

EUROPEAN UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the European Assembly of the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ) held electronically via Zoom on Thursday 9 September 2022 at 17H00 BST.

Present: EUPJ Chair Sonja Guentner and the other Honorary Officers and representatives of various Constituent Members and Associate Members of EUPJ, as well as invitees as follows:

Jai Anguita (Comunidad Judía Bet Shalom Barcelona) Spain, Peter Arvai (Szim Salom Progressive Jewish Congregation) Hungary, Rabbi Charley Baginsky (Liberal Judaism) UK, Rabbi Sergio Bergman (WUPJ) Argentina, David Bernstein (Platform of Liberal Jews Switzerland) Switzerland, Rabbi Menno ten Brink (Liberaal Joodse Gemeente Amsterdam/EUPJ/ERA), Netherlands, Yael Cobano (Comunidad Judía Reformista de Madrid) Spain, John Cohen (EUPJ) UK, William Echikson (The International Jewish Center IJC), Belgium, Andre Falcao (Hehaver - Synagogue Ohel Jacob) Portugal, Fabio Benjamin Fantini (Federazione Italiana Ebraismo Progressivo (FIEP) Italy, František Fendrych (The Jewish Liberal Union in the Czech Republic ZLU) Czech Republic, Eric Frey (Or Chadasch Vienna) Austria, Deborah Grabiner (EUPJ Office) UK, Miriam Kramer (EUPJ) UK, Paul Langsford (Movement for Reform Judaism) UK, Jennifer Leonard (Comunidad Judía Progresista de Andalucía Beit Rambam) Spain, Rabbi David Maxa (Ec chajim - The Progressive Jewish Community of Prague / Jewish Community of Liberec / Central European Beit Din) Czech Republic, Celia Naval (Assemblée du Judaïsme Libéral) France, Eliza Panek (Ec Chaim Jewish Community of Warsaw) Poland, Sven Parsser (Nederlands Verbond voor Progressief Jodendom) Netherlands, David Pollak (Mosaic Jewish Community) UK, Deborah Rios Rey (Comunidad Judía Bet Januká de Andalucía) Spain, Rabbi Thomas Salamon (Westminster Synagogue) UK, Shelley Shocolinsky-Dwyer (Liberal Judaism) UK, Gordon Smith (EUPJ) UK, Carole Sterling (WUPJ) Canada, Fredy Sussman (Comunidad Judía Bnei Israel de Galicia) Spain, David Tilles (Or Hadasz – Krakow) Poland, Jesse Weil (Szim Salom Congregation) Hungary, Robert Weiner (EUPJ) UK, David Weis (Liberal Jewish Community Luxembourg Esch/Alzette) Luxembourg, Paul Winter (EUPJ) UK, Jonathan Wootliff (EUPJ) Czech Republic.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair advised that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone to the 2022 European Assembly Meeting, saying she would have preferred to have met in person but welcomed participants from all over Europe. She hoped that the next meeting of the European Assembly could be held in person or on a hybrid basis. The Chair mentioned that the meeting was being recorded for minute purposes and that the recording would be deleted as soon as the minutes were approved. The Chair reported apologies had been received from Ruth Cohen (Honorary Life President), Leslie Bergman (Honorary Life President), John Clark, David Feder, Anton Fishman, Tamás Gróf, Peter Jossi, Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild and Rabbi Jackie Tabick.

The Chair then introduced EUPJ President, Gordon Smith, who made the opening prayer. The Chair thanked GS for all he has done and continues to do for Progressive Judaism in Europe and for the support and advice he has given the Chair. The Chair then introduced John Cohen (EUPJ Vice-Chair Governance) who explained the system of voting to be implemented for resolutions using the Zoom Polling System, with the kind assistance of Deborah Grabiner.

