

## Annual General Meeting Minutes

Monday 07.11.2022 held online via Zoom, opened at 6.03pm

(Item No.)	(Item)
	The AGM was preceded by a Keynote Presentation from 5pm: In 2022 the Big Steps Campaign of the United Workers Union saw educators from around Australia 'shut down the sector' with industrial action in many privately run long day care settings. Many staff in stand-alone services had limited understanding of the Big Steps Campaign, and this limited understanding was shared by the AGECS Council. In order to bridge this gap, AGECS offered the Keynote Presentation of the AGM to Big Steps delegates, so that we could learn more about the campaign and ways in which other early childhood professionals could help.
1	Welcome to Country by Auntie Di Kerr
2	Present: AJ Williams-Tchen, Alannah Dore, Alexandra Heard, Avril McHugh, Bridie Raban, Carolyn Lunt, Dorothy Connop, Emma Boag, Felicity Morley, Kym Gardnir, Laura Pearce, Leanne Mits, Liza Farquhar, Louise Fitzpatrick Leach, Maree Wiggins, Melissa Adam, Nichola Marriott, Nicole Talarico, Ray Bullen, Sandra McCarthy-Wilson, Sarah Gandolfo, Sarah O'Donnell, Sinead O Conaill, Sophia Patitsas, Sue Emmett. Also present: Liz Potter (minute-taker), Narelle Wilson (AGECS bookkeeper) Apologies: Coral Campbell, Wendy Grenfell, Annie Lomax, Joan Waters, Andrew Wehrans (Nexia)
3	Welcome by President, Sarah O'Donnell
4	Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 MOTION 4.1: That the minutes of the AGM held on 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings Moved: Nichola Marriott, Seconded; Sue Emmett. CARRIED
5	Business Arising from Previous Minutes: Ethical investing – a online session was held in April 2022 with presentations from uEthical and Evans and Partners for members to learn more about Ethical Investing. AGECS Ethical Investing committee (Alannah Dore, Sophia Patitsas, Bridie Raban and Maree Wiggins) then reviewed and commented on a draft policy which was reviewed by the Finance Committee. The Investment policy, which was adopted by Council in October and is available on the website, will allow Council to move forward in this area. Sarah thanked the Program Manager and the Ethical Investments Committee for their work.
6	Additional Items for General Business: 100 Years of Excellence Awards recipients
7	Correspondence: no official correspondence
8	Annual Reports 2021/2022 8.1 President's Report Sarah outlined that it has been a busy year for AGECS. Sarah expressed gratitude to past Presidents Maree Wiggins and Alannah Dore who have led AGECS to a strong foundational



point from which the 2022/23 Council could focus on the future, resulting in the Strategic Plan process. AGECS is a small committee comprised mainly of people who are working full-time in Early Childhood in areas where educators are requiring a lot of support. The process identified that AGECS could not function being all things to all people but needed to be clear on its strategic direction and how we can add the most value. The first commitment was increasing the budget to see what was required to run as a professional organisation with a team that was able to support Council behind the scenes. AGECS committed additional time to the Program Manager and Events Coordinators roles to ensure AGECS operates professionally, already making a significant difference in our presentation and communications which has been noticed by members. Council engaged Melissa Eastwood to drive the Strategic Plan process, with the outcome being the question: when did we truly engage with our community? Council has therefore made a commitment in 2023 to genuinely engage, to enable voices to be heard, which will then allow Council to make the best decisions about how AGECS can help the EC community and be an organisation with heart. Sarah thanked Council members who contributed their time for the Strategic Planning process. As AGECS heads into a new year, Council continues to be committed to the RAP, expressing the hope that members have enjoyed the RAP series, guided by AJ Williams-Tchen, our Aboriginal Consultant. These presentations are available on the website. Sarah expressed her gratitude to the RAP committee and thanked the 100 Years Anniversary committee lead by Alexandra, culminating in a special event to thank Council members for their contributions over the last 100 years and inviting members to come with us on the journey for the next 100 years. The special edition of AUDAX is a beautiful document that records our history and the stories. AGECS has accepted an Apiary Fellowship invitation to invest in Alexandra's leadership development, which will result in AGECS innovating and moving forward professionally. Sarah thanked the Finance and Ethical Investments committees for their work on the Finance and Investment policies. Sarah also thanked the amazing Council members and expressed her gratitude to Trustees and the members of the Warrawong, Forest Hill and Fellowship committees for the grants they disperse. Sarah thanked Trevor Jewel our hardworking bookkeeper who has stepped down, and introduced Narelle Wilson who brings a range of skills to AGECS. Sarah thanked Alexandra Heard and Liz Potter for professionalising AGECS and helping AGECS move into a new age, and the Executive for their extra work. Sarah advised the meeting that Sophia Patitsas is resigning as Treasurer but also stepping down from Council after around 20 years.

## 8.2 AGECS Financial Report

Sophia Patitsas, Honorary Treasurer, presented the Finance Report. "It is my pleasure to present the AGECS audited financial statements for the last financial year. Our books have been audited by Nexia Audit Pty Ltd. I would like to acknowledge Ray Bullen's expertise, wisdom, and advice in supporting AGECS's financial wellbeing over the years which has allowed for the organisation to prosper. Following the Audited Financial Statements, Ray Bullen has made the following comments:



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AGECS had a record year in Dividend Distributions and record Franking Credits at \$158,523, up almost \$100,000 from last year, however we still lost \$208,754 based on the Audited accounts for 2022. The key reasons included:

- \$133,413 related to the re-valuation of the Investment Portfolio due to the decline in the share market year on year. There is always an adjustment by the auditors to market value, so this was an 8.7% decline on last year's portfolio.
- The share market All Ordinaries lost 11.1% year on year, so our strong portfolio did much better than the general market. Last year this saw a profit of \$220,392 on this auditor adjustment, so over the 2 years we are ahead.
- There was a \$47,251 loss on the sale of shares. This could be because of participating in buybacks or we required to sell investments to fund the high expenditure of AGECS in 2022.
- 2022 had record expenditure levels.

