

## EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES

### FROM MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Beth Weizmann 306 Hawthorn Road, South Caulfield VIC 3162 Sunday 27 NOVEMBER 2011

Ari Heber: of Qld Jewish Community Services – MARS, Males Affected by Rape and Sexual Abuse. In Victoria, info night, and in Qld. A book called ‘Breaking the Silence’. Would like ECAJ to come up with a process of reporting of abuse, with links to recovery websites, and DVDs. Commends Manny for what he’s done.

Robin Margo: expressed concern about the use of the word ‘survivor’, as it has a general or specific meaning.

David Knoll: suggested ‘survivor of abuse’ term.

Ari Heber: prefers to say to be a thriver rather than survivor.

Danny Lamm: we will take on everything we said.

Manny Waks: is uncomfortable with the term ‘survivor’. Suggests ECAJ Yeshivah case in court next February, five other perpetrators, thousands of other victims, in Victoria are ten perpetrators and 50 victims. Also in NSW, Qld. Support for victims, but need it in action.

Josie Lacey: what is being done in schools to teach kids to come forward and not be scared?

Manny Waks: he’s not qualified to respond to know what’s in schools, but people are not keen to come forward due to the stigma.

Ari Heber: schools push stranger danger, but 90% of perpetrators are known by their victims. The best strategy is deal with in the family. Victims are scared not be believed.

Peter Wertheim: schools have responsibility to speak out.

Grahame Leonard: there was a book launch in Melbourne two weeks ago, by the Jewish Taskforce against Domestic Violence, and attended by Orthodox rabbinite, Chief Commissioner of Police, etc. 30% of crime in Victoria is domestic violence. Commends this book.

### FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE 5 MARCH 2012

**Allegations of child sex abuse in Chabad community;**

PJW: There has so far been nothing further in the media in Australia about this. The allegations have been reported overseas as though the whole Australian Jewish community was involved, not just Chabad.

Danny Lamm: When the court appearance occurs, the Age and Sun Herald will write on it. There will be other charges to be laid against others. It will keep repeating, lots of media. Yeshiva need to make clear that they will deal with these issues as the law in Australia requires.

PJW: I suggest we meet with journalists to make clear the scope of the issue, of what has been done by JCCV and ORA and others, and in alerting the community to the issue.

Danny Lamm: The events that occurred are years old.

Nina Bassat: We have endorsed the Keshet program from Israel goes to the educators, not the students, about how to handle allegations of abuse.

**FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE  
2 MAY 2012**

(In the context of a discussion about the Gonski Inquiry)

Nechama Bendet: Some background on Jewish schools in Australia. The Australian Council of Jewish Schools represents 15 schools Australia-wide, 8 in Victoria, 5 in NSW, and two in the other states. We also have three non-member schools, two in NSW and one in Victoria. In 2012, there are 8,803 school age children in Jewish schools, compared to 8,772 in 2011, about 5,000 in Victoria, 3,300 in NSW, and 500 in the other states. There are 1,732 pre-school age children in our Jewish kindergartens compared to 1,649 in 2011.

**FROM MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Beth Weizmann 306 Hawthorn Road, South Caulfield VIC 3162  
Sunday 25 NOVEMBER 2012**

**Report of Jewish Community Council of Victoria – Nina Bassat, President**

The other thing we have done is in the area of child abuse. Child abuse in Victoria is a very live issue and we needed to deal with it swiftly and effectively. We have formulated a child abuse policy which will be going to our plenum for inclusion in our policy platform

tomorrow. We made a submission to the Victorian government inquiry into handling of child abuse by religious and other organizations. It is not something we just want to make motherhood statements about and leave on the table. What we now have is a very experienced reference group of people with a lot of expertise in this area and this reference group proposes to meet with the aim of both educating and assisting the community in whatever way we can.

