

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

<b>DATE</b>	21 Aug 2010	<b>TIME</b>	10:00	<b>VENUE</b>	Ward Room - Military History Museum, Johannesburg
-------------	-------------	-------------	-------	--------------	---

### ATTENDANCE

<b>Present</b>	<b>Role</b> (at conclusion of meeting)
----------------	--

Michael Poll	President (Chair)
Matie Hoffman	Vice President
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Johan Smit	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Rynhardt van Rooyen	Treasurer

#### **Via Skype**

Ian Glass	Vice President, named Member of the Editorial Board
Lia Labuschagne	Cape Town Centre Rep

#### **Apologies (a) and not present**

Maciej Soltynski (a)	Council Member, Convenor of Scholarship Committee
Willie Koorts† (a)	MNASSA Editor
Case Rijdsijk (a)	Vice President, Garden Route Centre Rep
Wayne Trow (a)	Sky Guide Editor
Adv AJ Nel	Council Member
Chris de Koning	Bloemfontein Centre Rep
Christian Hettlage	Web Master
Constant Volschenk	Johannesburg Centre Rep
Frikkie de Bruyn	KZN Midlands Centre Rep
John Saunders	Hermanus Centre Rep
Peter Cramb	Durban Centre Rep

#### **NOTE:**

1. Minutes do not follow the published agenda sequence of the meeting
2. Names responsible for progressing actions are in bold

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Points</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
1	Welcome	<p>M Poll welcomed everyone and noted that it was the first time that the ASSA Council meeting was not held in Cape Town.</p> <p>Anyone who wanted to join the meeting via Skype was to be taken as being present at the meeting.</p>
2	Acceptance of Minutes	<p>The minutes of 4 May and 29 June 2010 (no quorum at last meetings) were accepted by Council.</p>
3	Filling vacant positions on Council	<p>3.1 M Poll explained that at the time when nominations for 2010/11 closed there was no nomination for Secretary but subsequently L Cross offered to fill the position of Secretary. He asked if Council accepts this offer. Proposed by: R van Rooyen. Seconded by: C Stewart.</p> <p>3.2 M Poll explained that at the time when nominations for 2010/11 closed there was no nomination for Membership Secretary but subsequently J Smit offered to fill the position of Membership Secretary. M Poll asked if Council accepts this offer: Proposed by: C Stewart. Seconded by: R van Rooyen.</p> <p>3.3 M Poll reported that Adv AJ Nel offered his services to Council and that it was proposed and agreed at the ASSA AGM that he would be co-opted onto Council. It was agreed by Council to co-opt Adv AJ Nel as Council Member.</p> <p>3.4 The result of these appointments still leaves a vacancy for Council Member and M Poll asked <b>I Glass and L Labuschagne</b> to please consider who they would like to propose from the Cape Town area to fill this vacancy.</p> <p>3.5 Council discussed and agreed that the position of Business Manager should remain open until a final decision on the distribution method of the Sky Guide. Council agreed that Isobel Bassett be asked (<b>Secretary</b>) if she can continue with the tasks of Business Manager until a final decision is possible by Council. Isobel to be reminded that she is welcome to submit invoices for approval of payment for any expenses incurred in the process.</p> <p>3.6 MNASSA Editor: W Koorts has submitted his resignation as MNASSA Editor to Council. Alan Versfeld offered his services by email. C Rijdsdijk also offered his services subject to a discussion with W Koorts. L Labuschagne also offered her services as back-up to Case. Council discussed the offers and agreed that W Koorts be asked (<b>Secretary</b>) to consider the offers – contact the individuals, where possible – and advise Council of the outcome.</p> <p>3.7 Webmaster: Council agreed that C Hettlage is doing a very good job and</p>

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Points</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
		requested that he be contacted ( <b>Secretary</b> ) to ask him to continue for another year if he is available to fill the position.
4	Continuing essential Council business – Financial Management	<p>4.1 Financial Status: There was no financial report available for presentation at the AGM.</p> <p>4.2 Handover to new Treasurer</p> <p>It was discussed and the following objectives agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The handover of monies and the account from previous to current Treasurer should happen as a matter of urgency so that the society's business can function;</li> <li>- Account should be brought up to date to the point of hand-over. Options are: ask if previous Treasurer can do this or Council need to employ someone to bring the accounts up to date.</li> </ul> <p>The following approach to achieve the objectives was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council (<b>Secretary</b>) will write to C Turk and put the Council views to him: Council is very grateful for his continued and valuable contribution and devotion to ASSA business; what approach would he prefer is followed to get the ASSA's financial management operational as soon as possible;</li> <li>- The new Treasurer (<b>R van Rooyen</b>) will also call C Turk and discuss the handover with him.</li> </ul> <p>4.3 Budgets: Budgeting process will be left for discussion until the financials are functional.</p>
5	Continuing essential Council business – Membership Management	<p>5.1 Membership Secretary Report. There was no Membership report tabled at the AGM.</p> <p>5.2 M Poll had placed M Rogers and J Smit in touch with one another via email concerning handover of Membership Records. Council (<b>Secretary</b>) to communicate with M Rogers and J Smit and formalise the handover process.</p> <p>5.3 In due course <b>J Smit</b> and <b>R van Rooyen</b> will have to check the payments of subs against the membership records.</p> <p>5.4 Also in due course the suggestion of "Online membership applications" to be considered between <b>Webmaster, Membership Secretary</b> and <b>Treasurer</b>.</p>
6	Continuing essential Council	<p>Council discussed issues around communication and the following was agreed:</p> <p>6.1 <b>I Glass</b> kindly offered and Council agreed that post delivered to PO Box 9 be re-routed to the Secretary's postal address: PO Box 1208 FERNDAL 2160 who</p>

