

Strategic Plan  
North Suburban Synagogue Beth El Sisterhood  
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## **I. Introduction**

The current President of North Suburban Synagogue Beth El Sisterhood believed that the organization needed a Strategic Plan to help guide its priorities for the foreseeable future. The organization had never conducted a Strategic Plan to the best of her knowledge. She asked Marilyn Hirsch and Lois Lourie to lead that effort and brought in Debra Natenshon as an advisor.

Our goal was to produce a plan that covered five years. This document describes what that plan is and how we got there. The intent is for the plan to be reviewed annually and be changed as appropriate to meet the needs of the organization.

The Strategic Plan committee was established at the beginning of FY24. Members representing different age cohorts were recruited to serve. All the committee members are members of Sisterhood. The committee had two co-chairs and ten members.

The committee developed a vision statement and a mission statement. The mission statement was adopted by the Bylaws Committee.

The development of the Strategic Plan was guided by the vision and mission statements. The vision statement refers to community and increasing sense of community was one of the metrics we considered measuring as an outcome. The mission statement indicates in broad terms what Sisterhood hopes to do, with foci on Judaism and Jewish culture, support of the synagogue, and reinforcing bonds between women. We kept these foci in mind when we asked about programming, fund raising, and engagement.

Data was collected and reviewed in four phases: background data on Sisterhood; committee member input; input from women who are not members of Sisterhood; and Sisterhood member input. Each of these phases focused on a unique aspect of the Strategic Plan.

Using the data we collected, we developed objectives to implement in Years 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan. These objectives focus on programming and dues/program fees, respectively. We also present metrics that can be used to measure our success.

## **II. Vision Statement**

NSSBE Sisterhood is an organization made up of dynamic women who work together to support the synagogue and increase the sense of community. While upholding the synagogue's traditional values and being fully respectful of its history, NSSBE Sisterhood will focus on moving forward and meeting the challenge of change.

## **III. Mission Statement**

The mission of North Suburban Synagogue Beth El Sisterhood is to strengthen and unite the women of the synagogue. Sisterhood facilitates efforts to: understand and perpetuate Conservative/Masorti Judaism and Jewish culture in the home, family, synagogue, and community; support the synagogue; and reinforce bonds with each other, Israel, and Jews worldwide.

#### **IV. Current State of NSSBE Sisterhood – Quantitative Analysis** (see Appendix items 1 through 9)

Phase one was an analysis of historical membership, programming, and financial data to understand Sisterhood's current state. Our conclusions as discussed below need to take into consideration that the recent historical time period included the COVID years of 2020 and 2021 which impacted programming and financials.

The analysis confirmed our observations that Sisterhood is a well-respected, stable organization of mature women. Programming is robust with an emphasis on educational programs. Sisterhood fund raises to contribute to the synagogue and to the WLCJ Torah Fund Campaign, which supports the five Conservative Masorti institutes of higher education. Pre-Covid, Sisterhood had a membership that exceeded 300 women, but this dropped, most likely due to a change in the process of dues collection and the impact of COVID. In the past, Sisterhood made significant contributions to synagogue projects including the kitchen and other renovations. These contributions were possible in part due to funds raised by an annual art fair which was discontinued.

Sisterhood's current membership is 183. Based on an analysis done several months ago, members have an average age of 70; this is older than the average age of the general female membership of the synagogue. Less than 15% of the Sisterhood members are below the age of 60. The membership is committed to the organization, with most of the current Sisterhood members being previous members.

Sisterhood offers a number of programs, mostly educational, that appeal to the current member demographic. Some are co-sponsored with the Cultural and Learning Center (CLC), HAZAK, and the Men's Club. Attendance at programs in recent years has been moderate, but numbers are growing, due in part to the Rosh Chodesh Group, Torah Fund Book Club, and some of the newer format programs (such as A Taste of Honey and Milk and Cookies).

