

Minutes, Kol Ami Steering Committee, February 23, 2015, 8.10pm

Attendees (by phone)

Members:

Rayna Aylward

Janice Cooper-Levy

Lynda Erinoff

Elenor Hodges

Elizabeth Lower-Basch

Jane Petkofsky

Toni Popkin

Mindy Rudell

Erv Walter

Staff: Herb Cooper-Levy

Agenda as proposed by Rayna was approved

Minutes submitted by Elizabeth (spelling corrected by Herb) approved.

President's report:

Carolyn is leaving Kol Ami (moving away from the area). Will need to replace her duties. Herb will take over the Master Calendar from Carolyn and ensure coordination on planning services and holiday celebrations. Noted that this would be an additional duty for the Community Coordinator. Budget implications will be discussed with Rayna and Erv, will communicate back to steering committee as part of budget planning.

It was suggested that we should try to spread activities over different weekends, rather than having them clump at once. Calendar Coordinator should give people proposing activities feedback about conflicts. Ritual, children and families, rabbis -- need to make sure people are clear about who is responsible for what activities. Herb suggests -- one service per month be a family activity, recommends use of chapel when it's the right size. Janice -- should sometimes have a "healing" service.

Carolyn also was representative to JRC plenum -- need to add to list of volunteer positions for next year.

Discussion followed of ways to honor Carolyn.

Community coordinator -- Herb provided written report

Noted that he is now creating a pdf version of newsletter in order to include graphics. Is looking into cost of services such as Constant Contact that would allow more attractive newsletters.

Is still working on membership directory, needs people to submit form

Rabbi search memo from Jane was submitted for the record

Question was raised about why number of committee members was raised from five (recommended by RRC) to nine. After consulting with Rayna, Jane decided to accept all who had volunteered to serve,

since they were a good representation of the different segments of the community, and she thought they would work well together. First meeting will be March 1, Room 10.

Outreach -- Elenor

Committee is putting website project on hold recognizing our limited capacity, budget. Working on email listserv policy, guidelines on what is appropriate to post to list, will share draft with steering committee. Will also restore the discussion list. In the meantime, Herb is slowly updating the current website, page by page, making sure information is accurate. Janice -- suggested having Herb do a demonstration of using the website for members who may not have tried it. This demonstration will be considered for the community meeting in June.

Erv -- Discussion of budget -- Erv recommended that we consider a new dues structure that more realistically assesses dues-paying members - and compensates for those who don't pay full or any dues - coupled with cost-cutting measures to reduce "budget creep." He noted that we're inclined to breach the agreed upon budget for things that we think are good, and we don't have the financial leeway to continue to do so. Organizations that go to "voluntary" dues structure typically have some members who backstop budget, are committed to covering shortfall.

Rayna -- Volunteer budget is also out of balance -- core group has been burdened, risk of burnout.

Passover coordinator -- don't have one signed up yet. Commit to mobilizing the membership. Need to get everyone engaged in an activity beyond Shabbat hosting. Rayna suggested that any new projects or initiatives require a "minyan" -- a minimum number of members willing to work on them -- before the project or initiative is approved. Elizabeth pointed out that before volunteers can be recruited, we need to provide info on what the positions entail.

Jim North is heading up the nominations committee -- he has asked current Steering members and committee chairs to let him know of intention to stay or seek a new position. Mindy noted we also need people to take responsibility for "second tier holidays" purim, tu b'shevat, family focused events.

Suggestion -- Should we divide up membership, circulate the list of activities, reach out to people to sign up? Could people choose to pay more and volunteer less?

Rayna suggested having a longer meeting April 19 in order to have these discussions in full.

Rayna, Elizabeth and Toni volunteered to work on agenda for April meeting for further discussion of options for bringing both financial and volunteer budget into balance. Elizabeth offered to re-circulate the "volunteer budget" document she drafted last year. Jim will be asked to identify officer/Steering candidates by early April, so they can take part in the April 19th meeting.

Upcoming events - include an interfaith service on May 30, with a Bahai co-leader. Steering approved a no-cost sponsoring of a Hannukah concert featuring Rabbi Mark Novak.

Our next phone meeting is March 23, 8:10-9:15 pm.

Community Coordinator report

Administration

1. I updated those who have member privileges on the website. There were 28 people who were listed as members whose membership was no longer current, some for more than 5 years. There were 6 members who were not listed. I asked Zach Schrag (the webmaster) to give these members access.

I sent an email to Kolaminvrc@yahoo.com inviting people to contact me if they have access issues. Several members replied to me that they did not know their user name and/or password. I discovered that I have sufficient privileges to issue passwords and have done so for about a half dozen members. While I can tell whether a member accesses the member pages, I did not want to be tactless and simply act, even though there is important Kol Ami information that we keep behind the member firewall, like minutes, the membership directory and the healing list. I plan to follow up with those members who I see do not access the member pages by a blind copy email, again not to embarrass anyone.

There is a separate page on the website for JCEP members. It cannot be accessed unless one enters their username and password to get into the member pages. Many JCEP parents are not active on the member pages. This is why I have been pasting JCEP reports on the homepage, rather than to the JCEP page.

2. I sent 51 individual emails asking for people to complete the new Membership Directory listing. I've received 6 completed forms. Thanks to **Rayna Aylward/Ed Bomsey, Harriet Epstein, Betsy Greer, Leslie Lesner, Mindy Rudell** and the **Sklarews** for their diligent responses. I will be following up individually to encourage a response. A valid response includes that the member does not wish to provide additional information.
3. I continue to do the routine administrative tasks:
 - a. Inputting the Master Calendar for March to the website
 - b. Posting JCEP reports and homework assignments to the website home page.
 - c. Bringing every page of our website up to date.
 - d. Keeping the closet orderly.
 - e. Checking on supplies.
 - f. Coordinating with the UUCA about our use of their facilities.

Outreach

1. I published 4 weekly issues of *The Kol Amite*. The latest issue including some images accessible via a PDF attached to the email.
2. I will be exploring the cost of moving *The Kol Amite* to Constant Contact and Mail Chimp.
3. I continue to communicate by email with several potential member units who have expressed interest in Kol Ami.

Report from Rabbi Search Committee (Chair Jane Schulman)

Here is a report from the Rabbi Search committee (Feb 22, 2015):

The information about our position for a High Holiday Rabbi was posted on the RRC website on Feb 9th. To date, I received 7 resumes in response to this posting. Two are currently employed at the RRC. One is a chaplain at Mercy Hospital in Baltimore. The remainder are "freelance" Rabbis in search of Hi Ho positions. In addition, Gilah Langner applied for the Hi Ho position.

Nine Kol Ami members expressed interest in serving on the search committee. Our first meeting is set for March 1, 3:30 at the UU. We will be discussing the process for interviewing and making a recommendation to Steering for the Hi Ho Rabbi.

I also had a long conversation with the Rabbi of the Reconstructionist congregation in Atlanta, GA. He is a good friend of mine and was kind enough to provide his insights/recommendations about the process for hiring a permanent replacement for R. Leila. I will be discussing these recommendations with the search committee probably during our second meeting.