Strategic Planning Committee Meeting October 2 2013

Penina Glazer – the chair: When the initial synagogue opened in lower main street in early 20th century) near the hospice shop; they invited Rabbi Alex Schindler (VERY famous rabbi  – read from Deuteronomy. The Jews of Northampton felt that they've been brought to the promised land; wanted to show gratitude for all these things that they experienced in Northampton – began a synagogue.

Completion of Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats Analysis begun at the last meeting.

a. Threats:
   a. no growth in population; aging; economic stag – one cluster;
   b. decline of conservative movement/lack of commitment to jewish institutions – second cluster;
   c. third cluster: competition, more choices, social competition, reputation;
   d. fourth cluster: disengagement of people in the empty nesters/ 4-s; perceived safety risk – another cluster;
b. Opp:
   a.  partnerships and human capital – LGA, other Jewish institutions; human capital: 5 colleges, smith; Jewish Federation and other western mass
   b. Build on new initiatives – revamped religious school; growing environmental awareness; growth in social action activities;
   c. New technologies; on line giving; social media;
   d. Facility improvements – need for a kosher party area;
   e. Jewish campus/Jewish Community Center
   f. Grants


Preparation for the October 3 Board Meeting where we will be doing a Visioning Exercise

Look at mission /vision statement;

Whatever we do tmoro nite at the board meeting October 3; will enhance what we are doing re mission/values;

Rabbi David leads us through the trigger text; without a vision people perish.

Mission is who we are

What do we appreciate in Leadership –

Professional leadership is experienced and skilled

Open to diversity; inclusive; welcoming to different points of view

Long term and committed.

Dedicated to short term goals; like a fund raiser or a need; people plunge in help w that;

Proud of their jewish traditions.


Index cards to protect the shy; everyone should be getting a 3 by 5;

DESIRED: at least a 100 people in a day coming thru the front door; each saying bracha's; a press agent –

DESIRED: I dream of seeing of more people under 50 years of age building new initiatives.

The point of the exercise on leadership that we just went through: we are not going to criticize or critique any idea. How did this feel? Point is to get us into a positive state of mind; what we appreciate can be a jumping off point of what we want to do. What we dream to do is based on what we have.

The rest of the groups and who will chair them for the board meeting on October 3: tfilah/spirituality (Norbert); torah/learning (Gillian); chesed/tsedekah (penina); community/ welcoming (lauren); fund-raising/endlowment (ben)

Board Members will choose their group and if there is an imbalance – steering committee members will help

Why did we do this: To identify themes. Purpose: is to help form task forces; and board members can help identify what the most important themes

Mission and vision team writes up the notes and edits.

Vision should provide a framework; how do we encourage joy for the jewish culture beyond what we are doing; how do we give it meat.

Emerging Themes; task forces;

For Centennial of United Synagogue Conservative Judaism: puzzle of how we get this information; listening deeply; what we produce is broad enough and getting enough details;

Going through the survey results and fill in their template;

Next steps When we have the community meeting in December; some of the results of the data; visioning exercise and modified our vision in x ways and from these that we've determined that these are the emerging themes; and we have formed task forces;

 Suggestions and solutions exercise; supposed to occur in October; review the vision; put their name on the work sheet; make one suggestion on how to make one solution that will ;

Thank you note; to be sent out to the entire group of people who filled out a questionnaire- to be sent out by Ben and note drafted by Penina.