2. Approval of Minutes of the 2021 European Assembly Meeting held via Zoom

The Chair advised that the minutes of the European Assembly Meeting held online via Zoom on 31 August 2021 were included in the EUPJ Annual Report for 2021 ("the 2021 Report") which had been made available on the EUPJ website before the meeting. In response to her request, the Chair had not received any comments or suggestions for changes to the Minutes, which were duly accepted as a correct record of the meeting and were then signed by the Chair, the resolution to approve them having been proposed by Fabio Ben Fantini and seconded by Sven Parsser.

3. Welcome by WUPJ President and Chair

The Chair introduced Carole Sterling (CS), WUPJ Chair and Rabbi Sergio Bergman (RSB), WUPJ President. CS, on behalf of herself and RSB, thanked the Chair for her leadership and commitment, welcomed and extended greetings to the European communities and to the EUPJ leadership. CS referred to the war in Ukraine, which presented a very challenging situation for the people in the region, and for our communities there, together with the communities in Belarus and Russia. The WUPJ had set up a Ukraine Crisis Committee, co-chaired by CS and Rabbi Igor Zinkov and including SG and RSB. So far over US\$2 million had been raised and WUPJ and EUPJ are thankful for all the support. The funds are being spent in a myriad of ways, including providing legal aid. CS expressed her hope that there will be Jewish life in Ukraine again and wanted to ensure that we are able to support them when that time comes. CS invited everyone to attend the WUPJ Connections conference from 3-6 May 2023 in Jerusalem and advised that Ben Fantini had agreed to be one of the Co-Chairs of the event. CS advised that this would be the first time that the WUPJ family will have come together since 2017 and hoped that the circumstances will allow us to come together for reunion, reconnection, regeneration and rebirth. CS, together with RSB, wished everyone a sweet and healthy new year and a new year of peace, and thanked them for all they do in WUPJ's holy and spiritual work. SG thanked CS and RSB for their exemplary leadership and support and, on behalf of EUPJ, acknowledged their cooperation and support. RSG wished all Shana Tova u'metuka.

4. Chair's Report

The Chair referred the meeting to the detailed Chair's Report included in the 2021 Report at page 5. The Chair then advised that she reported that she had served as the first continental EUPJ chair for the past four and half years, and can attest to the staunch commitment of its leadership to reflect the full diversity of the movement. She praised the progress that has been made regarding the composition of the Executive Board, and referred to the Search and Nominations Committee (SNC) to be set up. This was a major step to allow everyone to make their voices heard and to contribute to the development of the EUPJ in a constructive and tangible way. She encouraged everyone to engage with this committee, to volunteer to serve on it, to nominate candidates both for the committee and future leadership roles at the EUPJ and to raise any constitutional questions they had. SG emphasised the importance of delegates communicating this to their movements and congregations, which she hoped would lead to an intense and successful dialogue over the next few months to renew the leadership of the movement.

SG welcome Rabbi Thomas Salamon who has kindly volunteered to chair the SNC, who thanked the EUPJ for entrusting him with the opportunity to make a contribution to recommending nominees to become the new leadership. He shared his views on the formation of the committee and SG thanked him for his input and looked forward to moving forward on basis set out in the papers attached to the Notice of Meeting, which also had the full backing of the EUPJ Executive Board.

The Chair personally thanked EUPJ's President, Gordon Smith, for his generosity and for being a resourceful and knowledgeable sounding board. She also said that these comments extended to Leslie Bergman, Honorary Life President, who was not present but she thanked him for all his support. SG thanked John Cohen, Vice-Chair Governance, for his attention to detail and principled commitment and said she could not have done her work without him. SG thanked Deborah Grabiner, administrator, for all that she had done for the Management Committee and for the EUPJ, and said that she was the heart of our daily operations. The Chair also thanked Carole Sterling for her exemplary, empathetic and strong leadership in a time of prolonged crisis. Finally, to Robert Weiner, Vice-Chair, Organisational Development, she thanked him for the wonderful cooperation up to now and shared her optimism and good feelings for the way forward. The Chair confirmed that no other comments have been received regarding her report to date and assume

there are none. She stated that if there were comments or queries, then people were welcome to write to her or her colleagues on the Management Committee.

