



BRANDEIS NATIONAL
COMMITTEE

**NEC Meeting
Minutes
May 26, 2022**

Merle begins the meeting with a video of Senior Reflections from the class of 2022. The video highlights the many great aspects of the Brandeis experience and what it means to be a part of the Brandeis community. Merle's opening remarks note all of the great work the BNC has done, thanks to everyone here, to help the students of Brandeis. She also reflects on the recent commencement.

Committee Reports:

Finance with Michelle Fischler

Michelle begins by highlighting Dora's great work with her guidance and creation of the new financial system for treasurers and asks Dora to speak briefly.

Dora notes that Brandeis is a very financially conservative institution. Our team works very closely with gift processing, the team that makes sure we get all of our money into the financial system of the University. The new process for treasurers has really helped speed up the process. Out of 37 chapters, 34 are on board with the new system.

Michelle points out that Dora is also introducing a new event planning worksheet that will be released to chapters soon. It will show the chapters how much money they are generating and if they need to go back and adjust prices or other factors. Once an event is completed, you'll be able to plug all your numbers in rather than doing all the calculations by hand.

Onto the fair market value issue. We will be rolling the informational material out to chairs, treasurers, and presidents soon. Along with training for everyone to make sure everyone who needs help can get it.

Leadership Training w/ Janice Fineman

Janice presents an analysis from a survey of chapters about BNC leadership materials and what resources they have been using.

She received replies from 1/3rd of the chapters. Most do not offer training or use the handbook at all. Many use a questionnaire to get new potential names. Not having enough time or lack of interest are the main reason for there not being enough interest in leadership positions.

Janice points out that eight out of 12 chapter presidents surveyed have been in office for over three years.

A main takeaway from the survey is that there is no consensus as to what would help chapters with filling leadership positions.

Other major themes from the data:

- It is important to foster new talent
- To have a pool of potential leaders, we need a pool of new members
- Chapters should consider term limits so people are not on too long

Janice recommends a Leadership Taskforce in conjunction with BNC national to help with these issues. The team can assist and support chapters to help identify the specific needs that chapters have.

She outlines suggest next steps:

1. Identify members with skills
2. Mentor those people
3. Offer training
4. Have those candidates co-chair appointments with the expectation they will take over down the line

Programming with Myra Silverstein

Programs have enabled us to offer something for everyone as we raise money for the library and HoH campaign.

The study group repository, developed by the Norfolk Chapter with the National Office, will be released soon. This will be a compilation of past events and stud groups that will act as inspiration for crafting new programming going forward.

Alex gives us an overview of how the repository will work while sharing his screen and showing it off. It is a straightforward form to fill out with filters for theme, programming/study group, and frequency.

Alex also notes that a huge priority for us going forward will be making the website more of a resource over the summer. This includes chapter-specific pages on the website that have

individual info like bulletins, but also general information and resources that every chapter needs.

Membership with Maxine Schweitzer

At the February NEC meeting, we showed off the completed data from our recent membership survey. She thanks the membership committee for their work in crafting the survey. Maxine relays that information here.

There were a total of 55 respondents out of 106 invited to participate.

Key Takeaways:

1. Events and personal friendships are the current main drivers of membership. Events were listed as the #1 reason that people join BNC, with friendship/community being a close second.
2. There is a lack of reaching outside friend groups to grow membership. 82% of respondents invite their friends to BNC on a regular basis. When asked if they recruit from other community groups, 45% said no.
3. Not many people in BNC use social media for membership recruitment. Less than half of the respondents come from chapters with a social media presence, and only 21% use social media to drive membership at all.
4. Covid was brought up consistently in the open-ended answers as a hurdle for bringing in new members. Whether that be Zoom fatigue or not being able to connect as easily as before Covid.

Actionable items:

- Programming and membership committees should have a joint meeting to explore what both can do to boost membership.
- Look at where men's/couples groups are working out and build those out nationally.
- Create a refreshed campaign to give the parent of the 22' graduating class for BNC

Maxine ends by stating that to be one BNC, we must all participate and strengthen our membership base.

Discussion and Questions After the Presentations

There is continued discussion about searching for replacements in leadership positions. Ellen notes that she heard feedback that some were afraid to leave positions because of what could happen to the chapter after they left. Or that the person leaving would then be left out. But Ellen goes on to highlight the importance of communication, mentorship, and succession planning to help with these issues.

Michelle notes that some current leaders don't want to be part of the NEC until their terms are up. So we can't lose touch with these people once they step out of those roles.

Beth then brings up that BNC national is working with D'vorah Pemstein (Student Life) on having BNC being a part of Parent's Weekend. In addition we are printing new membership brochures and are finalizing the designs. Chapters will have them for new member teas. At the same time we will change the back page to specifically target parents. This will be online.

Beth notes the parents focus group we hosted a few months ago helped us shape our strategy going forward. We will continue with these focus groups for the parents and will find more ways to get the value feedback and act on it.

Merle thanked the NEC for their dedication during another difficult Covid year and gave thanks and Presidential Commendations to Leslie Pearlstein, Lori Roth, and Elaine Bloom who will leave the NEC.