

Annual General Meeting Minutes

(Saturday 06.11.2021)

Held online via Zoom

Chairperson (Sarah O'Donnell, President)

Present (Melissa Adam, Helen Baker, Sue Bradshaw, Ray Bullen, Coral Campbell, Dorothy Connop, Vanessa Crothers-James, Alannah Dore, Kerri Douglas, Ying Du, Judy Dunn, Susan Emmett, Liza Farquhar, Susan Fitzgerald, Karen Freeman, Wendy Grenfell, Anne Houghton, Michelle Jose, Carolyn Lunt, Kay Margetts, Nichola Marriott, Sandra McCarthy-Wilson, Avril McHugh, Kylie McLennan, Andrea Nolan, Sarah O'Donnell, Sophia Patitsas, Bridie Raban, Diana Van Rhine, Maree Wiggins, Helen Wursthorn)

Observers (Alexandra Heard, Engagement Coordinator, Liz Potter, Program Manager/minute-taker)

Meeting Open (11.03am)

Meeting Close (12.21pm)

(Item No.)	(Item)	(Notes)
1	Open Meeting and Acknowledgment of Country	Alannah Dore opened the meeting at 11.03am with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed members to the 2021 AGM.
2	Apologies	Caroline Cockram, Kevin Fell, Liz Gower, Anne Lomax, Susan Lopez, Heather (nee McCann) Carr, and June Waites.
3	Welcome by the President	Alannah explained the protocols of the online meeting processes. Alannah noted two proxy votes have been received.
4	Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting held on 7 November 2020	<p>Ethical Investments was raised last year in General Business. The minutes will be amended. Alannah noted Carolyn Lunt has raised this issue repeatedly over many years and acknowledged Carolyn, Maree Wiggins, Bridie Raban and Ray Bullen's contributions and research in this complex area. AGECS will organise a presentation to members and prepare a policy for consideration by Council in 2022.</p> <p>Motion (4.1): That the minutes of the AGM meeting held on 7 November 2020 be amended to include the discussion on Ethical Investments in Business Arising.</p> <p>Moved: Alannah Dore Seconded: Carolyn Lunt</p>

		<p>PASSED</p> <p>Motion (4.2): That the amended minutes of the AGM meeting held on 7 November 2020 be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings.</p> <p>Moved: Wendy Grenfell Seconded: Dorothy Connop PASSED</p>
5	Business Arising from Previous Minutes	Alannah Dore provided an Ethical Investments update.
6	Additional Items for General Business	None
7	Correspondence	None
8	Annual Reports for 2021	
8.1	President's Report	<p>Alannah Dore spoke to her written report. The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies turned 99 years of age this year. The year has been marked with numerous and diverse advancements and professional development avenues to ease the organisation into an eventful and unforgettable 100th year. At the forefront of continued developments, a plan for the coming years has begun to be implemented enabling improved equity and access to AGECS projects, programs and volunteer opportunities, increased geographical reach, advancing communication between Council members, and the broader Early Childhood sector. In addition we present a new identity with AGECS rebranding. This progress has been implemented by the AGECS Council despite the Council having had another challenging year with many unexpected events on top of COVID lockdowns. Alannah thanked the strong and committed members of Council and highlighted the contribution of Liz Potter and Alexandra Heard in delivering on Council's vision, supporting decisions that are technologically efficient, particularly in extending AGECS's online platforms, enabling broader accessibility and resources for members and receiving feedback from members via event surveys. Alannah thanked Trevor Jewell, book-keeper, for his ongoing committed and consistent service. Alannah thanked Ray Bullen for his dedication to and willingness to support AGECS. Alannah thanked Judy Dunn, Coral Campbell, Sue Emmett, Bridie Raban and Maree Wiggins' support as regional representatives and Coral's additional contribution as Chair of the Fellowship Grant program. Alannah invited general members to consider joining committees of interest, noting the committees' vital input into projects and programs. Alannah noted the work done during the year to create policies and strengthen technology to increase the professionalism as AGECS grows. 7 events were held online during the year with over 100 participants each together with some smaller, more targeted events for localised programs. Alannah highlighted the launch of the</p>

