

**MINUTES OF THE 55th CONGRESS OF PCCA DELEGATES
SYDNEY, 24 June 2023**

1. Welcome by the Executive Committee, and determination of the quorum and the number of ballot papers issued (by the Chair of the Delegate Verification Committee).
 - a) Małgorzata Kwiatkowska welcomed delegates, thanked the Polish Club in Ashfield, welcomed the honorary guests – Agata Utnicka, Charge d’Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Dr Monika Kończyk, Consul-General of the Republic of Poland, Fr Tomasz Nowak, and made introductory remarks outlining today’s proposed proceedings, and
 - b) confirmed quorum was established with 73 mandates distributed at the entry point (no delegate from Polish Association of Newcastle).

2. Election of a Chairperson, two Assessors and three (3) Secretaries.
 - a) Chair: Dr Robert Czernkowski and Bogdan Płatek nominated.
 - i. No withdrawals. Mr Bogdan Płatek: 19 mandates. Dr Robert Czernkowski: 54 mandates.
 - b) **Decision 1: Chair - Dr Robert Czernkowski**
 - c) **Decision 2: Assessors - B Iwanowska, M. Nowak, A. Doloto.**
 - d) **Decision 3: Minute takers - Joanna Merwart; Ita Szymańska, Henryk Kurylewski.**

3. Official opening of the Congress by the Chairperson.
 - a) Dr R. Czernkowski declared the 55th Congress open and asked everyone to behave according to formal protocol and to limit comments to 3 minutes.

4. Official determination of the validity of the Congress on the basis of the report from the Delegate Verification Committee.
 - a) Confirmed 73 mandates.

5. A short prayer, and a minute of silence in memory of delegates, who passed away since the previous Congress.
 - a) Fr Tomasz Nowak led delegates in The Lord’s Prayer and 1 minute’s silence to commemorate members who passed away in the last year.

6. Adjudication regarding appeals (if any) against the Delegate Verification Committee decisions as per PCCA Constitution § 50.
 - a) Nil.

7. Admittance of new member organisations earlier accepted by the Executive Committee.
 - a) Polonia Polish Association in Queensland – H. Kurylewski presented the organisation. S. Greda-Bogusz asked how many mandates – answer 6.
 - b) A Gajkowski – questioned the number of mandates allocated to Polonia in Qld.
 - c) M. Kwiatkowska - explained the question of mandates.

- d) B Iwanowska – asked if we are up to 6th or 7th point of the agenda: answer 7th.
- e) A. Grabek – Executive Committee verified all the documents.
- f) Voting: In favour: 55; Opposed: 16; Abstained: 2**
- g) **Decision 4: Polonia Polish Association in Queensland was accepted as a member of PCCA and awarded 6 mandates.**
8. Removal of member organisations as per PCCA Constitution § 13.
- a) Nil.
9. Determination of a new quorum, and the number of ballot papers issued.
- a) 73 – 1 + 6 = 78 mandates were issued
10. Presentation, corrections and acceptance of the Congress agenda.
- a) Accepted, no changes.
11. Words from the Chargé d’Affaires a.i., Ms Agata Utnicka and Consul General of the Republic of Poland, Dr Monika Kończyk.
- a) Ms Agata Utnicka introduced herself, then:
- reported the new Ambassador is expected to arrive in Australia in July 2023.
 - praised efforts and work by Polonia in Australia, mentioned 50 years of diplomatic relations between Poland and Australia.
 - mentioned 70. Years of PCCA. The strength of Poland is its people who promote Poland in their country of residence.
 - reported the last year was very hard for Poland and its foreign policy due to war in Ukraine. Your voice from Australia counts and is noted.
 - announced her farewell; when the new ambassador arrives, she will depart.
- b) Dr Monika Kończyk:
- referred to Covid-19 pandemic and hard times.
 - presented data from the last Census in Australia:
 - 209,281 people reported their Polish ancestry - 8% increase
 - people born in Poland living in Australia about 46,000
 - 3% decrease of people speaking Polish
 - increase of English-speaking people of Polish background
 - Census data may help planning activities by PCCA.
 - reported an increase of families with small children in Qld.
 - Consulate notices demographic movements via registration requests of births and passport applications
 - 43 projects were delivered with Polonia, the majority with Polish language schools and youth projects, \$89K spent on projects
 - Patriotic events supported, scouts’ projects
 - All this promotes Poland and ancestry
 - Culture – support for events, i.e. folk groups as a core embodiment Polish tradition, cultural events, film festivals, theatre festival – because these events attract other groups of Poles who are outside organised Polonia.
 - Facebook as Consulate’s promotion
 - New projects must be designed to promote Poland bilingually, promote Polish-Australian artists, performers, business people, attract younger people
 - Create and support new leaders. Those people must have Poland in their hearts.