5. Annual Accounts for 2021

The Chair confirmed that the Finance Report was included with the Annual Report, starting on page 7 and must be read with the 2021 Examined Annual Accounts, which had been made available as a separate document. This item was led by Paul Winter, Vice-Chair Finance who reported on the most important points.

The Chair advised that the Finance Report and 2021 Accounts were quite detailed but invited questions before putting them to the meeting for approval. Jesse Weil asked about the role of the Breslauer Fund and Gordon Smith confirmed that the fund was set up by two brothers, who have supported the WUPJ and the EUPJ for many years, and was primarily to help in the Czech Republic. Bill Echikson asked about the unused funds for the Baalei Tefillah Programme. The Chair confirmed that only the funds for the outstanding final event had been returned. This event could not take place in Brussels in December 2021 due to Covid restrictions and was re-scheduled twice but for reasons outside EUPJ's control could not be reinstated within the time frame allowed by the Rothschild Foundation. SG advised that the Management Committee and the Executive Board have agreed to link the programme to other global projects of a similar nature but due to the crisis in Ukraine and worldwide, have not yet been able to re-start this successful programme.

As there were no further questions, the Chair invited the meeting to approve the Accounts – the wording of the resolution was posted on the Zoom Polling System and the resolution was proposed by Paul Winter and seconded by Jesse Weil. All delegates were given the opportunity to vote using the Zoom Polling System, which showed that the Accounts were unanimously approved.

6. Appointment of Examiner

The Chair reminded the European Assembly Meeting that, as EUPJ is a UK registered charity, the UK Charity Commission requires its annual accounts to be examined by an independent qualified accountant who issues a report. Accounting firm Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP had provided a clear report, included on page 4 of the 2021 Examined Accounts. The report shows no criticism of the accounts and that they comply with the UK's Charity Commission rules.

The Chair invited the meeting to approve the resolution to ratify the appointment of Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP as Independent Examiners of the annual accounts for 2021 and to re-appoint them as Independent Examiners for EUPJ's accounts for 2022 – the wording of the resolution was posted on the Zoom Polling System and the resolution was proposed by David Bernstein and seconded by Ben Fantini. All delegates were given the opportunity to vote using the Zoom Polling System, which showed that the resolution was approved.

7. Resolution to ratify the decision to admit The Jewish Community of Liberec as Constituent Member.

The Chair reminded the meeting that it is the Executive Board which decides upon applications for membership, which it does upon the recommendation of the Management Committee after a full due diligence, but that this is then subject to ratification by the European Assembly.

The Chair advised that in mid-2021 the EUPJ received an application from The Jewish Community of Liberec, based in Liberec in the Czech Republic, requesting to be admitted as a Constituent Member of the EUPJ and referred to profile of The Jewish Community of Liberec on page 27 of the Annual Report.

The meeting was advised that the EUPJ Management Committee carried out a full due diligence and review in respect of this community, but was already aware and knowledgeable of this

community as Rabbi David Maxa had been involved with and supportive of this community for some time. Rabbi Maxa, is now the rabbi of the Liberec community and provided a detailed rabbinic report, which was approved by Rabbis Rothschild and Tabick. The EUPJ was also provided with all the documentation and information which EUPJ normally requires from prospective members. The Chair confirmed that the EUPJ Management Committee unanimously endorsed this application and that the Executive Board, at its meeting on 22 March 2022, unanimously voted to admit The Jewish Community of Liberec as a Constituent member.

The Chair invited the European Assembly to ratify the decision of the Executive Board to admit The Jewish Community of Liberec as a member, and the following resolution was posted on the Zoom Polling System “ –Resolved that the decision by the EUPJ Executive Board on 22 March 2022 to appoint The Jewish Community of Liberec, based in Liberec, in the Czech Republic as a Constituent Member of the EUPJ, with effect from that date, in terms of Section 4 of the Constitution, be and is hereby ratified in terms of the proviso to Section 4.2 of the Constitution”.