		<p>AGECS Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) acknowledging the contribution of AGECS's Aboriginal Community Representatives: Kerri Douglas, Kay Mondon, and Tristian Williams, together with Consultant AJ Williams-Tchen's invaluable support and input in advising AGECS during this process. Alannah thanked Steve Young, RAP Designer for producing a beautiful document. Alannah noted with the Centenary in 2022 that AGECS is entering a new era, reflected in the recent rebranding that honours AGECS historical roots whilst embracing an impactful future. AGECS will continue to inspire, empower future generations of the ECE community.</p> <p>A presentation demonstrated the new rebranding and website, with colours being inspired by the Victorian bush. Alannah noted the delivery of online events during COVID with over 1,100 event registrations with over 90% satisfaction from participants including Sessional Kindergarten teachers and assistant educators, long day care teachers and educators, family day carers, DET officials, PSFOs and academics, reaching regional Victoria and internationally. AGECS has strengthened its technology including an integrated database allowing improved member communication, new online platforms, online membership payments via PayPal and the move to online events. Online events are also recorded providing a library of resources for members to access. Internal and external governance has been strengthened with development of policies, documentation of procedures, clarity of role and position descriptions, making documents available and transparent, and the creation of two specialised roles (Events Coordinator to Engagement Coordinator and Administration Officer to Program Manager) to reflect these expanded roles. Feedback and suggestions from members has been appreciated in relation to committee side of Council. Alannah provided an update on the RAP confirming that AGECS will continue to reflect, to listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, to provide a voice for those voices and to make changes to the way things have been done as required.</p>
8.2	The AGECS Financial Report	<p>Avril McHugh, Honorary Treasurer, highlighted from the audited financial statements prepared by Nexia Melbourne. Avril thanked Ray Bullen for his assistance and advice in setting the financial strategy of AGECS and guiding its investments. AGECS is in a much stronger financial position than last year and has over \$1.7 million in assets which grew by \$200,000 over the financial year. AGECS has spent more on professional development activities than it received in income because of the strength of the investment portfolio and assists AGECS in retaining its valuable charitable status. Trevor Jewell was acknowledged for his efficiency in providing reports and managing payments and Ray Bullen for his expertise and knowledge have aided Avril as Treasurer for the last 10 years. Avril noted that this will be her last presentation as Honorary Treasurer and thanked Presidents Alannah and Maree for their support and encouragement during her term as Honorary Treasurer.</p> <p>Bridie Raban highlighted that Avril's report noted a profit instead of a loss. Motion (8.2.1): That an amendment to the Honorary Treasurer's report noting the overall loss rather than profit be accepted.</p>

		<p>Moved: Avril McHugh Seconded: Bridie Raban PASSED</p> <p>Motion (8.2.2): That the Auditor’s Reports 2020/2021 as circulated be accepted.</p> <p>Moved: Avril McHugh Seconded: Maree Wiggins PASSED</p> <p>Motion (8.2.3): That Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd be appointed as auditor of The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies for 2021/2022.</p> <p>Moved: Avril McHugh Seconded: Wendy Grenfell PASSED</p> <p>Alannah thanked Avril for her final report and her commitment of 10 years of service as Honorary Treasurer and Council Member.</p>
<p>8.3</p>	<p>Foundation of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies Report</p>	<p>Ray Bullen spoke on behalf of Foundation Chair Hugh Hodges. Ray noted the exceptionally challenging year due to COVID and its implications on the share market, reflected in the changing value of investments. Ray noted the Foundation’s strategy to invest for long-term, to gain advantages of dividend and interest income. Ray noted that in 2020/21 the Foundation distributed more in Warrawong and Forest Hills grants than it received in income, as it was trying to maintain distributions to organisations at a time when most philanthropic organisations had reduced their distributions. Ray noted the magnificent job done by the Advisory Committees in advising the Trustees about which organisations to support. Ray noted a unique problem arising, where many grants given in the last 2 years had not been able to be spent due to COVID and the Foundation is negotiating with those organisations in how to better use those funds. Ray noted the Foundation had for the second year dispersed about \$100,000 more than it earned and estimates a similar expenditure next year. The Foundation’s growth in assets from \$7.85 m to \$9 m has occurred despite a \$400,000 distribution to enable the Foundation to continue to support the ECE profession. Ray noted the retirement of long-term Trustee Glenys Severin, 20 years association with AGECS including 15 years as a Trustee. AGECS Council will nominate a replacement. Ray said they were proud to be Trustees and to assist AGECS and the ECE community, develop through a difficult two years.</p> <p>Alannah thanked the Trustees on behalf of the ECE profession for their ongoing dedication and to the Foundation for providing helpful and transformational grant funding.</p> <p>Motion (8.3.1): That President, Financial and Foundation reports be accepted.</p>