---

**FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE  
27 FEBRUARY 2013**

**Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**

Danny Lamm: I think we should mention also that we put in a submission to the Victorian Inquiry into Sexual Abuse of Children, or young adults. That was because Manny Waks made a statement to the Commission in which he attacked the ECAJ for a variety of things, didn't like the statement we made, didn't believe we were doing enough. He also mentioned other cases of abuse which have not been substantiated. Peter and I have taken the view that these matters are before the courts. When the courts resolve these things, we will be in a better position to comment and act. There has been a complaint from the Perth community about Waks's statement to the Commission, because there was a reference to endemic sexual abuse in Perth. But neither the Rabbis nor the school bodies support these opinions. They are aware of only two cases. One was said to be a case relating to a divorce, the mother claimed that the husband had interfered with their baby. It was thrown out of court, and the other case was also dismissed. I just want you to know that that was going on. Manny Waks emailed me that he would now again like to connect to the ECAJ. We haven't yet worked out a response but I think the view is that we wait till things become clearer with the court cases.

PJW: I think it should wait for the outcome of the Victorian inquiry too. But for the specific and quite gratuitous attacks Manny Waks made on the ECAJ, which were not even within the terms of reference, we would not have intervened in a state matter. We would have left that to the JCCV, but because of the specific attack on the ECAJ we felt compelled to respond and we did, and we will await the outcome of that inquiry before we engage any further with Manny Waks. And we'll wait for the court cases to be decided as well. One great difficulty with some of the allegations he raises like the WA ones is that we don't know if the two cases he raises are the same two cases that were thrown out. The specifics aren't there. Maybe that's understandable, but it's a bit difficult to act on something when the data is so nebulous and uncertain.

---

**FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE  
29 APRIL 2013**

**Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse**

PJW: Nothing further has eventuated. The Jewish News ran the information that the president of the Royal Commission wanted to get out to the community and it has been relayed to the community via us. The Federal hearings thus far have not as far as I recall touched our community. There has been a development in the Victorian inquiry and that was reported on in the media, but that is about all for the moment.

Nina Bassat: Peter is quite right. David Marlow and I gave evidence in the Victorian inquiry and that was reported on.

Danny Lamm: David Marlow is coming up behind us. He is the Executive Director of the JCCV. Do you want to add anything, David?

David Marlow: No, I think the questioning went well. There was no pulling down like they did with some of the other communities. They seemed to accept the answers. Manny Waks was sitting there as well as the Jewish News.

Danny Lamm: Thank you. There is a journalist from the Herald Sun who keeps bringing up stories. He is the same one I have commented on before that I find a little bit disingenuous. His name is Shannon Deery and he again ran another story and the implications affected the community. It related to a bus-driver who drove buses for Jewish day schools and who has been charged in relation to sexual abuse. Nothing to do with the Jewish community except that the victims are Jewish.

PJW: He was a bus driver at a Jewish school, but the driver was not Jewish. And the headline said "Jewish School Bus Driver"...

Nina Bassat: We have sought a meeting with Shannon Deery and with the editor because they conflate the issues constantly, and we don't know whether it is deliberate or total stupidity. In either event we have not been successful so far.

Vic Alhadeff: I am meeting with the editor of the Herald Sun. He was on the Journalists' Mission to Israel at the end of last year, courtesy of AIJAC. Damon Johnston.

Danny Lamm: Ok we will follow that up.

**FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE  
27 AUGUST 2013**

**Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse update (PJW)**

DANNY LAMM: One of the criminal prosecutions in Victoria is the case against Cyprys. It has been going on now for a couple of weeks. There is a suppression order on it and therefore we do not have anything to say. We just know that it is on. So much so that any person who testifies has to sign a document that they cannot talk about the testimony or any aspect whatsoever. It is a sexual abuse case involving events that took place some twenty years ago, and he allegedly abused several boys, allegedly. Quite separately, you might remember that as a consequence of some statements that were made to the Victorian inquiry which referred to the ECAJ, we put in a submission to the Victorian Inquiry late last year. Frankly, I can tell you on the request of the chairman of the inquiry. The position of the ECAJ and situation of national Jewry was totally misrepresented by Manny Waks and his father, and that is why we participated. Over the last few days, I received a phone call from a QC in Melbourne called Remy van de Wiel who would like to involve the ECAJ in the Royal Commission, which we already are, and in representing his client who he does not name, who he says has suffered abuse and wants us to be involved.

ROBIN MARGO: Does he want us to pay his fees?

