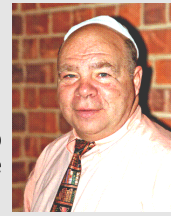


Presidential Matters



As synagogue meetings go, last week's general membership assembly differed greatly from past experiences. That made perfect sense, considering what was at stake.

One of the things I regret most in my tenure as president is not being totally communicative to the general membership; however, this goes both ways. While every letter contains the request to contact me with any questions, comments, and concerns, it is obvious that it is not enough for most members. It then becomes incumbent upon the board and me to provide a complete picture of exactly what is happening. The fact that most members do not reach out for further explanations is on them; however, it clearly does not absolve me from providing a complete picture. This will be corrected.

Regardless, you know that for the first time in a very long time, the synagogue is faced with its most critical decisions: do we sell the building and, if so, where do we go? Our finances clearly indicate our desperate condition. This is such a sensitive issue. We have called Little Neck Parkway our home for 70 years. How does one simply get up and leave? It doesn't happen without strong emotions. The decision to sell is, perhaps, being overshadowed by what comes next; however, each of us has to be troubled by picking up and leaving – it isn't easy!

As you should know, I appointed a special committee to explore potential outcomes. This committee was appointed by me and brought in a cross section of synagogue members. Subsequently, a leader of this committee was appointed. These individuals have devoted hundreds of hours (no exaggeration!!) to investigating, researching, and meeting with counterparts from other organizations.

Here are the findings as shared with the general membership at its February 20th meeting;

SALE OF PROPERTY

Early on, we reached a tentative agreement with the Pillar Church. The details were forwarded to each member. The decision regarding the sale of the property is determined by a vote of the general membership. You have received a proxy and voting instructions. If you have any questions, it becomes your responsibility to contact the synagogue office in advance of the February 27 voting date.

POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION

The search for a consolidation partner has continued for over a year. We started negotiating with Lake Success Jewish Center. For various reasons, attempts to reach agreements failed several times. If you want details, ask me; don't depend on hearsay! Letters, while with good intentions, going back and forth, do not always present the facts. What it does is create misunderstanding and frustration, especially when only selected members are included in the mailing.

All meetings with other synagogues were conducted with representation from each synagogue; at no point, was this a one-to-one meeting.

Please understand that our policy prohibits sharing individual or group communication through Temple Talk or the synagogue website. The negotiations at Lake Success failed. However, unbeknownst to several members, we continued reaching out to Lake Success even though the Board had decided this was no longer an option. I met with them privately on several occasions because I knew a group of our members were genuinely interested in pursuing an agreement. Each time, the negotiations failed. The truth is I violated Board policy, acting in hopes of finding a way around some disagreements.