		Moved: Sandra McCarthy-Wilson Seconded: Coral Campbell PASSED
9	General Business	
9.1	100 Year Anniversary Celebrations update	<p>Alannah introduced Wendy Grenfell, representative of 100 Year Anniversary Committee and long-time editor of AUDAX. Wendy provided an overview of plans for 2022 including: special mini grants up to \$5,000 for members to use in their centres; \$200 awards in the form of vouchers for members nominated for demonstrating educational excellence; 100 years anniversary of AGECS Early Childhood Education Excellence event; a special edition of AUDAX showcasing the career stories of 100 ECE professionals who have made a significant impact on children and their families in the early years, particularly in the areas of disadvantage and vulnerability over the last 100 years which will become a history of Early Childhood.</p> <p>Bridie Raban raised the option of providing \$500 grants for resources rather than \$200. The Committee will consider it in its budget. Ray Bullen affirmed that AGECS needs to spend more on professional development than it receives in income.</p>
9.2	Ethical investing	<p>Carolyn Lunt spoke about the urgent need for AGECS to invest ethically for the future of the planet and children in the face of catastrophic climate change events. Alannah thanked Carolyn for raising the issue and confirmed that AGECS will prepare a policy in 2022 which will guide AGECS actions. Kay Margetts noted that members have expertise for Council to use.</p>
10	Elections	<p>Election of The AGECS Council Members</p> <p>Alannah Dore advised that the AGECS Constitution states that Council members must be under 73 years of age.</p> <p>Motion (10.1): That current nominations will include candidates who are older than 72 years for 2022.</p> <p>Moved: Alannah Dore Seconded: Sarah O'Donnell PASSED</p> <p>Motion (10.2): That the appointment of Office Bearers be held via a Zoom Council meeting within the next 10 days from today's AGM and current Office Bearers remain in their positions until new Office Bearers are nominated and elected.</p> <p>Moved: Alannah Dore Seconded: Maree Wiggins PASSED</p> <p>Alannah Dore advised that Alexandra Heard, general member, has been appointed as the Returning Officer and will chair the elections.</p>

		<p>Returning Officer advised that all Council members are stepping down. There are 19 positions available, however not all positions need to be filled. Returning Officer called for nominations. Nominations are: Helen Baker (nominated by Wendy Grenfell, seconded by Gillian Shelley), Alannah Dore (nominated by Sarah O'Donnell, seconded by Nichola Marriott), Sue Emmett (nominated by Sarah O'Donnell, seconded by Maree Wiggins), Liza Farquhar (nominated by Sarah O'Donnell, seconded by Nichola Marriott), Wendy Grenfell (nominated by Dorothy Connop, seconded by Gillian Shelley), Sandra McCarthy-Wilson (nominated by Sarah O'Donnell, seconded by Maree Wiggins), Nichola Marriott (nominated by Sarah O'Donnell, seconded by Wendy Grenfell), Sarah O'Donnell (nominated by Wendy Grenfell, seconded by Nichola Marriott), Sophia Patitsas (moved by Sarah O'Donnell, seconded by Wendy Grenfell), and Bridie Raban(nominated by Kay Margetts, seconded by Carolyn Lunt).</p> <p>Motion (10.3): That the nominations be voted on together. Moved: Alexandra Heard Seconded: Dorothy Connop PASSED</p> <p>Motion (10.4): That all the successful nominees be accepted as Council Members for the 2021/22 year by vote of show of hands. Moved: Alexandra Heard Seconded: Maree Wiggins PASSED</p> <p>Returning Officer handed the Chair back to Alannah Dore.</p> <p>Alannah welcomed the new Council members and acknowledged Council members who are retiring.</p>
11	Awards	<p>Alannah Dore presented awards to Avril McHugh Honorary Treasurer and Maree Wiggins Past President for their long-term and committed service to AGECS. Alannah noted Maree's continuing involvement with the RAP Working Group and the Ethical Investing Committee.</p> <p>Sarah O'Donnell presented award to Alannah for serving for two years as President. Sarah thanked Alannah for leading the Council with kindness and grace, enabling AGECS to move forward and for her hard work on the RAP.</p>
12	Close	<p>Alannah Dore thanked members for attending, noting her appreciation of members' feedback during the year. Meeting closed at 12.21pm.</p>