The budget had expenses at \$104,232 but the actual was \$186,613. This was due to engaging consultants as well as:

- \$76.6k allocated to the 100-year grants
- \$22.8k on Re-branding
- \$4k on Strategic planning
- \$7.5k in updating software programs, including SmartyGrants (Liz has negotiated a portion (\$3,000) of this to be refunded in FY23)

In 2022, the Council adopted the Finance Policy and Investment Policy which will further allow for transparency, confidence and reduce bias in decision-making. As the world enters a time of economic instability, AGECS, with its careful considerations will work toward creating a sustainable portfolio. Before closing, I would like to acknowledge and thank our previous Bookkeeper, Trevor Jewel for his tireless work with AGECS, and for his commitment to ensuring the financial obligations of this organisation always being achieved. I would also like to introduce and thank our new Finance Officer Narelle Wilson who has helped me in my role of Honorary Treasurer and thank Liz Potter for her support whilst I have been in this role. Finally, I would like to sincerely thank Avril McHugh for being a Mentor for me whilst I was previously in the Assistant Treasurer role. As this is my final year as Treasurer and Council Member, I would like to say that it has been a privilege watching this organisation progress positively and wish AGECS all the best for the future. With Ray's guidance and the Council's commitment to rebrand this association, it will be great to see it prosper and thrive in the future."

MOTION 8.2.1: That the Auditor's Reports 2021/2022 as circulated be accepted.

Moved: Sophia Patitsas; Seconded: Sandra McCarthy-Wilson. CARRIED

MOTION 8.2.2: That Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd be appointed as auditor of The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies for 2022/2023

Moved: Sophia Patitsas; Seconded: Liza Farquhar. CARRIED

### 8.3 Foundation of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies Report

Ray Bullen advised that the Foundation distributed \$479,000 in grants this year, close to a record. They are anticipating distributing close to \$480,000 to \$500,000 in grants in the coming year. In the last 4 years, approximately \$1.8 million has been distributed to EC



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organisations. \$8.3 million in investments will allow Foundation to continue into the future. Ray noted that AGECS has \$1.3 million so collectively the two organisations – which are linked together (the Foundation was created as a separate entity out of AGECS) – are set up well into the future to provide grants and training to the ECE community. AGECS and the Foundation together continue to develop and will grow substantially in the future. Ray thanked Warrawong and Forest Hill committee members who understand what the grant requests are and who do a wonderful job providing invaluable assistance in helping Trustees make their decisions. Sarah thanked Ray and the Trustees for their support and the greater understanding of the roles of the two organisations gained during the year.

MOTION 8.3.1: That the President, Financial and Foundation reports be accepted.

Moved: Nichola Marriott; Seconded: Alannah Dore. CARRIED

9 General Business:

Nichola Marriott, Honorary Secretary – 100 Years of Excellence awards: with over 30 nominations, it was really difficult for the committee to narrow it down to the final 11 winners. The committee was thrilled in a time of struggle in early childhood to hear people being recognised for their brilliance. Nichola expressed congratulations to everyone who is continuously turning up with a smile on their face because it has been hard time. The recurring themes in the nominations were: above and beyond, dedicated and passionate, community-minded, embracing change, high quality, engaging and connecting, respect. Our 100 Year of Excellence Award winners are: Felicity Morley, Kerrie Gould, Kim Brodribb, Laura Pearce, Louise Fitzpatrick Leach, Melissa Adam, Melissa Mugford, Patricia Beh, Rachael McBrien, Rifka Ash, Sarah Louise Gandolfo.

10

Elections

The AGECS Constitution states that Council members must be under 73 years of age.

MOTION 10.1: That current nominations may include candidates who are older than 72 years for 2023”

Moved: Sarah O’Donnell; Seconded: Liza Farquhar. CARRIED

Alexandra Heard was introduced as Returning Officer.

All Council members stepped down, except Sarah O’Donnell who was elected at the 2021 AGM as President for two years.

**Election of the AGECS Council Members**

As the number of nominations was less than or equal to the number of positions available on Council, no election was required.

Nominations: Melissa Adam, Helen Baker, Emma Boag, Alannah Dore, Sue Emmett, Liza Farquhar, Wendy Grenfell, Nichola Marriott, Sandra McCarthy-Wilson, Sinead O Conaill, Sarah O’Donnell, and Bridie Raban.

MOTION 10.2: That the nominations be voted on together



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	<p>Moved: Alexandra Heard; Seconded: Maree Wiggins. CARRIED</p> <p>MOTION 10.3: That all successful nominees be accepted for the 2022/2023 year.  Moved: Alexandra Heard; Seconded: Sophia Patitsas. CARRIED</p>
11	<p>Election of Council Office Bearers: (ONLY COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTED)</p> <p>Vice President: Liza Farquhar  Honorary Treasurer: Emma Boag  Honorary Secretary: Nichola Marriott</p> <p>MOTION 11: That successful nominees be elected Office Bearers  Moved: Alexandra Heard; Seconded: Bridie Raban. CARRIED</p> <p>Closing statement by President  Sarah thanked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alannah at the completion of her term as Past President for her support and particularly her work with the RAP which will continue.</li> <li>• Melissa and Sinead, AGECS's new Council members who are out in the field and have great connection with Early Childhood community.</li> <li>• Alexandra and Liz for getting AGM together; and</li> <li>• Everyone attending for their time and participation.</li> </ul>
11	<p>Meeting closed: 7pm</p>



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