- You have to look after local artists – they are our people, let's support them.
12. Announcement of PCCA Medals approved by the PCCA Award Committee.
- a) M. Kwiatkowska announced the award of 8 medals including
 - Dr Monika Kończyk (Konsul General)
 - Dr Janusz Rygielski (NSW)
 - Zdzisław Leliwa (Poland)
 - Anna Pacewicz (NSW)
 - Stefan Wiśniowski (NSW)
 - Eliza Hess (QLD)
 - Urszula Nadstazik (QLD)
 - Związek Polski w Newcastle (NSW)
 - b) Medals will be presented to the awardees present this evening after the recital of pianist Krzysztof Malek and soprano Marta Nowicka.
13. Presentation, corrections and acceptance of the minutes from the previous Congress.
- a) Nil amendments
 - b) **Decision 5: Minutes of the 54th Congress of PCCA Delegates were accepted by acclamation (78 votes).**
14. Tabling the following reports (provided earlier to the Delegates):
- a) Presentation of the Annual Report by the PCCA Executive Committee.
 - Attachment 1.
 - b) Presentation of the Annual Financial Report by the PCCA Treasurer, including updates regarding PCCA Perpetual Fund.
 - Attachment 2.
 - c) Presentation of the Arbitration Committee's Report.
 - Attachment 3.
 - d) Presentation of PCCA Sub-Committees' Annual Reports.
 - Attachment 4.
 - e) Presentation of the Internal Audit Committee's Report, including the Internal Audit Committee's assessment of the past activities of the PCCA Executive Committee.
 - Attachment 5.
15. Discussion of presented reports.
- a) Dr Robert Czernkowski formally requested the Congress' approval to refrain from reading President's report at the AGM as all documents had been circulated to member organisations prior to Congress.
 - b) Mrs Grabek referred to p. 3 of report – amounts difference. Clarified, accepted.
 - c) Z. Bieliński – asked about the cost of brochure – graphic design (1000 English plus 2000 in Polish) - most costs covered by a grant, minimal amount contributed by PCCA budget.
16. Voting on motions regarding approval of the activities of PCCA Executive in the

previous year.

- a) Motion: **Voting: In favour: 75; Opposed: 0; Abstained: 3**
- b) **Decision 6:** The activities of PCCA Executive in the year 2022/23 were approved.

17. Voting on proposed motions regarding the PCCA Executive's absolution/dismissal.

- a) Read by J. Kłoda: motion to accept report and dismiss the Executive Committee.
- b) **Voting on above: In favour: 78; Opposed: 0; Abstained: 0**
- c) **Decision 7:** The motion for a Vote of Approval for the outgoing PCCA Executive (dismiss) was passed.

MORNING TEA BREAK

Guests departed after Morning Tea

18. Summary of Małgorzata Kwiatkowska's 6-year tenure as the PCCA President.

- a) Attachment 6.
- b) Dr R. Czernkowski thanked the President for her message and encouraged reflection over the content of the speech.
- c) B. Płatek referred to the issue of MAPA and how PCCA could support this organisation.

19. Nullification of special voting rights allocated to the members of the Council Authorities.

- a) Two mandates returned by I. Szymańska and J. Kłoda (Executive Committee mandates, not as delegates of member organisations).

b) Updated mandate count: 76.