Members pay annual dues of \$40 with a \$30 option for those age 65+ (starting in FY25, there will be no standard option for paying lower dues). Sisterhood pays \$15 for each member to the Women's League of Conservative Judaism (WLCJ). Income collected from dues, fund raising (non-Torah Fund), and program fees are used to offset programming costs and provide an annual contribution to the synagogue in support of dues for members in need. Modest amounts are contributed to other synagogue activities and to outside organizations. The amount of the

annual contribution to the synagogue is dependent on the Sisterhood budget and funds raised for that year.

About 50% of the Sisterhood members also contribute to the Torah Fund. Since Torah Fund programs require an additional contribution (separate from Sisterhood), there is some confusion about this, especially among newer Sisterhood members.

## **V. Methods**

The committee had three phases of new data collection (Phases 2 to 4) to help create the Strategic Plan. These three phases were: input from the committee members, input from nonmembers of Sisterhood, and input from women who attended the Sisterhood retreat in early February.

### **Phase Two**

Based on input from Debra Natenshon, a Strategic Planning expert, we used the SOAR tool to collect information from committee members on seven areas of Sisterhood operation. For each area that a group is interested in planning for, the tool is used to collect the following information:

Current operation

Strengths – What things do we do well?

Opportunities – How can we do better?

Future State

Aspirations – What do we hope to achieve?

Results – How do we define success?

We asked about these Sisterhood areas of operation: branding; dues/program fees; marketing; programming; fund raising; engagement; and other. Nine committee members responded. The committee members who responded were not representative of Sisterhood members by age.

### **Phase Three**

Once we had the information from the committee members, we determined that we should collect information from synagogue women who were not members of Sisterhood. This information focused on programming, based on our findings from Phase Two.

Committee members were asked to reach out to nonmembers and ask them five questions that were crafted by the committee. Potential interviewees were selected in two ways. First, a random selection process was used. The nonmembers were sorted on a list by age, youngest to oldest women. Two random samples were taken, one that included women in their 20s to women in their 70s and a second selection looked at women who were in their 20s to 40s.

Second, some committee members expressed an interest in speaking with women they knew and with whom they had a connection. Ten committee members were assigned or selected two or three women to contact. Thirteen interviews were conducted. The respondents were not representative of nonmembers by age.

#### **Phase Four**

The fourth phase of data collection occurred at the Sisterhood retreat that was held early February 2024. We used four small breakout groups to assess how to frame the metrics we would use to measure our success with proposed programming changes. The question we asked the groups to consider was:

What is the most important thing we should try to accomplish?

Increase membership overall, i.e., focus on increasing the total number of members.

Diversify membership, i.e., focus on one or more demographic groups to increase the number of women in that group/those groups.

Increase participation in programs, i.e., increase the number of women who attend programs.

Increase community, i.e., increase women's positive feelings of belonging to Sisterhood.

We asked each group to rank these four options and tell us why they chose that ranking. Each group had a facilitator who was a member of the Strategic Plan Committee.

## **VI. Findings**

For Phase Two of the data collection, the Strategic Plan Committee member input, we received very thoughtful and complete responses. Highlights of the responses were as follows:

Branding – No need to change the name of the organization but there is a need to change the image to make it more modern.

Dues/program fees – Dues are reasonable but the total cost for participation is unknown as there are fees to attend some programs. The fee structure needs to be simple, transparent, and provide good value.

Marketing – The Sisterhood weekly note was seen positively but the organization needs to make more of an effort to reach out to women to increase participation at programs.

Programming – There was positive feedback regarding current programming, which was described as diverse and thought provoking. However, the responses included information that the programming does not capture the interest of younger women.

Programming that would appeal to them was described as fun, with a focus on friendship and entertainment. This is in juxtaposition with our mission partly being to enhance Jewish lives and provide a strong sense of community in a way other options do not.

