

December 6, 2018, 7:00 pm

Kol Ami Steering Committee Notes

Attending: Debbie Linick (chair), Rabbi Gilah Langner, Jane Schulman, Lynda Erinoff, Jonathan Baumgarten, Herb Levy, Mattie Cohan, Eric Rosenberg, Rayna Aylward, Erv Walter, Anne Salzberg

The bracha was recited. The agenda was approved.

1. **Executive Session:** The meeting started in Executive Session without the Rabbi and Administrative Director present in order to discuss reimbursement to the Administrative Director of \$1500 for hours worked in excess of his contracted and budgeted time. The board voted unanimously to approve the disbursement and reported such to the Administrative Director and Rabbi when they joined the call at the conclusion of the Executive Session.
2. **Administrative Director:** Lynda Erinoff pointed out that many duties were being handed over to the Administrative Director. She brought up the possibility of using contractors for some duties, which would bring up the question of how outside assistance would be paid for. Lynda also brought up the need for discussion of a limit on the amount of expenditures without the approval of Steering.

Jane Schulman then discussed the activities of the search committee for a new Administrative Director and brought up the need to clarify the duties of the position as the committee goes about its work. Jane said that the committee will report back to steering following its January meeting. Erv Walter mentioned the possibility that other volunteer positions would be absorbed into the duties of the Administrative Director.

3. **Prior minutes:** approved unanimously.
4. **Treasurer's Report and Budget Update:** Erv reviewed Kol Ami finances and collected dues. Dues collection has been better this year and targets have been met. Reminder notices for those outstanding have been sent. Erv noted that donations are doing well and expenses are being kept within budget. He mentioned the new expense of workers' comp insurance coverage for our employees and guest rabbis.

The congregation presently has 62 members with the addition of one individual membership.

Debbie mentioned the possible effect of the new Administrative Director on the budget. Rayna Aylward wondered about incurring additional expense for recruiting; Jane was unsure how much that would be.

5. **Administrative Director's Report:** Herb told the committee that UUCA now requires two weeks' notice for any change in room set-up. He discussed the success of both the Neve Shalom and Gratitude Service, noting that the former had 50 attendees and the latter had 60.

6. **Reconstructing Judaism (RJ):** Debbie, Rabbi Gilah Langner, and Lynda, shared their experiences at the convention in Philadelphia this November. Rabbi Gilah described it as marvelous, with participants from around the country telling about the new ideas and experimentation they were bringing to their services. Lynda remarked on the diversity of individuals and approaches to services. There was interest within Steering in incorporating music into our services; Rabbi Gilah suggested a Shabbat Shira service on the prior week (Jan. 12) as a good opportunity. Debbie brought up buzzwords

she'd heard discussed at the convention: intentionality and inclusivity. We could apply intentionality within our congregation by adding new perspectives to our services. For example, we could rethink the prayer at the opening of Steering Committee meetings; one possibility would be discussing personal experiences. One example of adopting inclusivity would be including special needs more intentionally, such as with a Shabbat service focused on that theme. JCEP has been successful in meeting the needs of special needs students and we hope to bring that skill to the new Tot Shabbat services. Toni Popkin has agreed to serve as Kol Ami's liaison to the Jewish Federation's Inclusivity Committee. The possibility of subsidies for children attending Reconstructionist summer camp and individuals to attend RJ events was also discussed.

7. Hanukah: Mindy described the success of our celebration, with great turn-out and a welcoming atmosphere for new members.

Mindy also mentioned that the first Tot Shabbat will take place on Saturday. Jane Schulman has been in touch with JCC Growing Jewish Families (GJF) and they will have their "Tot Shabbat Train" "stop" at Kol Ami for our March 9 service. This is another way to bring new families who might not be aware of Kol Ami into the congregation. Rabbi Gilah will also lead a family Seder on April 14 for the growing number of young families involved at Kol Ami.

8a. Tikkun Olam: Mattie discussed a possible Martin Luther King Day of Service, assisting refugees or individual projects as part of our Tu B'Shvat Seder. Debbie suggested the possibility of increased involvement by the congregation in social justice activities through new members who have expressed an interest in this work.

8b. Care & Concern: Rayna discussed the need to engage the entire community to help members in need. She suggested offering standing resources for assistance, as well as assembling a volunteer base. Among ideas would be working with the Ritual Committee to assist with Shiva, including meals, funds or transportation.

8c. Security: Jonathan told the committee that UUCA has asked Kol Ami to participate in emergency training on Jan. 13, which will require us to reschedule our Steering Committee meeting on that date.

Eric Rosenberg discussed his strong reaction to a published article reporting on Kol Ami using a Muslim-owned security firm following the Tree of Life attack in Pittsburgh. Eric questioned the wisdom of discussing our security arrangements with the press. Considering that our use of the UUCA facility had shielded us from public attention, Eric feared that the publicity of this sort could put the congregation, and particularly our children, at risk. He was also disturbed by the lack of discussion and engagement of the Steering Committee before a contractor was hired, citing a need for procedures for instituting security measures, as well as for interactions with the press.

Debbie moved to formalize the creation of the Security Committee, which was approved unanimously.

The next Steering Committee will take place on January 13 We are polling the members about moving the time to 2:30-4 pm to accommodate the emergency training at UUCA.