn Gray will step down as Chair and will be off the Committee, which will meet before the end of the month to recruit a new chair. The Committee discussed Rabbi Leila’s email about the lack of a minyan at Kol Ami services, and the need to explain the value of a minyan. The Rabbi will edit her email message for inclusion in the blog, with help from Toni or Don.

Janice reported that she has a set of the Shiva books at her house. Don indicated that the extra set of shiva books will be kept at the Rabbi’s house. The Care and Concern Program has sent out cards, and has been following up on members who are in difficult situations after a death or illness. Toni mentioned the importance of indicating the need for care and concern when hearing

about anyone who could use this support. She indicated that she will be getting a new project started, reminding people with yahrzeits about the date that they should say Kaddish and be part of the minyan at services. She will provide written details about this project. After the Annual Meeting in June, she will step down from doing scheduling of hosting for onegs.

Mary indicated that she received an Adult Ed report from Marcel Infeld who will not be teaching next year. Leadership of adult ed will be open. As part of strategic planning, Mary has sent out the program audits which are due by May 1st. There is a need for the Steering Committee to discuss the volunteer policy before the Annual Meeting. It needs to be put up at the Annual Meeting for a vote.

David and Lance attended another meeting at the Northern Virginia JCC about the upcoming Israel street festival. There will be concurrent events held in DC, Maryland and Virginia on Log B'Omer, May 22nd. The festival in Virginia is planned for four hours, from 1 to 5 p.m. It includes music, singing, artists, displays from the embassy, a lot of activities for everyone. The set up needs to be done by noon, and should be cleared out at 5 p.m. There is a need for simple ideas for kid related activities. The JCEP teachers will ask for suggestions. In addition, Lance and David will send out an email to ask for volunteers to help at the table. There should be about 500 handouts. Don will look over the brochure, revise if needed, and get it professionally printed. Lance feels that participating in this activity connects Kol Ami to the larger Jewish community in Virginia.

Laura Dines gave an update about planning for the Passover seder. There are 26 adults and 6 kids officially registered, with the numbers continuing to grow. There is a need to get more communications out about the need to RSVP by Friday, April 15th. Don will add this to the website, and send out direct messages about the event. The website includes a blurb on Passover kashrut. In terms of food, there is a need for matzah ball soup and mock chopped liver. The perfect potluck site provides an efficient way to organize and identify who is bringing what. The Rabbi mentioned the need to use recyclable, green, environmentally friendly materials at the Seder and at onegs.

Jane indicated that Herb Cooper-Levy will be making copies of the Haggadah, and Harriet Epstein will be handling the seder plates and ritual objects. She will be contacted and informed about how many to bring. David and Lance have handled publicity for the seder through the Federation and Smooze.

Don indicated that he has contacted Amy Stutt in relation to the administrator's responsibilities, including obtaining a log on how her time has been utilized. Positive changes in "This Week" have been seen.

There are tikkun olam funds left, due to member generosity and giving. The question about political action tikkun olam was raised. There needs to be a discussion on how this can be done, and what is appropriate to share with the listserv. Don suggested putting this issue in the

members section of the website, announcing it on the listserv. Having a forum on hunger as a moral issue was suggested, identifying a place to come together and work on this issue (or others), perhaps an online or a Sunday evening meeting. There is a need to consider how to focus on issues within the community, as part of bolstering adult education.

The next Steering Committee conference call will be Tuesday, May 3, at 8:15 p.m.