Fundraising – The committee members recognized that the gift shop is a major source of Sisterhood fund raising. Suggestions were made for ways to increase the amount of money raised and to make the operation more efficient. There were also suggestions for ways to fundraise aside from the gift shop, including reviving the Festival of the Arts. Comments included that Sisterhood members need to understand why we fundraise and why it is important.

Engagement – The respondents recognized that Sisterhood has a core group of dedicated members. There is a need to bring in more women, focusing on different demographic groups. Board members should be encouraged to be more involved and there needs to be a bench of leadership for the future.

Other – Two areas that were raised were succession planning and facilitating how different communities within Beth El can support each other.

Based on these responses, we believed we had sufficient information to move forward. The general conclusion from this phase of data collection was that we had a good organization but there were ways to improve participation, membership, and community. The decision was made to focus on programming in Year 1, which would also help with branding, engagement, and fundraising. In Year 2, we would focus on dues/program fees. Highlights from the Phase Three data collection, the nonmember survey related to programming, were as follows:

Question 1: What does Sisterhood mean to you?

Many of the respondents said the term Sisterhood conjured up an image of older women but there was also positive feedback regarding our organization and our offerings.

Question 2: What activities do you participate in at Beth El?

Some respondents only went to High Holiday services; some attended Tot Shabbat and other children's activities; some attended classes and lectures and/or Shabbat services; and there was one respondent who had been a synagogue officer and two who had been synagogue committee chairs.

Question 3: If Sisterhood had a program that you would be thrilled to attend, what would it be? When would it be? Who else would be attending?

While there was no consensus on programs or timing of events, we did get a wide range of ideas for programs these women would be interested in. Two takeaways were that it

would benefit Sisterhood to have one annual signature event and that childcare for families with younger children was important.

Question 4: What method of invitation would most likely result in your attending a Sisterhood event?

The Thursday synagogue email was mentioned more than any of the other choices we gave.

Question 5: What reasons have prevented you from joining Sisterhood as of now?

Some of the responses that sum up the sentiment included “very busy,” “Sisterhood not on the radar,” and there was “no need to join.”

This phase of data collection did not give us anything definitive to move ahead on, but it did give us things to think about.

The Phase Four results were very consistent across the four retreat breakout discussion groups. Three of the groups gave “increase participation in programs” and “increase community” the highest rankings. One group ranked “diversify membership” and “increase participation in programs” with the highest rankings.

Based on the very engaging conversations that occurred among the retreat participants, the metrics we will use to measure programming outcomes will focus on program participation and community.

## **VII. Metrics**

### Increase participation in programs.

The Vice President of Programming has lists of attendees at past programs. We will count the number of women who attended the past programs and calculate an overall average number of women. We will also assess the lists and determine if we should analyze the information more specifically, such as counting attendance by type of program or day of the program or time of the program or mode of presentation. In each case, we will calculate an average attendance and use it as the baseline to compare attendance at our programs after we implement changes.

### Increase community.

This metric is a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment.

To obtain a baseline assessment for qualitative measures, such as feelings about Sisterhood, relationships between Sisterhood members, and feelings about the synagogue, we will have to create a questionnaire to administer to all or part of the Sisterhood membership.

To obtain a baseline for a quantitative measure, we can use the attendance sheets referenced above. In this case, we would assess patterns of program attendance. We would determine



what the distribution is of the number of programs women attend and take the average of that distribution. We would use that average as a baseline to measure repeat program attendance as one aspect of the community.

## **VIII. Objectives**

### Year 1 (FY25) – Programming

Objective 1: Implement a “get to know Sisterhood” social program.

At the retreat, it was apparent that a number of the participants know little about: Sisterhood and what the goals are; how dues and program fees work; and why we do fund raising and what we raise funds raise for. Our thought is that if we have a program that focuses on these topics, women will feel more connected to the organization and be more interested in participating in other programs. Specific decisions about the program will be left up to the program committee; consideration needs to be given to whether this program should be integrated into another program or a separate event.

