



CAULFIELD HEBREW CONGREGATION
MINUTES OF THE 72nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT
CAULFIELD SHULE, THE SUKIERT MEMORIAL HALL
572 INKERMANS ROAD, CAULFIELD NORTH, VICTORIA
ON THURSDAY 31 AUGUST 2017 AT 6.30PM

1. Welcome to annual general meeting 72nd – CHC

John Searle was appointed Chair for the meeting

John invited attendees to stand for 1-minute silence out of respect for members who passed away in the past 12 months

Apologies:

David Mond

Matt Szylit

Howard Zeimer

Jonathan Joseph

2. Confirmation of the Minutes of 71st the AGM:

Proposed: Daniel Jenschel

Second: Joel Silver

Carried

3. Presentation of President's report

Anthony Raitman - President's report

72st AGM of the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation.

Once again, it has been an honour to serve as President of the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation this past year. I stand aside knowing that the organisation is in a strong position and that I am succeeded by a capable and competent President in Daniel Jenschel.

2017 has been another successful year for us, and I am pleased to note that we made an operating profit.

This year we have continued to innovate and trial new events and activities, while maintaining our regular schedule of events.

The Adult Education program grew out of a discussion about whether or not we should partner with the Melton Institute to return to Melbourne. In the end we decided that if we could offer quality speakers with interesting and relevant topics, people would attend regardless of the "brand". So we set about establishing our own program starting with David Solomon and Paul Forgasz which has been extremely well attended and well received.



Shabbat dinners have been a feature of our shule for a number of years. In the past few years, we have had the Inkr572 dinners and the Bnei Mitzvah dinners. This year we introduced the first of our family dinners in recent times with our scholar in residence, Rabbi Dov Lipman. The feedback to this was overwhelmingly positive. We had over 100 people attend. One of our members who did not attend, but received positive feedback commented that if they had known about the quality of the speaker, and the food to match they would have come. Of course I told that person to stay tuned and book early for the next one.

Bridge was an idea that was brought to the Board by Danny Gluck and we agreed to give it a go. To date it has been well received but will need to grow in order for it to be sustained as a core CHC activity.

Kobi and the Children's choir has been a significant achievement, and investment, for our Shule. While there were some early challenges in making this work, I think we can all see the benefit that this has had for our regular services, the Chevra, and those children who have now formed part of the CHC Children's choir. The choir under Kobi's leadership is performing next week in the Bnai Brith Jewish Eisteddfod finals after only a few short months of working together which is a great achievement.

Caulfield Shule was at the forefront of being a child safe organisation long before the Victorian Royal Commission and the Child Safe Legislation came into effect. In 2009 we were the first Shule to publish a Child Safety policy and I am pleased to inform you that we are compliant with the current child safe legislation. Training for the Board members has occurred and we have scheduled training with Tzedek for staff and volunteers in October. I am determined to also ensure that training for parents and members of our community in the coming months.

All of our successful programs have continued during the year and the number of people participating has grown. The Yom Ha'atzmaut Breakfast was a success once again, with Daniel Taub as our guest for the weekend. Tuesday Shmoozeday and Caulfield Bubs continue to thrive and our speaker's circuit at Seudah Shlishit is still the envy of the community. In fact, we plan to document as many of the talks from this program as possible so that those who do not join us on Shabbat afternoons have the chance to benefit from the quality of our speakers.

The invitation extended to Rabbi Greenberg, by the Inkr572 committee, drew an equal amount of criticism and praise from members and non-members alike. As a board we made a conscious decision to allow Rabbi Greenberg to speak and having attended the dinner, I know we made the right decision. Our younger community members were engaged in the discussion and it was the more religious members of the audience who respectfully asked questions of Rabbi Greenberg. The irrational concern that Rabbi Greenberg was seeking to advocate a gay lifestyle was just that. Irrational. He told his life story and provided a thought provoking perspective. In this day and age, we are obliged to provide young people with information and facts in order that they can make informed decisions in a supportive and respectful environment. The alternative is that they use social media as their library of facts and isolation their tool of engagement.

I can strongly commend Eli on the Bar Mitzvah program this year as I have had personal involvement. While it was disappointing that we did not have a Bat Mitzvah program last year, I am pleased to say that we will have one in 2018.

Our relationship with Hineni continues to strengthen, as demonstrated by the recent Hineni Shabbat takeover and the madrichim's involvement in our various other activities, particularly the Purim and Chanukah parties. It is also great to see that most of the madrichim for our children's program, ably led by



Tyla Chapman, are Hineni Madrichim which means that we are actively supporting and investing in the future of our youth.