The resolution was proposed by Robert Weiner and seconded by Sven Passer. All delegates were given the opportunity to vote using the Zoom Polling System, which showed that the resolution was unanimously approved. The Chair welcomed Rabbi Maxa who was attending the meeting and thanked him for his inspirational work. The meeting wished the community Mazel tov.

8. EUPJ Succession Planning Proposal

The Chair pointed out that the meeting had already discussed points regarding to this proposal, which had been unanimously accepted by the Management Committee and the Executive Board. She hoped that everyone had taken the opportunity to read and consider the Succession Planning Document, attached to the Notice of Meeting, as well as the proposed Terms of Reference for the Search & Nomination Committee (SNC) and the proposed Deed of Amendment to the Constitution.

The Chair advised that the Succession Proposal sets out the objectives of the Management Committee and the Executive Board in regard to EUPJ leadership, and that these are to ensure that we recruit a cross representation of people to replace the current leadership which is truly representative of our diverse European communities and who reflect that diversity, in geography, gender and age.

At a first stage, the meeting was invited to help in identifying people to work with Rabbi Salamon on the SNC, and who themselves reflect this diversity and who have the knowledge and ability to identify candidates so that a comprehensive cross section of EUPJ membership can be brought into the process leading to appointments by next April. The Chair thanked those people who had already expressed a willingness to join the SNC but more were encouraged, especially younger and female volunteers.

The meeting was informed that Robert Weiner and Sonja Guentner would make themselves available to, and actively assist, the SNC as much as possible so that they have all the help and assistance they need. The Chair also encouraged all delegates not to wait to be contacted but to make any proposals and suggestions directly to the SNC or to herself or Robert Weiner. Before the matter was put to the vote the meeting was asked if there were any questions but none were raised.

The proposal was put to the vote but as the Zoom Polling System limits the number of words which can be used, the resolution was split in to three parts. The meeting was asked if they would vote on each part, but all three would be considered as one resolution

The full wording of the resolution was contained in Item 7 of the Notice (page 35 of the Annual Report) but Part 1 read as follows “ –Resolved that, the Succession Planning Document attached to the Notice calling the 2022 Annual General Meeting of the EUPJ European Assembly be approved”. Part 2 read as follows:- “Resolved that this meeting approve the appointment of the Search and Nominations Committee on the terms and conditions set out in the Succession Planning Document and under the Terms of Reference set out in Schedule 1 thereof”. Lastly, Part 3 reads as follows: “Resolved that the Constitution of the EUPJ be and is hereby amended as provided for in Schedule 2 of the Succession Planning Document.” The resolution was proposed by Jesse Weil and seconded by Sven Passer. The Zoom Polling system showed that whole resolution was overwhelmingly approved (as proposed in Item 8 of the Notice of Meeting).

9. EUPJ Officers and Board Members

The Chair advised that the terms of office of certain of the Officers of the EUPJ would end at the meeting and some were entitled to be re-appointed for additional terms. She advised that appointments to the Executive Board and other offices are for two year terms, with a maximum of three 2 year terms in any one role. Some appointments need to be by election by European Assembly, some are rights given to certain members, some are ex officio appointments and some are made by the Executive Board itself.

The Chair advised that direct appointments to the Executive Board by Constituent Members where they are the sole Constituent Member in a country, or otherwise have specific rights of appointment under the constitution, do not require to be voted on, but were announced to the meeting –

- By FIEP, the Italian federation, - Fabio (Ben) Fantini in February 2022 to replace Joyce Bigio;
- By UpJ, the German union, Irith Michelsohn also in February 2022 to replace Sandra Losch
- By Abraham Geiger College – Rabbi Edward Van Voolen for a third term;
- By Leo Baeck College – Anton Fishman for his/ second term;

The Chair then advised that board representation for countries with more than one member and no national union, are made by the Executive Board itself, in its discretion but after consulting the member communities. The Executive Board has made the following appointments –

- In respect of The Czech Republic, Jonathan Wootliff; and
- In respect of Poland, which now has 2 Constituent Members, Prof Stanislaw Krajewski on the joint recommendation of both our Constituent Members in Poland.