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Points</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
	business - Communication	<p>will ensure this gets to the Membership Secretary and Treasurer (this process must be monitored to see if this is the best way to timeously get information to the Treasurer and Membership Secretary)</p> <p>6.2 Council (<b>Secretary</b>) to ask the Webmaster to re-route mails destined to Secretary and Membership Secretary and Treasurer to the current incumbents.</p> <p>6.3. Minute Books: Council (<b>Secretary</b>) to find out who ordered these books for what purpose.</p>
7	Sky Guide update	<p>7.1 It was noted that the Editor, W Trow, reported that the Sky Guide was 95% done and proof reading will start in first week of September.</p> <p>7.2 Sky Guides advertisers. I Glass reported that he sent out invoices to advertisers who were not billed. Council thanked him for this gesture. I Glass said he does not know if the advertisers have been paid or not.</p> <p>7.3 Council asked that W Trow be notified (<b>Secretary</b>) of Council's thanks for his efforts to get the publication this far so soon and to ask him if he would continue the contract for 2012 and also if he has been paid according to the phases depicted in his contract and also to confirm when the next payment is due.</p> <p>7.4 <b>M Poll</b> offered and it was accepted that he will circulate the contract to the members. Copy of contract to be distributed (<b>Secretary</b>) with the minutes.</p> <p>7.5. Finalisation of the Sky Guide distribution using Struik. Was not discussed but is being progressed by <b>I Glass</b> and <b>M Soltynski</b>. Latest update from M Soltynski: "Struik has indicated serious interest and is busy drawing up a non-standard contract to present to ASSA for consideration. It seems to be that because ASSA is to be responsible for preparing the material up to the printing stage, and Struik being responsible only for printing, marketing and distributing, that makes the contract non-standard for Struik, and this is what is causing a delay on their side."</p>
8	Section Directors	<p>8.1 Dark Sky Section: No one was nominated for Section Director. The meeting discussed that this was an important section to continue ASSA objectives and that Johan Smit would be a good candidate to contribute to such an ASSA section. J Smit accepted the nomination. Proposed by L Cross. Seconded by Chris Stewart.</p> <p>8.2 Imaging Section: The only person nominated did not accept the nomination. The meeting discussed and agreed that this section is more of a special interest group and is not essential to what the ASSA must pursue in the interest of astronomy. It was agreed that the Imaging Section will be mothballed. (<b>M Poll</b></p>

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Points</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
		<p>agreed after the meeting to let the last Section Director know Council's decision)</p> <p>8.3 Council (<b>Secretary</b>) to advise Section Directors of their appointments.</p>
9	Section Reports	<p>9.1 Some Section Directors did not send in any annual reports. The meeting discussed and agreed that should any Section in future not timeously submit an annual report to Council, a suggestion was made that the Section be regarded as moribund. Section Director's reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comet and Meteor Section : report submitted by Tim Cooper</li> <li>2. Deep Sky section – no report</li> <li>3. Double Star section – no report</li> <li>4. Imaging section – no report</li> <li>5. Occultation section: report submitted by Brian Fraser</li> <li>6. Solar section: no report</li> <li>7. Variable star section: report submitted by Chris Middleton</li> <li>8. Cosmology section: report submitted by Frikkie de Bruyn</li> <li>9. Dark Sky section – no report</li> <li>10. Education and Public Communication: report submitted by Case Rijdsdijk</li> <li>11. Historical Section : report submitted by Chris de Coning</li> </ol> <p>9.2 Council (<b>Secretary</b>) to advise Section Directors of their appointments.</p>
10	ASSA governance	<p>10.1 Council discussed a number of aspects that relate to the purpose and governance of the ASSA.</p> <p>It was agreed that these aspects must be debated. It was considered that the ASSA Symposium would be a useful forum where Council members could possibly convene and progress the matter. It was agreed that these aspects could be tackled: ASSA objectives, structure and relationship with Centres, constitution, job descriptions, remuneration policy.</p> <p>It was further agreed that <b>L Cross</b> and <b>L Labuschagne</b> will document and circulate for discussion an approach for tackling these issues. It was accepted that the process cannot be completed in one session at the Symposium and also that the purpose of the Symposium should not be compromised.</p> <p>10.2 To help progress these aspects, it was proposed that out of town Council members could come and contribute to a constructive strategy session at the Symposium. Such <b>Council members</b> could put their request to M Poll in the first instance and Council could consider the principle of expense refunds. <b>J Smit</b> to discuss the feasibility of such a strategy session with the ASSA Symposium committee. I Glass and L Labuschagne indicated that they may attend the symposium and thus a strategy session.</p>