Objective 2: Plan a series of small group programs.

Plan a series of small group get togethers (three or more spread out throughout the year) that provide an opportunity for participants to get to know each other in an informal setting scheduled at various times and days. The organizer would initiate an exercise for participants to get to know each other. Participation would be on a first come first served basis. Members or Board Members would be asked to volunteer to host and plan an event.

Objective 3: Implement three or more new and innovative programming concepts.

Increase the variety of programs that have a more social focus and/or focus on wellness or skill building (for example, cooking, knitting, art, jewelry making, massage) that will appeal to a wider variety of members and prospective members. Some of these programs should have a relationship to Judaism. This can be the food that is cooked or the object that is created. One barrier to participation is that people have different schedules. We will try to answer the question of whether participation is dependent on timing or other types of access factors.

Objective 4: Select, plan for, and implement an initial signature event.

Sisterhood should strive to select and implement a signature event by FY26. The selection of that event and the planning should begin in FY25. The event itself may occur in FY25 or FY26 and then be repeated on an annual or every other year basis. A signature event requires significant help from many people, both in

the planning stage and during the event. We can use any phase of this initial effort that occurs in FY25 as a before/after demarcation to determine if women working together on this major project increases participation in other programs and in more positive feelings of community. One option for a signature event that is being discussed is to restart the Festival of the Arts.

## Year 2 (FY26) – Dues/Program Fees

**Objective 1:** Create options to restructure dues and program fees. Explore different models for collection of dues and fees and the potential to offer members a choice of payment models.

Identify options for collection of dues and program fees. Possible options include: (1) pay dues and pay a fee for some or all programs; (2) determine a blanket amount and that amount will cover all dues and fees for one year for one individual; (3) pay no dues but pay a higher fee for each program; and (4) have synagogue dues cover membership. In all cases, there would be a mechanism for women to indicate they are Sisterhood members, and we would pay the \$15 per capita fee to WLCJ for them. If there are free programs, the women in the third group would still have to pay a fee. Programs where a formal meal is served would require all participants to pay something.

Some women definitely want to pay one time and would prefer not to be asked frequently for small amounts. Some women would prefer to pay as they go.

Collect feedback from membership on preferences for dues and program fees. Identify any challenges with bookkeeping, list maintenance, and ShulCloud impact of different dues payment options.

**Objective 2:** Simplify the membership sign-up and dues payment process.

The current membership sign-up process can be complicated. Some potential members mistakenly believe that they paid their Sisterhood dues when they paid their synagogue dues. We should determine how to make it clearer and easier for members to join and pay dues, including payments out of donor advised funds. This is a challenge shared with the Men's Club. Currently, members can sign-up and make payments via a form on the synagogue website, or a check to Sisterhood. In the past, members could also write a check to the synagogue. This makes maintaining accurate and timely member and financial records challenging since there can be a lag between member payment and notification of Sisterhood.

Years 3-5 (FYs 27 – 29) – Objectives would be determined based on what happens in Years 1 and 2. We do note that fund raising is an issue that would lend itself to being the focus of the plan in Year 3.

In Appendix 11, we list additional ideas for consideration as we move forward.

## **IX. Conclusion**

North Suburban Synagogue Beth El Sisterhood is a well-run and well-respected organization within the synagogue. However, there are areas that could be improved. That improvement will hopefully result in more women participating in and feeling connected to Sisterhood and the synagogue. This plan will start the organization on its journey.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Current Sisterhood Membership FY24

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| New members                                 | 29 <sup>1</sup>  |
| 2022-2023 renewing members                  | 97 <sup>2</sup>  |
| 2021-2022 and/or 2020-2021 renewing members | 47 <sup>3</sup>  |
| Total Members                               | 173 <sup>4</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Have not been members in period 2020 to 2023.

<sup>2</sup> 67 of these members were members for 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.