The Chair expressed her hope that the Executive Board will be able to appoint representatives for Belgium and Spain in the near future.

10 Rabbinic Matters

The Chair referred to the detailed reports for the European Rabbinic Assembly (ERA), the European Beit Din (EBD) and the Central European Beit Din (CEBD) that were included in the Annual Report on pages 12, 13 and 14 respectively. No questions were raised.

11. Brussels Office Report

The Chair advised that a full report on the activities of the Brussels Office was included in the Annual Report on page 11, the Chair pointing out that this was the annual assembly meeting of the EUPJ and not that of the EUPJ Stichting. However the Chair reported that

the EUPJ Stichting, based in Amsterdam, is now being chaired by Rabbi Menno ten Brink. He joins with the EUPJ Chair in acknowledging and thanking Leslie Bergman for all his commitment to the project and for his vision in promoting EUPJ's engagement on the continent and with the European Commission.

The Chair advised that in the summer of 2022, the Human Rights Agency of the European Commission invited applications to conduct its third Anti-Semitism Survey and the EUPJ Foundation was approached by a large research firm to bid for this project - this is a major project and a great opportunity for our movement. The Chair was happy to report that we were successful in our bid and that the project is getting underway now and EUPJ members would be kept informed of its progress. The first tentative date for a Zoom Information Meeting is 19 October and EUPJ will reach out to members when the survey gets underway to ensure the broadest participation. Registration details will be released as soon as these become available.

12. Any Other EUPJ Reports

The Chair advised no other reports had been received.

13. Any Other Business

The Chair advised that, except as set out below, the Honorary Secretary had not been notified by any Member within the relevant time period of any matter or issue to put before the European Assembly.

The Chair invited Robert Weiner (RW) to address the meeting on two points. Firstly - a) Leo Hepner Award – RW advised that the first award of €5000 was granted to FIEP who established an education programme from which the community still benefits today. It is hoped that Leo's legacy will be long remembered in Italy. Regina Hepner has recently advised EUPJ that she is keen to launch a new award later this year with a focus on innovation in the Jewish World and RW asked delegates to look out for the award launch and start thinking about suitable projects to expand Leo's legacy. Secondly - b) It Was RW's honour to say a few words about Leslie Bergman, Honorary Life President, who has now retired from the Management Committee. Leslie has served both the WUPJ and EUPJ for over twenty years and his roles have included being Vice-Chair Finance of the WUPJ as well as being a remarkable President of the EUPJ, always undertaking the tasks with the very best interests of Progressive Judaism in mind. He has been instrumental in many successful projects for decades, most recently establishing the EUPJ's office in Brussels which developed into our European operation. Leslie was rightly elected as an EUPJ's Life President, a position RW hoped he would hold for many years to come so that he can share wisdom and experience for the future. RW, on behalf of EUPJ, thanked Leslie for his service to the organisation.

The Chair handed over to David Weis (DW). DW reported that he has been involved in a group who have developed Limmud Europe to manage different Limmud events across the continent, particularly after to Brexit in order to receive funding from the European Commission, and a grant of €500k has been awarded. The programme will contain online Limmuds as well as in person events and is based on Progressive Judaism. The first event will be Limmud Rhine, based on Rhineland Jews. Everyone is welcome. The website is not open yet but details will be circulated. The Chair thanked DW for this wonderful initiative.

The Chair then thanked John Cohen and Deborah Grabiner for all their work in organising this online meeting of the European Assembly. She also urged anyone with any questions or queries to contact the EUPJ Management Committee. The Chair thanked all present for attending the 2022 European Assembly Meeting and declared the meeting closed at 18:16 pm (BST).

The President, Gordon Smith, then thanked Sonja Guentner for all her hard work on behalf of the EUPJ and WUPJ.

.....
Chair of the European Assembly Meeting