When the Darchei Shalom Soup, Sandwiches and Chat initiative commenced, none of us were sure whether it could be sustained. Well, more than 12 months on, it is still going from strength to strength and I acknowledge the hard work of those involved every week.

Our regular services continue to operate and while there was a bit of a lull during winter, as is often the case, even the early morning minyan has had pretty good attendances.

The Community Centre Redevelopment continues to progress and gained a boost from the State Government with a grant of \$250,000. This has allowed us to engage project managers to take us through the next stages of development, while we approach potential benefactors for capital commitments. My thanks go first to Rodney Horin who has driven this project from its inception but also to Rachel Mihalovich who has been the driving force behind our achievements to date.

Also this year, we re-signed Rabbi Genende, Rabbi Krasnjanski, and Dov, and hopefully will gain support from you tonight to formally engage Rabbi Gedaliah Levin as Chazan Sheini. I know that the community supports this high calibre team and we thank you all for your efforts. In particular, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Rabbi Genende and cannot speak highly enough of his warmth, commitment and motivation to meaningfully engage our members and the wider Jewish Community with modern orthodox Judaism.

Turning to the Board, I want to acknowledge and thank each and every one of the board members for their support and active contribution this past year.

I don't plan to mention each of you individually tonight but want you to know that without your support, advice and commitment we wouldn't be where we are today. It is great that most of you are staying on the board. I do however wish to acknowledge that after more than 10 years of service Allen Milner has decided to retire from the Board. I only hope that he retains his role as Gabbai of the early morning minyan as he plays a pivotal role every morning of the year. I also note that Jesse Braunstein who is now living overseas will not continue on the board this year. And thank you to Michelle Gold for your support and knowledge.

Our organisation would not be the envy of all if it were not for the staff at CHC. Yael, in her role as Office Manager has really worked hard to ensure that we have a professional office, and this task was made somewhat easier due to the skill and professionalism of Sharon, Alida, Simona, Michelle and Janna. As always Danny, Eva, Marie and Bill have ensured that things behind the scenes run smoothly, and cleanly every day.

When I took on the Presidency two years ago, I spoke about us becoming more inclusive, our members becoming more actively involved and that we should act with a Yiddeshe Kop through debate and discussion.

You will be the judge of whether or not I have succeeded in those goals, but I leave feeling proud of the achievements that I have been able to lead.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the new board, especially Daniel as the new President and the new members including Baron Katranski, Keren Ludski and Tammy Lincoln, as well as the not so new returned serviceman, Howard Zeimer.



Finally, I would like to thank my family for their ongoing support over the past two years, and on behalf of us all wish you all a Shana Tova, may we all have a happy and healthy new year.

Thank you

Anthony Raitman

President

4. Presentation and adoption of the 2016/2017 financial statement

Greg Blashki – Treasurer’s Report

72st AGM of the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation

You will have noted from reading the audited financial statements that last year, which ended on 30 April, we ended up generating an operating surplus of \$61,276 which pleasingly enabled us to claw back part of the operating loss of \$146,458 in the previous year.

The profit and loss report summarises the major categories of income and expenditure. I will just briefly comment on the significant changes from the previous year:

- This year reported membership and seat rental income increased by 6%. That change was a function of a CPI pricing increase small overall changes in the number of seats rented and fluctuations in discounts, write-offs and provisions for write-offs. Collecting charges from some members remains very challenging and as of yesterday we are still trying to collect \$47,219 outstanding from last year, most of which related to seat rentals. This can be an unbelievably unpleasant role.
- Program expenses and revenue relate to the high Holiday activities including the choir and the coffee tents; providing kiddushim throughout the year, and running many other activities including the Seniors Club, Caulfield Bubs, Kids Club, Yom Ha’atzmaut breakfast, Bar- and Batmitzvah programs and various others. As I have advised previously, as much as possible we try to make each activity self-funding by charging fees to recover its costs. This year, the net cost of programs after recoveries was \$137k which was \$5k less than the previous year. Some of the more financially significant items in this area were:
 - Choir expenses for the High Holidays were \$74k which was about \$2k more than the previous year.
 - Program costs increased this year as a result of casual labour costs of about \$20,000 for the kid’s club being classified as program costs rather than included in general employee costs.
 - Our net kiddush expense dropped from \$44,000 in the previous year to \$34,000 last year as a result of a big effort by Sharon Abramahov in our office to both watch the costs and in particular seek sponsors. It has been a great job by Sharon.