DANNY LAMM: He hasn't yet negotiated that, but I circulated that letter to our office bearers and Peter and Robert in particular drafted a response that would not allow us to be drawn into what I think is clearly an attempt to create a problem for the ECAJ, more than the intention of helping out this barrister's client. That is my understanding. John Searle and Nina are on that committee as well, and they were very helpful. What I can say, unless John cuts me off, that at least we know that this lawyer is a QC, who is quite established, certainly has a relationship with a couple of the people who are active in raising the issue of abuse. One is Manny Waks, because he told me in conversation, "Manny Waks wants to be on my committee, but I am not doing that, I am running separately", and we also know that he is involved with someone else. We have sent a letter back to van de Wiel explaining our position. We have also written to the two institutions that have been named in Victoria, one being the Yeshiva Centre, and the other being Maccabi, setting out: a. what van der Wiel wrote, b. what our response is, c. what our suggestions are. Peter will elaborate. He spoke to Maccabi, I spoke to Yeshiva. Maccabi appreciated being informed and the way we have done it, and the Yeshiva the same.

PJW: There are two requests in van de Wiel's letter. One was that we "represent his client". We were a little puzzled about that because he is the client's QC so what the hell is he there for? We made clear that we did not think that was an appropriate request. The other aspect of it was an expression of concern, arising out of criminal proceedings that have either already concluded or are still in process, that certain people who are currently in positions of authority in the Yeshiva and Maccabi were in positions of authority in those organisations at

the time these alleged offences occurred and were derelict in their duty allegedly because they either did not respond appropriately to complaints or they did not have proper preventative process in place. And therefore, so the request goes, these people should be called upon to stand down from any positions they currently hold in those organisations and the ECAJ should be leading the charge, as it were, in calling for them to relinquish those positions. This particular letter from the QC says nothing about who those people are or what their alleged culpability is, or what the circumstances are. Nothing, no information at all. We are just expected, on the basis of a very nebulous story, to jump to their tune. We have written to Maccabi and to Yeshiva, as Danny said, and we gave them a heads-up in advance. We said “Here is a copy of the letter we got from van de Wiel. It makes certain allegations in respect of your organisation. We are recommending that you institute a due diligence process internally, if you have not already done so.” Maccabi already has done so independently and Yeshiva may already have done so as well. Our letters to Yeshiva and Maccabi also said that if you find that any of these people have not acted appropriately at the time, you should ask them to show cause why they should continue to hold their positions. And subject to what emerges from that, you should either ask them to resign or not, as the case may be. Those letters went out today. I have no doubt that our letter to van de Wiel will at some point find its way either to the media or to the Royal Commission, or both, but there is nothing in that letter that we need feel worried about in any sense. Our response is entirely appropriate. And I want to thank the people on the committee who helped to draft it.

DANNY LAMM: We will circulate it to all.

---

**FROM MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Beth Weizmann 306 Hawthorn Road, South Caulfield VIC 3162  
Sunday 24 NOVEMBER 2013**

**Response to President’s report of Dr Danny Lamm**

**Ian Samuels:** The other matter is the Royal Commission on Child Abuse, and I am sorry I did not get to read the whole report but I am querying what the ECAJ will be doing.

**Danny Lamm:** I will be brief because it is in the report. We made a submission to the Victorian inquiry. We will be involved in the Royal Commission and we issued guidelines to everybody about the Commission’s expectations and they broadly follow those that were prepared and released by the JCCV which we entirely endorsed. It is a gigantic source of distress to everybody to know things like this are happening, but the most critical thing is that it should not be a springboard to say that this is a problem endemic in the Jewish community, or sections of it, and to make up stories about things that take place in other states as was expressed about *a person* which is totally without basis whatsoever. So the ECAJ will be very active. There was

a report in the Jewish News about this just now. It did not include the fact that the ECAJ was involved with the Victorian report, so you cannot rely on reportage either.

**PJW:** The Victorian report did not in any way say anything or come to any conclusion that in any way supported the allegations that the problem was endemic throughout the Jewish community. They found certainly that there were instances that occurred within particular institutions, and that in itself is a serious enough matter, and needs to be addressed. But it needs to be addressed in a methodical way. I think that the JCCV has set the template as to how the community should respond state by state and I am hopeful so far from what I have heard at Board of Deputies meetings that something similar might occur in Sydney.

