

LEO BAECK CENTRE FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM
MINUTES FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY 1st MAY 2022

At LBC and Online

Present: Michael Taft (chair), Deborah Ogawa, Pierre Harcourt, Rabbi Jonathan Keren-Black, Stephen Hacker, Karen Silberberg, Jennifer Glaser, Lisa Sylvan, Maurice Duband, Hugh Berryman-Brooke, Brenda Brook, Jerry Winston, Ailsa Jean, Rena Lopata, Marty Abraham, Jennifer Harvey, Alan Harvey, Susan Cohen, Julie Contole and Michael Polack (19)

Proxies: Val Silberberg, Julie-Anne Lilienthal, Susan Rose, Lilian Cohen, Jack Cohen, Nigel Rose, Caroline Oblak, Tanya Warms and Matt Rose (9)

On line: Alan Feldman, Tom Beer, Dorothy Kerron, Vicki Brous, Albert Isaacs, Tony Kerron, John Merory, Paula Messer, Leah Mow-Yoffe, Mark Pryor, Victoria Gurvich, Sharene Hambur, Terri Nathan and Philip Bliss (14)

42 attendees; 35 voting members

1. Confirmation of quorum

Quorum for a general meeting, the presence of 10% of members entitled to vote, was confirmed to be achieved.

Michael, president, opened the meeting and paid respects to the traditional custodians.

We acknowledge that our sanctuary is on land whose traditional custodians are the Wurundjeri people, and we recognize the elders past and present of the First Nations across Australia.

2. Previous AGM and Special Meeting Minutes were moved for acceptance

The members accept the minutes of the 2021 annual general meeting and special general meeting.

Moved Karen Silberberg

Seconded Pierre Harcourt

Accepted

3. Receive and consider the Annual Report, including Auditor's report

• **President's Report**

We are moving into a post COVID time which should allow us to return to in person events and happily resume many of our activities (Michael).

The members accept the President's Report.

Moved: Maurice Duband

Seconded: Jen Glaser

Accepted

- **Treasurer's & Auditor's Report; to be moved for acceptance**
- On behalf of Treasurer Matt Rose, Deborah Ogawa presented the report. She said that without grants and bequests LBC would have produced a loss. She thanked Karen Silberberg for serving as Treasurer for part of the year and Matt Rose who took over as Treasurer, Mark Pryor for being Treasurer advisor, Paul the bookkeeper and Julie-Anne and Aya in the office.
- Question: There is an account to donate money with tax benefits – will it be easier to find? (Maurice).
- We are working on a new interface (Deb) to make the process to donate tax free clearer and simpler.
- Philip Bliss commented on PJCF as an avenue for donations.

The members accept the Treasurer's & Auditor's reports.

Moved: Ailsa Jean

Seconded: Susan Cohen

Accepted

- **Rabbis' Report; to be moved for acceptance**
- Questions asked.
- What is the planning for the future? (Marty) Pierre reported on progress with the rabbi search. There is a job description circulating. An email address is set up for recruitment.
- Are there many rabbis available? (Rena Lopata) We are not sure of how easily we can recruit; there are a number of vacancies in Australia (Michael).
- Rabbi Jonathan has served this congregation for nearly 20 years. He thanked the community for their support.
- We are excited about the future and we are open to considering anything. Rabbi Jonathan has agreed to undertake some Beit Mitzvah even after he leaves. (Deb)
- This is the best congregation in Australia (Rabbi Jonathan)
- We have a really strong value proposition, with a united Committee and clarity about what we are looking for. We feel a great deal of optimism and positivity. (Steve)

- The Ritual Committee is working on an increase in lay leaders to cover any period without a rabbi (Albert). We managed four years in the past although we hope that we will not need to cover for that period of time.

The members accept the Rabbi's report.

Moved: Jerry Winston

Seconded: Ailsa Jean

Accepted

- **Other Group Reports as per Annual Report; to be moved for acceptance**

The members accept the other Group reports as per the 2021 annual report.

Moved: Julie Contole

Seconded: Maurice Duband

Accepted

Question: Can a Rabbi serve two shules? (Marty) This might be a model. It is too early to have had any expressions of interest. (Michael)

4. Appointment of Hon Auditors and Hon Solicitor; to be moved for acceptance

Auditor: Lowe Lippmann

Hon. Solicitor: Geoffrey Shiff, Partner Shiff & Company

The members accept Lowe Lippmann be appointed as Auditor and Shiff & Company as Honorary Solicitors for next year.

Moved: Susan Cohen

Seconded: Pierre Harcourt

Accepted

5. Proposal for the 2023 fees and their due date (31 March 2023); to be moved for acceptance.

Fees were decided considering inflation and other factors. It's a marginal increase that we are proposing.

Question: Would not our expenses decrease without a rabbi? (Jenny) But there is much to do and pay for such as the carpet and painting (Michael) So, although we might not have a salary to pay to a rabbi, it gives us a chance to catch up. If our finances are robust and we still don't have a rabbi in the next financial year, that information would be taken into consideration for when we set fees next. (Deb)

The members accept the proposed fees and schedule for 2023.

Moved: Jen Glaser

Seconded: Steve Hacker

Accepted

6. Election / Confirmation of Committee

As there are as many spots as nominations, so we will appoint the people who have nominated:

President: Michael Taft, Vice President: Deborah Ogawa, Treasurer: Matt Rose and Secretary: Michael Polack.

Ordinary Members: Karen Silberberg, Alan Feldman, Stephen Hacker, Jen Glaser, Caroline Oblak and Pierre Harcourt.

Michael thanked all those who have put forward their names to serve.

7. Word of welcome to new members and expression of appreciation for retiring Committee members

Michael thanked Jon Taft who is stepping down after 25 years or so of outstanding service to the LBC Board and Committee, including as president. He will continue as chairperson for the Membership group. His contribution has been exceptional.

We thank the appointed members for recommitting for another year of service.

8. Questions from the floor about matters raised today

Michael asked for any questions.

John Merory wanted to know if money has been set aside for renewable energy project (solar panels).

Deborah responded that in June/July we will be seeking contributions to raise \$7000 for buying solar panels to match a government grant.

Advice received is that at the moment a battery will not be economic (Rabbi Jonathan). We can, in due course, upgrade to a battery.

Refreshments were made available.

Meeting closed 3.16pm