

MINUTES, KOL AMI STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

Thursday, September 23, 2010, 8 p.m.

Participants: Don Kraus, Jane Schulman, Mary Kuntz, Lance Feiner, David Lipscomb, Elizabeth Lower-Basch, Susan Freiband, Gail Seligman

For a few minutes before the conference call officially started, strategic planning issues were discussed by Mary, Don and Susan, including the guidelines and timing for program audits.

The minutes of the last conference call on August 30th, 2010, were approved, with no comments. Two items, strategic planning and outreach, under “Committee Reports”, were added to the Agenda for this conference call.

Elizabeth presented the Treasurer’s Report. Income has been coming in during this time of year, with about \$20,000 in the bank. High Holy Day contributions (\$5,381) were over the amount budgeted (\$4500). Money from the Yizkor book (\$782) was also more than what was budgeted (\$700). More people have asked for reimbursement for High Holy Day expenses this year. It is important that if anyone has spent money, and expects to be reimbursed, Elizabeth needs to be informed. A reminder needs to be sent to people about paying for the Break the Fast. About \$2000 of the \$3500 budgeted has been spent on advertising. According to Elizabeth, Kol Ami is in pretty good overall financial shape. Thirty nine memberships have been received, with six more anticipated. Seven families have paid for the JCEP program, with more to come.

Questions were raised by Don about the process for a post mortem, relating to High Holy Days, focusing on what we need to capture, how we did, how to do better next year. Don felt that we did great, that people really came through. Lance mentioned, in relation to logistics, about running low on chairs, how to get additional ones, as well as where to collect the food, so it won’t be disruptive. Extra chairs are needed beyond the number of people expected to attend. The registration form for High Holy Day services will be reviewed and revised in relation to this issue. Having a box for donations at High Holy Day services was suggested, as well as preparing a more specific checklist of items needed and tasks involved, so that new people can step in to handle logistics on an “ad hoc” basis. Those serving as gabbis for different High Holy Day services, as well as those working with logistics, will be asked to give input into a Google.doc to add to what Carolyn Gray has already developed as a starting point for High Holy Day tasks. Everyone should identify what things could have been done better, and send an email to Gail and Don. The preparation of the supplement was a successful joint effort, involving the Rabbi, Carolyn, Erv, Don and the service leaders. There were enough machzors and supplements for all services.

A big “thank you” for everyone who worked on the High Holy Day preparations and services will be prepared in the next couple of weeks. Gail on logistics, Jane and Carolyn for Ritual, and Hope with the kids activities, will each identify those who should be included.

A lot of information has been obtained about the people who attended High Holy Day services. A follow-up needs to be done to contact the new people or visitors. Jane explained how she did this last year, including sending emails to visitors, calling them and leaving messages. Mary suggested inviting them to some specific activity, or sending them a list of upcoming Shabbat services and other activities. Lance mentioned specific Shabbat services for meeting and greeting new people, as well as the outreach brunch, the event at Barbara Jazzo’s house and the Rabbi’s smoozes. David and Lance will brainstorm, and prepare a draft suggestion on what can be done as part of this follow-up.

There was no formal report from the Ritual Committee. Jane indicated that the next Ritual Committee meeting will be scheduled by Carolyn.

Don indicated that JCEP starts this Sunday, along with the first meeting of the Hebrew reading class, which has 15 people signed up. Marcel will add to the adult education area. Janice, of the Care and Concern Committee, has received a note from Rabbi Leila about other Jewish communities who will be offering her help and support.

Under “strategic planning”, Mary identified two things that are being worked on, development structure and program audits. There is a need to identify someone willing to take on the responsibility of helping with development, specifically fund raising. At the last community meeting the need for a development committee was identified, but this has not yet been implemented. Using Carolyn’s initial work with guidelines and timeline for program audits, this aspect of strategic planning will be further developed by Don, Mary and Susan. They will work on Google.doc to finalize a revision of the program audit form. A telephone conference call was set up for Thursday, September 30th at 8 p.m. (using the same conference call number) for Don, Mary and Susan to work on these issues.

Lance reported for the Outreach Committee that advertising spent for the High Holy Days aimed for a broad audience. Electronic copies of the ads placed were identified, and all of them actually appeared. It would be useful to determine how successful the use of advertising in local newsletters was. Plans are to spend additional money for advertising at local fairs in the Jewish community, picking one to concentrate upon. As a follow up to the High Holy Days a personalized letter will be sent out to new people attending services (using information gathered on the website), including asking them how they found out about Kol Ami.

Don discussed a new Kol Ami project that was proposed by Dr. Richard Ruth, the preparation of a poetry book. Richard would serve as editor. Up to 3 or 4 poems from interested Kol Ami members and former members would be included. The poems would not have to be specifically Jewish in content. A specific deadline would be set for submission of the poems. The book

would be self published, with donations requested to cover costs. There would be a book signing event. A suggestion was made to broaden the scope of the book to include art work and recipes, to encourage more people to buy it. Richard will be informed of the discussion at this meeting, and asked for more details to clarify that Kol Ami would not be put at financial risk as a result of the Project. Susan indicated that she would be interested in helping Richard with the Project. At the next meeting more details about the Project will be presented.

Don brought up the issue of the amount of traffic on the Kol Ami email list, what Amy Stutt sends out to the community. Is this at the comfort level of everyone? He indicated that it is important to make sure that the amount of material that appears on Kol Ami email is appropriate and not overwhelming. There was no specific feedback either way from steering committee participants in this conference call on this issue.

Scheduling of the next community meeting was discussed. The date needs to be set, either in the fall or Jan/Feb. The purpose of the meeting is to get together and let people know about what's been happening with Steering Committee activity, Kol Ami plans and projects. January 9th or 23rd appear to be possible dates. Don will poll the Steering Committee to identify the best choice.

Debora Linick has requested that Kol Ami co-sponsor JCRC Cuccinelli and Connolly-Finian events. It was felt that this relates to the Kol Ami Tikkun Olam policy. Some members of the Steering Committee did not feel comfortable with making this decision for the entire community. It was agreed not to co-sponsor, rather to continue to publicize these events through Kol Ami email. The broader issue of Kol Ami co-sponsorship of political events and activities will be discussed at the next community meeting. Debra can be invited to talk about this topic at the meeting.

There was no new business. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held via conference call on Wednesday, October 27th at 8 p.m.

The conference call ended at 9:15 p.m.