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Dear Rabbi Sokol,

This is to inform you that we will not be returning to the Yavneh Minyan of Flatbush. Although neither of us have attended regularly for some time now, we have for many years enjoyed the *Yamim Noraim davening*. Despite this, we will be going elsewhere from now on.

The reason for this is a letter that was sent by the board to Tom Bauer in response to his lack of payment of dues. The tone of this letter was hostile and accusatory in the extreme. Considering that Tommy has been a longtime member of the *minyan* and has contributed in many ways, this was uncalled for. However, even if Tommy had never contributed to the *minyan* in any way whatsoever, this letter would still be inappropriate. We are not interested in *davening* in a shul where this kind of *sinat chinam* is tolerated.

We have spoken to a member of the outgoing board, and understand that their perception was that Tommy was hostile in response to phone calls he received about payment of his dues. This does not excuse an institutional response of this nature. A simple letter that said he would no longer be a member unless his dues were paid would have been sufficient; the same sort of letter any member in arrears would receive. We were also told by a member of the board that the Board was not aware of Tommy's domestic situation at that time, or they would have made allowances for his behavior. If we have ever heard a good argument for *dan l'kaf zchut*, this is it.

This is a very unfortunate situation, exacerbated by the lack of clear policies and procedures and their fair application across the board. The constitution, which was properly voted on and ratified has been ignored when convenient and applied when it has suited particular purposes. The only recourse open to a member with financial difficulties is to speak with Bob Kaplan. It is no secret that there is hostility between Bob and Tommy. It is quite obvious that this letter is an outgrowth of Bob's dislike of and rivalry with Tommy. Tommy's response reflects his anger and dislike of Bob. The difference is, Tommy is an individual, and Bob speaks for the *minyan*. We no longer wish him to speak for us.

We are also disturbed that the board made the decision that Tommy's services as *ba'al tokeiah* would no longer be required. The responsibility for *tefilla* is a function of the *gabbaiem*, who are accountable to the rabbi. It is not a function of the board to make decisions regarding *tefilla*.

Perhaps most of all, we are appalled that the rest of the board stood by and allowed this to happen, and that you as *morah d'asra* took no action. While there are many functions of the *shul* that belong exclusively in the hands of the board, matters of moral conduct most certainly involve the *rav* of the *shul*.

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