<sup>3</sup> 47 members were not members in 2022-2023 but were members in either 2020-2021

### Appendix 2: Potential Sisterhood Members (FY 21,22,23)

Former Sisterhood Members (excludes deceased and non-Beth El synagogue members)

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 2022-2023 former members                       | 48  |
| 2021-2022 former members                       | 49  |
| 2020-2021 former members                       | 116 |
| Total non-duplicative potential former members | 213 |

**Appendix 3: Potential Sisterhood Members (FY 24) (from Beth El membership)**

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| New to synagogue            | 28  |
| Others                      | 575 |
| Total potential new members | 603 |

**Appendix 4: Membership by year (FY 21, 22, 23, 24)**

| <b>Sisterhood Membership Count by Year</b> | <b>Number</b> |
|--|---------------|
| 2023-2024 Current as of 2.1.24             | 173           |
| 2022-2023*                                 | 152           |
| 2021-2022*                                 | 201           |
| 2020-2021*                                 | 335           |

\* From WLCJ Year-end statement

**Appendix 5: Membership by Age (FY24)**

| <b>Age of Sisterhood Members by Tier (as of 7/1/2023)</b> | <b>Percent of Members</b> |
|---|---------------------------|
| 90+ yrs   | 5%                        |
| 80 -89 yrs  | 15%                       |
| 70 -79 yrs  | 28%                       |
| 60 – 69 yrs   | 37%                       |
| 50 – 59 yrs   | 10%                       |

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| Under 50 yrs           | 5% |
| Average age = 69.7 yrs |    |

## Appendix 6: Sisterhood Programs for Calendar Years 2022 & 2023

| Type of Program  | Number                      |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Education Programs   | 30                          |
| Social Programs  | 8                           |
| Fund Raisers   | 9 <sup>1</sup>              |
| Beth El Torah Fund Programs                                  | 23                          |
| WLJC Sponsored Programs that were promoted to NSSBE. Members | 23                          |
| Total Program Opportunities                                  | 93 (average of 46.5 per yr) |

<sup>1</sup>Ongoing/repeating fund raisers counted once (Mazel Mail).

## Appendix 7: List of Sisterhood Programs for Calendar Years 2022 & 2023

Note that some programs are co-sponsored with CLC, HAZAK and/or Men's Club

### Education Programs

- Rosh Chodesh Group (8 sessions)
- Great Jewish Families Who Have Built America
- Rosh Hashanah "Reflections" (2 sessions)
- Sisterhood Installation 2022 and 2023 (2)
- Milk and Cookies with a Chanukah Flavor (2 sessions)
- Community in West Rogers Park
- Astrology, Judaism and You
- A Taste of Honey (3 sessions)
- Sustainability in Fashion
- Blood Drive (3 sessions)
- Virtual Tour of Jewish Paris
- The Start-Up Nation: A Multi-Media Presentation on Israel's Achievements in Science, Medicine, and Technology
- By the Grace of the Game author Dan Grunfeld
- The Women of Chanukah Story
- Sisterhood Shabbat (2022 & 2023)

### Programs – Primarily Social

- Celebrate Jewish Broadway
- Let's Get Moving
- Ravinia Festival
- Chinese Dinner and Movie (2 sessions)
- Brain Bash Trivia
- In person Game Night - Here Today
- Sisterhood Shabbat Dinner

### Programs – Fund Raisers

- Jewel-Osco Cards
- Sisterhood Gift Shop
- MazelMail Birthday and Wedding Anniversary Greetings
- Special Gifts to Sisterhood
- Chanukah Greetings - Chag Urim Sameach greeting to Sisterhood mailing list.
- Send Passover greetings to women of Beth El
- Send Shana Tova Greetings to Women of Beth El
- Honey from the Heart
- Purim E-card Greeting Cards