- The 2017 Yom Ha'atzmaut breakfast resulted in a surplus of \$16,000 after receiving a very significant support of 15,000 from Robert Weil who also arranged for the wonderful speaker. Thank you Robert.
- The cost of repairs and maintenance was significantly lower this year because we had no major projects. You may recall that in the previous year we did major repairs to the shule roof that cost \$33k.
- You can see that our biggest expense category is employment expenses which this year cost a total of \$849k. We currently have 13 staff in full or part time roles plus we employ casuals from time to time to assist with other activities as required. The \$88,000 decrease in reported expenditure resulted from the following major factors:
 - As previously mentioned, approximately \$20,000 for kid's club casuals was re-allocated as a program expense;
 - WorkCover costs decreased by \$28,000 due to prior year refunds obtained by our accounts manager, Simona Weinstein.
 - Much of the remaining difference was due to abnormal expenses in the previous year for adjustments to leave provisions and for payments to temporary accounting staff.
- Caretaking and security expenses increased by \$22,000 during the year. Part of that resulted from the commencement of our bridge club which meets twice weekly.

The above operating results do not include the donations received or expenditure on our property redevelopment program. Up to 30 April 2017 we have incurred expenditure of \$433k which, in accordance with accounting standards, has been reported as capital work in progress in the balance sheet. This cost has been matched by donations of \$459k received up to year end.

Looking forward, in the current year we are budgeting for a small surplus of \$15,000 with no major expected changes in income or expenditure.

I would also like to report on some of our administration activities.

Last year I reported to you that we had installed a new membership database system and had employed a new accounts manager Simona Weinstein, who had made major improvements to our accounting systems. All was looking good until early this year, we received advice within a few weeks that firstly, our software supplier advised that he would not be supporting his product anymore and we would need to replace it, and secondly we found out that Simona had become extremely ill and would be away for many months.

Fortunately, often out of bad comes good. Simona and Selwyn Nadelmen found MUCH BETTER replacement software from New York called ShulCloud which we have recently installed. Secondly we are looking forward to Simona's recovery and return to work after Yom Tov.

The forced change to ShulCloud has provided us with some major improvements in our administrative processes:

- The new system has prompted a very detailed review of the membership records which were found to be in a poor state. We are now reviewing all records, eliminating duplications and obvious errors and proactively updating them.



- The new system now allows us to better communicate with members including now using one central system for sending out emails, newsletters and notices and being able to send accounts to members electronically.
- The new system provides for one integrated system to publish details of events and manage them, include all events in the shule calendar and automatically update our website which is now managed as part of the new system.
- The new system makes it much easier for members to pay their bills electronically with minimal need for manual processing.
- In the next month or so we will replace our existing website with the new ShulCloud managed site. This will also provide members with an opportunity to review their membership details and outstanding accounts.

Like all new systems, implementation has not been without its challenges. But due to the big effort made by Yael, Sharon and Alida in our office with great temporary assistance by Janna and Michelle and major support by Selwyn, we are making the administration much more reliable and efficient.

The other good news is that the new system has involved negligible cost as the software costs only a few hundred dollars per month and the only implementation costs have been for some clerical support.

Finally thanks so much to Yael and the girls in the office who despite what some think, are very diligent and motivated to do the right thing by the shule. Thanks also to Selwyn who plays a major role in managing seating, membership matters, security, property maintenance and anything else that might go wrong. And thank you to Anthony who took on the very challenging leadership role. It has been a pleasure to work with you.

G E Blashki

Hon Treasurer

31 August 2017

5. Motion to carry President's and Treasurer's reports
Proposed: Greg Blashki
Second: Anthony Raitman
Carried
6. Discussion and questions on the President's report and 2016/2017 financial statement

Jacob Perahia: Was the \$480,000 in the development fund from the 20 families? Or did it include the \$250,000 grant from Government

Greg Blashki: The Redevelopment donations to 30 April 2017 of \$459,190 did not include the \$250,000 receivable from the Victorian Government, but came from a number of families.

7. Announcement of election results

Board of Management:

President, **Mr Daniel Jenshel**

Vice President, **Mr Robert Weil**



Vice President, **Mr Selwyn Nadelman**
Hon. Treasurer, **Mr Greg Blashki**
Hon. Secretary, **Mrs Debbie Szental**
Board Member, **Mr Danny Gluck**
Board Member, **Mr Baron Katranski**
Board Member, **Mrs Vivien Lewenberg**
Board Member, **Mrs Tammy Lincoln**
Board Member, **Mrs Keren Ludski**
Board Member, **Dr Howard Zeimer**

8. Address by Chairman John Searle:

I would like to address a few comments to Anthony Raitman – a number of you know that in the position of President you are not thanked every day, unlike most organisations – shules operate differently – the President bears the brunt of people complaints – Anthony has handled and completed his role more than admirably. The Melbourne Jewish community has a grape vine – I have only heard outstanding reports. There are two important yard sticks to measure success – have a look at the position of the congregation at the end of the term of the President to when they commenced, and this shule is in a better position now. Secondly look at the succession plan – Daniel Jenschel has been elected next president – he knows what the obligation is, what the commitment is, what the work load is, coming in full of energy. When you get someone that really knows what it's all about – that goes very well for the congregation. Yisher Koach on a job well done Anthony. Daniel – congratulations.