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		<p>10.3 Following on from the previous point: M Poll will review the work he has already done on the ASSA Constitution re-write and the Job Descriptions once the strategy session has been held.</p> <p>M Poll has done a draft of a new Constitution in April 2010 and Adv AJ Nel rewrote the text and no further work has been done on the Constitution. <b>M Poll</b> undertook to take the work further after the symposium in October.</p> <p>10.4. Summary of ideas already forwarded to M Poll by members to be circulated to Council by <b>M Poll</b> and to be included in a strategy session.</p>
11	ASSA Symposium 2010	<p>11.1 J Smit gave an update to Council on arrangements and said that a “near final draft” program exists.</p> <p>11.2 Although the hosting Centre may ask Council for bridging finance (M Hoffman said a loan of ~R5 000 was loaned to Centres before), ASSA Pretoria advised that funding is not required but attendees are. There is a risk that too few attendees could result in a loss. The booking numbers would be reviewed next month. ~50 is considered for break even. Any profit would go back to the Centre.</p> <p>11.3 <b>Council reps</b> were asked to please advertise the Symposium – detail was on the ASSA Pretoria and Council websites. Other advertising mechanisms suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Johannesburg Planetarium maillist</li> <li>- Astronet maillist</li> <li>- Centres must advertise</li> <li>- Sterre en Planete (<b>Matie</b> will ask Hennie Maas)</li> </ul>
12	Winding up KZN Midlands Centre	<p>12.1 The memo sent to Council by F de Bruyn and circulated to Council was considered.</p> <p>The mail sets out reasons for the decline of members in the KZN Midlands Centre and inability of the Centre to be able to nominate a working committee. The Midlands Centre voted to that the Centre would no longer remain as a constituted ASSA centre. In terms of the Constitution, winding up of a Centre includes: “the immediately preceding Chairman and the Committee shall within one month of the dissolution of the Centre, cause all assets, funds and records of the Centre to be sent to the Society for safekeeping or disposal as Council shall see fit.”</p> <p>A deviation from the Constitution is sought from Council: “to retain the monies of the Centre in order to make the necessary modifications and improvements to the</p>

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Points</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
		<p>observatory.”</p> <p>The vintage Dancer Scope would be donated to ASSA, probably to the Boyden Museum in Bloemfontein.</p> <p>12.2 Council discussed the matter and requested that the Centre be congratulated on the professional approach taken in this matter and that the Centre be notified that Council approves of the disposal as set out but be asked (<b>Secretary</b>) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- clarify what the Observatory entails and how monies would be deployed. In principle, Council agreed that the funds may be deployed in improving the Observatory but it wants to understand what the Observatory entails such as ownership of land, infrastructures.</li> <li>- provide Council with a final record of assets and financial statement showing what happened to the funds and assets.</li> <li>- provide Council with proof that enhancements have been done and that the scope was disposed of as envisaged.</li> </ul>
13	ASSA Centres Final reports	<p>13.1 Council asked that Centres be notified (<b>Secretary</b>) to send to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A copy of the minutes of the AGM showing elected officers and committee for the ensuing year.</li> </ul>
14		Matters arising from 4 May and 29 June 2010 meetings:
	Alternates	<p>14.1 As it is predicted that most meetings for the year would be in Gauteng, the <b>non-Gauteng Council members</b> are asked to consider if they wish to attend via Skype as a rule or ask Council to appoint locals to represent them at the meetings.</p>
	Customer Records	<p>14.2 “Treasurer was requested to see Isobel Bassett to ascertain which customers had been invoiced for the 2010 Sky Guide, so that he would then be able to estimate the income for Sky Guide.” It was agreed that this action be closed seeing a new Treasurer has been appointed.</p>
	Sky Guide distribution list	<p>14.3 “Chris de Coning was to contact all parties and attempt to solve the problem of the Sky Guide distribution list. “</p> <p>This action was closed because new process will have to be implemented.</p>
	AGM: Auditors	<p>14.4 The AGM agreed to remain with the same Auditors. Council agreed to communicate (<b>Secretary</b>) with Auditors and request confirmation of appointment.</p>

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Points</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
15	Other business	<p>15.1 L Labuschagne noted that she offered to back-up Case as MNASSA editor and also raised the issue of remuneration of the Editor. Both items have been covered in the minutes above.</p> <p>15.2 I Glass asked for approval of previous minutes which was not done at the time as quorum didn't exist. This was done and is noted in the minutes under point 2.</p> <p>15.3 M Poll handed the 4 awards not handed out at the AGM to the <b>Secretary</b> to arrange handover to recipients.</p>
16	Closure Next Meeting	<p>M Poll thanked everyone for their contribution and closed the meeting at 12:30 as there was no other business to discuss.</p> <p>Next Council Meeting 30 October 9.30 for 10:00 start.</p>