

Kesher Israel Board Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2005

Attendees: Natasha Rosenstock, Rabbi Freundel, Roz Singer, Jerry Chapman, Gary Winters, David Epstein, Al Altschul, Baruch Fellner, Debbie Rogal, Jonathan Pincus, David Barak, Jonathan Frenkel

1. Opening of the Mikvah.

The board expressed gratitude and appreciation to Lea Mendelsohn for her efforts to complete and open the Mikvah. The Mikvah will be open soon. The sense of the board was to do a joint program to celebrate its opening. Women who are interested in being a mikvah lady should contact Rabbi Freundel.

2. Budget

It was noted that disbursements are high and receipts are low this month, but that's expected at this time of year. Reminder calls/emails will go out shortly to those who have not paid their dues or kol nidrei pledges.

The fundraising target is uncertain this year, since the original fundraiser had to be postponed/modified. The smaller events which are being planned may be able to meet our needs financially. It was suggested to do a program with Leon Kass, the President's representative on cloning and bioethics.

Roz Singer reported that she had spoken to John Kaboff (a concert cellist) who recently performed at the Millennium Stage. He is willing to donate his time. Apparently, he's going to be working with an Israeli pianist. Strathmore Hall rents for 3 hours for \$300, and it holds a maximum of 120 chairs. Roz is going to try to plan this event for mid to late June.

3. Discussion on Shul Property

There is some property in SE Washington, in Marshall Heights neighborhood, which the shul currently owns with a tax lien on it. When DC rebuilt Southern Ave, they cut our property in half, and this is a small property which we still owned. There was a strategy of acquiring tax liens, in the hopes of eventual repossession, but no one understands that strategy today. Jerry Chapman agreed to follow up and try to determine the complete property value.

Gary Winters reported regarding Bayit II. Daria Fane is working on the zoning issues, but there is nothing new to report. It was asked whether the rent received from the building is covering the expenses, but it is not clear because all of the expenses aren't in yet. David Epstein, representing the trustee's interests, said that any excess should go toward trustee repayment. Gary Winters clarified that any excess will go toward paying down the mortgage, and only after that will the trustees be repaid.

4. Discussion regarding the Shul Renovations

Gary Winters reported that Kadcon, the contractor, is working with Shalom Baranes to develop an estimate. It will include the roof repair. Our funder is willing to pay for the

large majority of the effort, for the aspects of “beautification of the shul.” In the interest of completeness, Gary has asked for additional items to be priced. There will be an opportunity for the board to see the details. We have not incurred any costs except for Baranes’s fees, which have been paid for by our donor. The intention is to do the project over the summer.

We have faced challenges concerning contacting the contractor over the last six weeks. The board discussed the possibility of using another contractor, but it seems that we don’t have many other options.

5. Other Programming Reports

Jonathan Frenkel reported that we won the bid on the IMAX film for \$1200. It will be an exclusive IMAX showing in the Natural History library, and it can be done whenever we want.

Roz Singer agreed to look into having a magician as part of a program.

Gary Winters gave a huge Yashar Kochech to Elanit Rothschild regarding the adult education programming, and encouraged others to come to these events to meet new members.

Gary also reported that the mystery guest dinner was a big success at having Keshet Israel members meet each other. The participants were mostly younger people. Roz Singer commented that there needed to be some better coordination regarding where people were supposed to go.

6. Other Business

Jonathan Frenkel requested more help with minyanim.

Rabbi Freundel reminded people not to use the back door to exit because of the Mikvah.

Gary Winters reminded attendees to send in their mishloach manot and wine sale forms.

David Epstein suggested that since there are many more organizations in DC than in the past, we should have some discussions about branding: what are the features we can highlight the most about what is good about Keshet? What can we say about ourselves that will attract people. How can we focus our image? This is in addition to our main mission, which is prayer. This was tabled for future discussion.