---

**FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE  
24 FEBRUARY 2014**

**Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse update**

Nina Bassat: The JCCV has been pro-active. We have gone well beyond merely speaking to the public Inquiry in Victoria. We have promoted a training program with 55 to 90 people per session signing up. The focus is on institutions dealing with children having a proper policy and procedure in place and implementing them. We have had feedback from participants saying that these programs have changed the cultural perceptions. Other organisations who are not affiliates such as Hadassah and Yeshiva are signing up to do the program.

Jason Steinberg: The Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies has embarked on a proactive campaign. We have a small sub-committee of child psychologists and other professionals. They are in the process of drafting guidelines and procedures as a base level for any organisation involved with children. We took this proactive step last month.

Robert: It is important to understand the two initiatives that have just been referred to; the JCCV and the QJBD. I think that there should be a consistency in approach between various states and, whatever consistent approach is adopted, it should be shared wherever possible with other states. I am sure something is happening in NSW but in Yair's absence we do not have the detail. I take the opportunity to ask both Nina and Jason to provide the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and the ECAJ with details of their initiatives so that they may be considered.

Nina Bassat: We have already forwarded all details on to Bettina Cass in preparation for a similar initiative in NSW.

Robert: We will obtain the information from the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and once reviewed perhaps the ECAJ may play some role in distributing materials or finding out what is happening in other states and so on.

David Knoll: As a model for non-school bodies, we could look at the guidelines adopted some years by the Council of Jewish Educations, which require compliance with child protection laws and rigorous enforcement procedures, as a condition of participation in CJES. Maybe this could be done nation-wide.

Robert: Yes, it can be but in reality CJES operates out of the JCCV, the NSWJBD and in Western Australia only because JCCV used to look after Adelaide and NSWJBD looks after Queensland or has limited involvement in QLD. The point David made is well taken. CJES has a very comprehensive scheme of operation which covers these issues amongst other things and, the ECAJ should ensure that the systems are not merely paper systems but that they actually work and are enforced.

Nina Bassat: CJES participating schools are availing themselves of the JCCV's 5 month training program.

---

**FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
TELECONFERENCE  
22 MAY 2014**

**Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse update (PJW)**

This item is on the Agenda as a reminder that at some point the spotlight of the Inquiry will shine on institutions in the Jewish community. This hasn't happened yet. Victoria through the JCCV has done a great job in preparing the community for that eventuality.

Yair has charged the Chair of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies Social Justice committee, Bettina Cass, to organise a similar round of consultations and input from experts as in Melbourne.

There has been a fresh look at JewishCare in Melbourne and Sydney in becoming the institution that provides outreach services for victims and families of victims.

JewishCare have expressed confidence in taking on responsibility they are well equipped to take on that responsibility. Things have been done informally in the past but moving forward to making things formal from this point onwards.

This is to be welcomed because the community does need to have a service provider in that area that is widely known and respected in the Jewish community.

David Knoll: There has been difficult arranging a meeting with Kevin Andrews the Minister for Social Services.

Outcome: Yair: There are connections in Sydney to assist with this. He proposed that they talk offline and suggested a joint delegation approach to discuss the matter.

There was a formal resolution passed at the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies plenum last Tuesday that a formal structure be set up to work with JewishCare in NSW as is being looked at in Victoria and to be coordinated by the ECAJ nationally to put together a national community endorsed victim support service within the infrastructure of the community. Preliminary discussions have taken place in NSW and in Victoria as well. The Jewish Board of Deputies is happy to work with the JCCV and the ECAJ.

There has been one conviction which took place last week. NSW isn't immune to this problem and needs to catch up to where Victoria is.

Danny: I had the meeting on the ECAJ's behalf with JewishCare in Victoria and they are now putting the proposal together.

Robert: The proposed national scheme should also be available if needed to the communities in QLD, SA, WA and the ACT so that if allegations emerge we can have procedures in place to deal with this.

Peter Wertheim: The contingency plan is that SA and WA and Tasmania would refer any problems or cases to JewishCare in Melbourne and the ACT and QLD would refer cases to NSW.