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Minutes of Biennial General Meeting

Held: 5.15pm on Tuesday 10 May 2016
 Neil Forsyth Room
 Level 1
 205 William St, Melbourne

Attendees: Glenn McGowan QC (Chairman), Lucy Line, Daye Gang, Carlo Dellora,
 Shannon Finegan, Campbell Thomson

MINUTES

	AGENDA TOPIC	
1	Acknowledgement of traditional owners Apologies – Justice Bromberg; Murray McInnis; Michael Cahill	
2	Minutes of previous BGM 14 May 2013 and last monthly meeting 12 April 2016 both tabled and accepted	
3	Matters arising from last minutes – nothing arising	
	Reports	

4	Report from President – report received. Report read in the absence of the attendance of Justice Bromberg (his Honour is on leave)	Bromberg
5	Reports from Vice Presidents – nil	
6	Report from Chairman – report received and circulated	McGowan

<p>7</p>	<p>Report from Treasurer – report received and circulated.</p> <p>Discussion: safeguards for payments authorization. There should be a policy that for payments of a certain amount over a minimum, or there should at least be an email exchange with another executive member authorizing it. Payments over a certain amount should not unilaterally be approved.</p> <p>This ties in with incorporation – the constitution needs to be amended to conform with the Associations Incorporation Act.</p> <p>Glenn has found this difficult as the constitution is atypical. If we incorporated, donations may be tax deductible and this may encourage donations.</p> <p>We are not contemplating charity status. That is too hard. The absence of an identifiable entity makes it difficult to claim the deduction. It is easier when donating to an entity rather than a committee.</p> <p>The other reason is insurance. If we hire a venue for a function, the person booking is at risk. So it makes sense for an incorporated association take the risk.</p> <p>McGowan to approach Tony Lang regarding this – seeking advice about the utility of incorporation. The Asian Lawyers Association has incorporated.</p> <p>Is it worth actually going down this route? What is the appetite from people seeking tax deductibility.</p> <p>There doesn't seem to be much.</p> <p>The more important aspect is insurance.</p> <p>If we incorporate, this will be good discipline for accounts. Being incorporated will cause us to be more thorough.</p> <p>New policy adopted - we need 2 signatures from the executive for expenses over \$200 from now on.</p>	<p>Dellora</p>
	<p>Elections of executive members</p> <p>All nominated members declared elected. All current members of the executive have been reelected and continue to serve.</p>	

	Strategy (below)	
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<p>Strategy planning for 2016 and 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where is the organization going? - What are its goals? - What are its strengths? - What are its weaknesses or areas for development? <p><u>Discussion re strategy:</u></p> <p>Issues of interest to ICJ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offshore detention – HCA challenge – it’s a national change. HCA has authorized indefinite detention, has not outlawed offshore detention. Both sides of politics support it. 2. Police powers in NSW. 3. Engaging more with students/young people. 4. More communication within the organization between the younger people and the senior people in the organization. 5. Indigenous incarceration – a blight on our community. 6. Media presence – facebook, survive law. 7. Responsiveness to breaking issues in a timely way. 8. Interaction with ICJ NSW – increasing it? Skype conferences? <p>Questions for thought:</p> <p>How can the ICJ be useful with its specific resources?</p> <p>Would comparative law analysis from other countries re offshore detention be helpful?</p> <p>What is our relationship with ICJ Australia? Good.</p> <p>With ICJ NSW? Monthly connections.</p> <p>How do we make student involvement a core part of the organisation’s activities? The student project last year was their own idea. It was a great idea and the project was good. Could we set up a prize for a research essay (topic of our setting), the essays to be written by a team of people? The team could speak at a meeting/function later. We could compile the ideas into a report. Innovation and creativity of ideas could be a focus. To tap into the students, could we advertise ourselves on “Survive Law” website.</p> <p>We also have a facebook presence. The administrator employee could administer this and make it more up-to-date in future.</p>	<p>All</p>
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	<p>ICJ NSW – would we benefit from having a telecon or Skype hookup with ICJ NSW to see how we could work together? The group is supportive of this. We can voice what issues we are keen on and see, if there is, will to work on it jointly.</p> <p>Should we have internships to inspire young people to be involved? We could trial Jasmine and Rob as interns.</p> <p><u>*We should put these items in the next agenda and revisit them.</u></p>	
	Governance/administrative matters	
10	<p>Administrative assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The question of a paid administrative assistant - It is worth paying \$100 a week to a student. - March to October are the months this person is expected to be active. - Trial this for 3 months with Jasmine? - Shannon to supervise her. - Things like membership renewals are time consuming. - New policy: Jasmine to be paid \$100 for the next 3 months, supervised by Shannon, to do administrative tasks for ICJ. After 3 months, Shannon to report. 	Finegan

