

## **Minutes from Keshet Israel Board Meeting January 15, 2005**

Attendees: Rabbi Barry Freundel, Gary Winters, Baruch Fellner, David Barak, Natasha, Debbie Rogal, Lea Mendelsohn, Roz Singer, David Sloan, David Epstein, Heather Zomer, Al Altschul, Michael Gelfand, Jonathan Frenkel.

### **1. Dvar Torah**

The meeting began with a dvar Torah by Rabbi Freundel regarding the red heifer.

### **2. Discussion Regarding Rejoining the OU**

The board discussed whether Keshet Israel should rejoin the OU, in light of the change of leadership there since the problems a few years earlier. The new president has been there for about six weeks. Board members expressed concerns about whether the organization has been responsible for the situation, and concern that the culprits were protected. Several board members said that they thought it would be beneficial for Keshet Israel to rejoin, and that we should support agencies like the OU. There was general agreement that it would be helpful to have a representative from the OU come to meet with us to discuss the issue and improvements made. The rabbi said that he would call to request this.

### **3. New Members**

The board approved the following new members:

Alan and Lily Gersch  
Daniel Siesser  
Marni Leftkowitz  
Sarit Weisburd  
Joshua Sunshine

### **4. Budget and Fundraising**

Al Altschul reported that we are in line with budget for the year. David Sloan praised the management of the budget and said the main issue is the need to reach our fundraising targets.

The 6<sup>th</sup> and I synagogue is the leading candidate for a location for this year's fundraiser. The prospective date for the event is March 27.

A question was raised about things going on at the 6<sup>th</sup> and I synagogue that we should be aware of, and possibly shouldn't associate ourselves with. The services there are distant from our philosophy. Does having an event there legitimize these activities? Other members suggested that this could be an opportunity to support non-denominational activities. We have had the rabbi teach courses there, so there should not be a concern. The rabbi said that there is a difference between renting a room at Adas Israel, a clearly conservative synagogue, and holding an event at a location that is being promoted as supporting a wide variety of Jewish institutions. He felt it would be acceptable to hold the event there, although he felt the concerns were legitimate.

Several other possible venues were discussed. We are not able to rent a room at the Smithsonian. The 6<sup>th</sup> and I synagogue is significantly less expensive than another venue. The fees paid do not go to support the other activities held there.

Additionally, the venue is not handicapped-accessible, and many members expressed that this is a significant concern. We have members who require elevators.

Returning to the budget, it was asked whether there are any carrying costs for Bayit II reflected in the budget. We have not incurred any costs yet, but when we do, they will be handled through the building fund, which is separate from the operating budget. Michael Gelfand reminded us that we have received contributions for the Bayit II, and this is also not reflected in the budget. Al Altschul responded that he will report on it monthly.

### **5. Other issues**

Michael Gelfand asked why we are charging \$4 for the “Religion and American Politics” event. This amount was set because Leon Weiseltier, who is one of the speakers, wanted the event to be inexpensive.

Gary announced that we will be having a congregational meeting to discuss the nursery school on February 2. He requested that we present this as an initiative that has the support of the board at large, even though there are some individual members of the board who do not support the project.

Gary presented Shalom Baranes’ renovation proposal, which is being funded by the anonymous donor. The consensus was that the proposal looks good. There were questions about maintenance and acoustics. Gary indicated that he plans to meet soon with a general contracting firm recommended by Shalom Baranes to get the project going. The board thanked Gary for all his work on this.

Gary noted that the mikvah is being filled. Lea Mendelsohn said that there will be a meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss leadership of the mikvah.