Daniel Jenschel – Incoming President

72st AGM of the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation

I would first like to acknowledge Anthony Raitman for all the hard work he has put in as President for the last two years as well as his work on the board before that. I would further like to thank Allen Millner, Michelle Gold and Jesse Braunstein for their time on the board and the effort and dedication they have shown during this period.

It is an honor and privilege to be elected President of Caulfield Shule. Although I did not grow up in the community I have fond memories of attending Friday night services and participating in the annual pilgrimage from Bnei Akiva to Caulfield Shule on Simchat Torah day. I am passionate about the Melbourne Jewish Community and believe Caulfield shule is an integral part of the past, present and future of the broader Jewish Community. I hope to be able to build on this success going forward.

This week's torah reading is Ki Teize. The parsha focuses on many of the laws and 74 out of 613 mitzvot are listed in this week's portion. The list includes laws on marriage, divorce, burial and captivity. There is also a unique law of Ma'ake mentioned. This law requires one who owns a home with a rooftop to make a fence



around this area to prevent injury or damage. There is a commentary on this law and a metaphor used such that the rooftop is akin to our ego, our attitudes and our thoughts. The fence is a metaphor for protecting these intangible qualities and characteristics of ourselves by surrounding ourselves with role models of high caliber, high quality and people with integrity. I believe I have gathered a group of people on the board of these qualities, with the added competencies to help drive the best programs, plans and strategies for the organization and membership base. The board will now represent both experience and some generational change. A cross section of our total membership. I would like to thank each new members and those that have stayed on for their support and commitment to the shule. I hope to ring fun and enjoyment to the board as well as maintaining a strategy of growth and innovation.

At this stage of would also like to thank my wife and children who without their support I would not be able to embark on this new journey and phase of communal leadership.

Tonight is not a forum for outlining new policy platforms or strategy. All I would like to say is that I promise to leader with a policy of governance and process, to function as an ethical business model and to ensure that every decision, program, plan and objective is based around the benefits it provides to our members.

Once again thank you for this opportunity!

I would like to start by acknowledging and thanking Anthony in the last couple of months I have seen the amount of work involved this is a step up and the bench mark is there. Thank you to Jesse Braunstein, Michelle Gold and Allen Milner for all their work on the board and contribution.

It is a privilege and honour to be elected. I am encouraged and enthused to be taking on this role. Although I did not grow up in the community I have fond memories of attending Friday night services and participating in the annual pilgrimage from Bnei Akiva to Caulfield Shule on Simchat Torah day. I am passionate about the Melbourne Jewish Community and believe Caulfield shule is an integral part of the past, present and future of the broader Jewish Community. I hope to be able to build on this success going forward. I have been involved with the Jewish community over 30 years. The one thing that always stands true is my passion for Melbourne Jewish Community.

This week is Parasha is Ki Tetze. The Parasha focuses on many of the laws and 74 out of 613 mitzvot are listed in this week's portion. The list includes laws on marriage, divorce, burial and captivity. There is also a unique law of Ma'ake mentioned. This law requires one who owns a home with a rooftop to make a fence around this area to prevent injury or damage. There is a commentary on this law and a metaphor used such that the rooftop is akin to our ego, our attitudes and our thoughts. The fence is a metaphor for protecting these intangible qualities and characteristics of ourselves by surrounding ourselves with role models of high calibre, high quality and people with integrity. I believe I have gathered a group of people on the board of these qualities, with the added competencies to help drive the best programs, plans and strategies for the organization and membership base. The board will now represent both experience and some generational change. A cross section of our total membership. I would like to thank each new members and those that have stayed on for their support and commitment to the shule. I hope to ring fun and enjoyment to the board as well as maintaining a strategy of growth and innovation.



Tonight is not a platform for new policy – however I can promise my governance will be based on what is right for the member. Thank you to members for electing me. I have got big shoes to fill.

9. Election of auditors

Motion to elect Paul Chadwick as auditors

Proposed: Greg Blashki

Second: Selwyn Nadelman

Carried

10. Extension of appointment of Official of the Congregation – Gedaliah Levin

Motion to appoint Gedaliah Levin as Chazzan Sheini

Proposed: Anthony Raitman

Second: Selwyn Nadelman

Carried

11. Hatikvah

The 72nd Annual General Meeting concluded at 7.10pm

12. Refreshments