11	<p>A policy about monthly meeting attendance of executive members</p> <p>*New policy: executive members should strive to attend 6 of 10 monthly meetings per year.</p> <p>Discussion about how to make meetings more attractive to attend – no need necessarily to keep talking about administrative matters at each monthly meeting. We could discuss some of these things at weekly executive meetings and make time instead for interesting speakers at the monthly meetings in order to reduce repetition in the monthly minutes.</p>	Line
12	<p>Succession planning – governance training for executive members</p> <p>There should be some notes to help people step into vacancies.</p> <p>Gang and Dellora voice how helpful this would have been when they joined the executive.</p> <p>It may be as simple as saying “read these resources”.</p> <p>Roles should be clearly defined.</p> <p>Meeting resolves that each executive member drafts a short document (e.g. 1 page) about what their role entails and within the next month, show it to each other at the weekly meeting (not a monthly meeting). Ultimately, this will be made into a handbook.</p>	Gang
13	<p>Incorporation and modification of constitution</p> <p>- discussed above under “treasurer’s report”.</p>	McGowan
	<p>Submissions, articles, proceedings, projects</p>	
14	<p>Judicial independence project – held over.</p>	

15	Sri Lanka Evidence Project – evidence gathering weekend held recently	Thomson
16	<p>Junior Lawyer projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an issue with morale. - In Feb 2016, 4 projects were decided on. They were: 1. Indigenous incarceration (nothing has been done – how to get indigenous lawyers and law students involved?); 2. gender and radicalization (re affecting Muslim women); 3. Video project (multimedia project); 4. Rule of law/human rights (multimedia project). - The first 2 projects involve seeking out the right ppl to be involved. - The key issues involve morale and personnel. - The indigenous incarceration one is most aligned with our focus and most pressing. - Perhaps 4 projects is too much. Perhaps one or two should be scrapped or not progressed. 	Finegan
17	<p>Sponsoring foreign human rights lawyer to undertake the Bar Readers’ Course</p> <p>We are proceeding with a reader. We have approval from the Bar.</p> <p>We have people who can mentor the individual. Billeting has not yet been organized. We will find a volunteer. If we have trouble, we will put it on the website. This will happen in September, during the readers’ course. We hope to hold the fundraising dinner while he is here so he can speak.</p> <p>It would be good if he were videoed testifying how beneficial the opportunity was.</p>	McGowan
18	General business – none.	

Meeting closed at 6:50pm.

Policies that were adopted at this meeting:

1. The ICJ needs 2 signatures from the executive for expenses over \$200 from now on. This fosters accountability. For online payments where one authorization is required, there must be emails exchanged with at least one other executive member authorizing the payment via email confirmation to the person proposing the payment.
2. Jasmine Alcon to be paid \$100 for the next 3 months, supervised by Shannon, to do admin. After 3 months, Shannon to report on success.
3. Executive members should strive to attend at least 6 of 10 monthly meetings per year.

Things to follow up:

- Glenn to approach Tony Lang re incorporation. Report at the June meeting.
- Executive members to draft short documents regarding the nature of their role to assist with role handover. Documents to be shown to other members at a forthcoming weekly meeting.
- Strategy should be revisited at June meeting to consider "action items" from the ideas generated at this meeting.
- Shannon to handover administrative tasks to Jasmine and Carlo to authorize weekly payments to Jasmine. Shannon to report at the August meeting to review Jasmine's position.

Council meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at 5.15pm in the Neil Forsyth Room, 1st floor, Owen Dixon Chambers East, 205 William St, Melbourne.

The remaining meetings for 2016 are:

- 14 June
- 12 July
- 9 August
- 13 September
- 11 October
- 8 November
- 13 December (which will serve as the Planning Meeting for 2017)