20. Every election year, if the Council's Authorities are absolved or dismissed, the election of new Authorities of the Council as per PCCA Constitution §1, §15, §27, §28, §29, §30, §31, §32, §33, §34, §35, §43, §45. Each presidential candidate (i.e. President and Deputy President should present their background, aims, and intentions, as well as their team - the members of their Executive Committee, especially their intended Secretary and Treasurer)

- a) President
 - i. Three candidates nominated: Mr Zygmunt Bieliński (VIC), Mr Henryk Kurylewski (QLD) and Mr Marian Radny (NSW).
 - ii. Candidates presented themselves.
 - iii. Candidate M. Radny was not present and did not introduce himself.
 - iv. Delegates asked questions.
 - v. Elections were undertaken:
 - o Mr Z Bielinski: 22 in favour
 - o Mr H Kurylewski: 51 in favour
 - o Mr M Radny: 1 in favour
 - o 2 abstained.
 - vi. **Decision 8:** Henryk Kurylewski elected PCCA President.

- b) Deputy President

- i. Two candidates nominated: Ms Małgorzata Kwiatkowska (NSW) and Mr Marian Radny (NSW).
 - ii. Candidates presented themselves.
 - iii. Candidate M. Radny was not present and did not introduce himself.
 - iv. Elections were undertaken:
 - Ms M Kwiatkowska: 59 in favour
 - Mr M Radny: 15 in favour
 - 2 abstained.
 - v. **Decision 9: Małgorzata Kwiatkowska elected PCCA Deputy President.**
- c) Executive Committee Members (including the Secretary and Treasurer)
 - i. New President put a motion to accept the new Executive Committee:
 - Secretary: Anna Niedźwiadek (WA)
 - Vice Secretary: Małgorzata Wray (WA)
 - Treasurer: Dr Robert Czernkowski (NSW)
 - Edward Dudziński (SA)
 - Grzegorz Machnacki (VIC)
 - Adam Grabek (TAS)
 - Anna Waldon-Rodzoś (ACT)
 - Ita Szymańska (QLD)
 - Jerzy Wojtkowski (VIC)
 - ii. **Decision 10: Delegates elected the new Executive Committee: In favour: 56; Opposed: 19; Abstained: 1.**
- d) Internal Audit Committee Members
 - i. **Decision 11: Delegates unanimously elected the following members of the Internal Audit Committee:**
 - Janina Kłoda (QLD)
 - Jan Tkaczyk (QLD)
 - Helena Zebrowski (NSW)
 - Joanna Fenik (NSW)
 - Bogdan Płatek (NSW)
- e) Arbitration Committee Members
 - i. **Decision 12: Delegates unanimously elected the following members of the Arbitration Committee:**
 - Basia Czech (VIC)
 - Anna Doloto (NSW)
 - Gosia Vela (NSW)
 - Stefan Wiśniowski (NSW)
 - Agata Satala (NSW)
 - Adam Biziuk (NSW)
- f) PCCA Award Committee Members (one from each state/territory)
 - i. **Decision 13: Delegates unanimously elected the following members of the PCCA Award Committee:**
 - Gosia Skalban (SA)
 - Ryszard Borysiewicz (NSW)
 - Elzbieta Krukowska-Alterman (QLD)
 - Elżbieta Dziedzic (VIC)
 - Andrzej Alwast (ACT)
 - Adam Grabek (TAS)
 - Fr Tomasz Bujakowski (WA)
- g) Statutory Committee
 - i. **Decision 14: Delegates unanimously elected the following members of the Statutory Committee:**