### Torah Fund (Minimum \$54 Donation)

- Torah Fund Book Club (10 sessions)
- Why Do We Find Prayer So Hard?
- Torah Fund Pre-Pesach Workshop: Two conceptions of the Miracle at the Sea
- Torah Fund Pre-Pesach Workshop: Ten Plagues and Exodus in Jewish Art
- Torah Fund Pre-Pesach Workshop: Midrashic View of Exodus
- Why We Should Invest in Synagogue Schools
- What's Next for Conservative Judaism?
- Torah Fund Author Jacqueline Saper, From Miniskirt to Hijab
- What's Next for Conservative Judaism Educational Forum on current dynamics in Middle East and role of our Jewish state.
- Torah Fund How the Conservative Movement's Law Committee Impacts our Lives Today, Part 1
- Torah Fund How the Conservative Movement's Law Committee Impacts our Lives Today, Part 2
- Torah Fund Stands with Israel
- Torah Fund: Choosing Parenthood: ART, Adoption and Single Parent, Part IIP

### Programs Sponsored by WLCJ that were Promoted to NSSBE Members



- 2023 Convention Social Action Project: Giving the Gift of a Healthy Birth
- Book Discussion: Golem Girl: A Memoir
- Jews in Film: Night and Day - The Jewish Connection to the Movie Musicals of the 1940's, Session 1
- Jews in Film: Night and Day - The Jewish Connection to the Movie Musicals of the 1940's, Session 2
- Jews in Film: Night and Day - The Jewish Connection to the Movie Musicals of the 1940's, Session 3
- Exploring LGBTQ+ Identities
- End-of-Life Issues
- Come Back to Israel, or Explore the World
- Just for Laughs
- Region Torah Fund Event
- How to Best Support a Loved One Facing Cancer
- WLCH 5783 and 5784 Calendar
- WLCJ Mishpachah Program – Communication Skills for Difficult Times
- Jewish Women of Color: On a Journey Towards Inclusion
- Getting Our Heads into the Seder: A Pre-Pesach Program
- Jews In Film – Somewhere Over the Rainbow, Session 1
- Jews in Film – Somewhere Over the Rainbow, Session 2
- Jews in Film – Somewhere Over the Rainbow Session 3
- What Every Women Should Know about Cardiovascular Diseases
- Who Owns the Western Wall?
- Discovering and Sharing our Genetic Information
- What You Need to Know About Campus Antisemitism

Note that the numbers in parentheses show the number of times that program occurred.

**Appendix 8: Torah Fund Information (FY 22,23,24)**

| Year/Term | Number of Donors | Goal    | Annual Campaign | Spaces Campaign | Total   |
|-----------|------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| 2023-2024 | 71               | \$8,000 |                 |                 |         |
| 2022-2023 | 82               | \$9,500 | \$7,915         | \$134           | \$8,049 |
| 2021-2022 | 102              | \$9,000 | \$8,818         | \$492           | \$9,310 |

- Torah Fund contributions go directly to Torah Fund – they do not go through Sisterhood.
- Anyone (technically) can donate to TF. The donor does **not** need to be a Sisterhood member.
- Beth El Torah Fund accepts contributions from everyone and does not discourage donations from men.
- Beth El Sisterhood set a policy (around 2016) to request a \$54 minimum contribution for all Torah Fund Classes offered by Sisterhood. There is no “special membership” category for Torah Fund. Their donation allows them to attend Torah Fund sessions (both Beth El Sisterhood sponsored classes and national Torah Fund classes).
- Torah Fund classes include Book Club and other educational sessions and represent about 25% of Sisterhood programs.
- The number of Torah Fund donors has ranged between 82 and 102 over the previous three years. The average donation is around \$100 per person.
- Women's League (WLCJ) assigns our "goals" each year for contributions.
- All Torah Fund contributions go directly to the Torah Fund Campaign of WLCJ to support the 5 Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher education.
- The Torah Fund Campaign Special Project, Creating New Spaces, runs parallel to the general Torah Fund Campaign. It is raising \$200,000 to support specific programs at the JTS and Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies

## **Appendix 9: Sisterhood Financial Information**

- Income Sources:
  - Member dues: \$40 (\$30 option for 65+)
  - Sponsorships, contributions, and gifts
  - Gift shop sales
  - Other fund raising: Honey sales, Mazel Mail, Holiday Greetings
  - Program fees
  
- Expenses:
  - \$15 per member goes to WLCJ
  - Programs and Good & Welfare
  - Sisterhood Shabbat Kiddush
  - WLCJ Convention; CGLR Conference; (may not be annual)
  - Gift Show attendance (may not be annual)
  - Contribution to synagogue
  
- Sisterhood annual contribution to synagogue ranges from \$7,400 to \$14,050 since FYE 2021
  - 67% to 79% of the contribution is used to subsidize NSSBE dues for members in need
  - Sisterhood also contributes about \$2,000 per year to other synagogue programs (Shabbat Kiddish, Library, clergy gifts, graduation gifts) and other charitable causes.
  
- Note: In the past, Sisterhood made significant contributions to specific projects (kitchen renovation). Also, significant funds were raised in the past from an annual Art Fair.

## Appendix 10: Ways to Join Sisterhood

1. Direct link to form, housed on Shulcloud: also links to payment. Payment generates an automatic email notification. Most people join this way.
2. Congregants go to Shulcloud on their own account. Can click to pay but no form is filled out. Dues gets recorded by system and attributed to sisterhood. Sisterhood gets notified when a spreadsheet is requested from the Finance Director. Membership form is not automatically generated or completed. Must be requested from member who joins in this way.
3. Make check payable to Sisterhood. If the check is mailed to the synagogue with sisterhood on the envelope, it goes into the sisterhood box. It may or may not be accompanied by a form. The synagogue prefers those checks be written to the synagogue.
4. In the past, there was an option (no longer available) to write a check payable to Beth El or as part of payment of Synagogue dues. The intention to join Sisterhood may not have been recorded and Sisterhood may not have been notified. This required research when someone claimed to be a member and paid their dues in this way.
5. Other comments:
  - It is possible in the Shulcloud system to indicate your intention to pay Sisterhood dues but not pay immediately. There can be a long lag until the dues are paid.
  - Sisterhood and Men's Club are separate categories and not included when members are paying dues at higher levels.
  - Every year, members must fill out the Sisterhood form with their renewal.
  - In the future, we may want to consider an option on the form to pay more than their fair share of Sisterhood dues.
  - Some women inadvertently pay dues more than once. This is an additional burden to the synagogue to resolve.

## **Appendix 11: Additional Ideas for Future**

- Identify first time attendees at each Sisterhood event and assign a board member to talk with them at the event.
- New members get a small gift from the gift shop – have to pick it up when the gift shop is open.
- Sisterhood members get discount at gift shop.
- Sisterhood members buying day – volunteers to gift wrap –offer discount.
- Signature sisterhood events – schedule and known in advance.
  - Example: Rosh Chodesh – schedule in advance, mark calendar
  - Annual honey tasting event, etc.
- Class/welcome new participants to mahjong.
- Since Torah Fund classes are a significant percentage of Sisterhood programs, consider ways to make them more available to more members?
- Complimentary Sisterhood membership for first year Beth El members.
- Implement program sponsorships.
- Better outreach to nonmembers regarding Sisterhood events.
- Send weekly Sisterhood note to nonmembers If they agree to receive Sisterhood emails.
- Create a one pager that describes Sisterhood and the benefits of belonging.
- Advertise more in the synagogue itself.
- Gift shop: increase exposure; increase hours; establish online store; implement mobile pay; bring in consultant with business experience.
- Fund raising sukkah building; becoming a match for services needed and provided and taking a percentage of payment; finding additional items to sell.