- Dr Andrzej Kozek (NSW)
 - Joanna Fenik (NSW)
 - Adam Grabek (TAS)
 - Jerzy Wojtkowski (VIC)
 - Dr Włodzimierz Wnuk (VIC)
21. Presentation and discussion of proposed budget for the next financial year.
- a) Dr R Czernkowski presented the proposed budget for FY2023-24.
 - b) Attachment 7.
 - c) Delegates approved the budget estimate: 76 in favour.
22. Appointment of Auditor for the next financial year (there is no need for an Auditor, given the assets).
- a) The Treasurer has put a motion to not appoint an auditor.
 - b) Accepted unanimously: 76 in favour.
23. Suspension of the 55th Congress and opening of the Special Congress in order to pass the agreed amendments to the PCCA Constitution.
- a) 55th Congress suspended and Special Congress opened.
24. Summary of the proposed amendments to the PCCA constitution.
- a) Chair presented proposed amendments.
 - b) Attachment 8.
 - c) Dr S. Greda-Bogusz proposed amendment for clarity:
 - i. In Motion 5 Par 22 (iii) amend text “insufficient” to “no”.
 - ii. Accepted.
 - d) All motions were voted on as one motion.
 - e) Accepted unanimously: 76 in favour.
 - f) **Decision 15: Delegates approved proposed amendments to the PCCA constitution.**
25. Closing of the Special Congress and resumption of the 55th Congress of Delegates.
- a) Closed.
26. Discussion and consideration of any motion of which prior notice has been given in accordance with this Constitution (specifically as per Art. VII § 20).
- a) No motions were received.
27. Presentation of the Henryk Kitaszewski’s Foundation.
- a) Anna Niedźwiadek presented the work on the Fund, its aim, objectives and processes.

- b) Purpose is to support young people but also build capacity of Polish organisations. Organisation to seek a grant to engage a student of Polish background to deliver a definite project. Students' age to be up to 35 year old, grants between \$5,000 and \$15,000.
 - c) Discussion ensued.
28. Determination of the location of the next Congress.
- a) Proposals were to hold the next Congress in Canberra, Perth, Sydney.
 - b) Vote on where to have the next Congress:
 - i. Perth – 28 votes
 - ii. Canberra – 47 votes
 - iii. Sydney – 11 votes
 - c) **Decision 16:** Delegates approved the holding of the formal 56th Congress online within statutory 3 months of the end of the financial year, then meet in Canberra in September to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Council of Polish Organisations in ACT Inc.
29. Any other desiderata (not binding to the Executive Committee of PCCA).
- a) A. Grabek: reported difficulties in sending books from Poland to Australia. Requests that PCCA applies to Poland's diplomatic authorities to assist as lack of books at schools impacts cultural development.
 - b) Correspondence from Gazeta Polska w Sydney concerning allocation of mandates and proposal signed by Dr Adam Dzierzba; request to Constitution Committee to review this.
 - c) T. Dudziński: questionnaire re: archival materials were sent out to but little response was received. Sought explanation why financial year for PCCA ends on 31 March each year.
 - d) M. Kwiatkowska: Proposed that the Constitution Committee examines why financial year for PCCA ends on 31 March each year with a view to amending this to end on 30 June.
 - e) B. Iwanowska: books orders may be put through Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą (ORPEG) by mid-May and mid-September and offered to assist with information. In terms of archival information, advised MAPA's resources were stored at Klub Polski, Albion, but in an disorderly manner and finding particular material was very difficult.
 - f) Dr S. Greda-Bogusz: request to Constitution Committee to review the mandate allocation system and review the rules. Mandates are the long-standing issues.
 - g) R. Borysiewicz: referred to notion of "democracy" and "proportional representation". May the members consider this.
 - h) A. Trajanovska: expressed thanks for support given to PolArt 2022 and invited everyone to attend next PolArt in Wellington, New Zealand in December 2025.
 - i) A. Niedźwiadek: described the content and objectives of the 2-hour workshop next day.
 - j) T. Grabek: asked about when the archives surveys were sent out to member

organisations.

- k) Mr Wiesław Wójcik and wife (guests from Polish Association of Newcastle) arrived.
- l) E. Altermann-Krukowska: advised good teaching books are available online.
- m) G. Machnacki: responded to Dr S. Greda-Bogusz's comments on mandate allocation. Local organisations need to look at their internal matters first before they start sorting out PCCA constitution.
- n) M. Kwiatkowska: advised the plan for Sunday (8:30: coffee/tea at Polish Club, Ashfield; 09:00: workshop starts; 12:00: Holy Mass at local church in Ashfield) and thanked Dr Robert Czernkowski for chairing the meeting.

30. Closing (with Polish National Anthem).

- a) Congress closed at 16:20 (Polish National Anthem was sung by Delegates).