

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	5 Feb 2011	TIME	10:00	VENUE	Ward Room - Military History Museum, Johannesburg
-------------	------------	-------------	-------	--------------	--

ATTENDANCE

Present

Role

Michael Poll	President (Chair)
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Adv AJ Nel	Council Member and Treasurer

Via Skype

Ian Glass	Vice President and Membership Secretary
Christian Hettlage	Web Master

Apologies (a) and not present

Auke Slotegraaf (a)	Council Member and Sky Guide Editor
Matie Hoffman (a)	Vice President
Lia Labuschagne	Cape Town Centre Rep
Maciej Soltynski (a)	Council Member, Convenor of Scholarship Committee
Case Rijdsdijk (a)	Vice President, Garden Route Centre Rep, MNASSA Editor
Chris de Coning (a)	Bloemfontein Centre Rep
Constant Volschenk (a)	Johannesburg Centre Rep
John Saunders (a)	Hermanus Centre Rep
Peter Cramb (a)	Durban Centre Rep

NOTE: Names responsible for progressing key actions are in bold

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome	M Poll welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. He said that even though there was not a quorum (7 individuals is stipulated in the constitution) the meeting will continue and Council will be asked to confirm decisions upon circulation of the minutes.
2	Acceptance of Minutes	The minutes of 30 October 2010 were accepted.
3	Matters arising from the minutes of 30 Oct 2010 and Agenda Items	Matters covered since the last meeting on 30 Oct 2010: 3.1 Council acknowledge the reply by the President to the email from Cliff Turk re. advising Council before applying past principles of free/exchange copies of the Sky Guide (See emails in Annexure that was attached to the Agenda) 3.2 Council noted its approval given to the request from Cosmology Section to add Prof Nurgaliev to distribution list. (See comments and outcome in the Annexure that was attached to the Agenda)
4	Council Structure	4 Resignations of Membership Secretary and Treasurer 4.1 Council accepted the resignations (obtained via emails) of the Membership Secretary

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		<p>(Johan Smit) and Treasurer (Rynhardt van Rooyen) and formally accepted the offers from Ian Glass to fill the role of Membership Secretary and Adv AJ Nel as Treasurer; their offers were accepted by Council with thanks and appreciation of their willingness to take office.</p> <p>4.2 Status of handover – Membership Secretary</p> <p>I Glass noted that J Smit did a very good job of getting the membership records in order.</p> <p>L Cross noted that I Glass has written to some lapsed members (who had email addresses) about their membership and a number has already replied that they were not aware that their membership had lapsed and offered to pay the outstanding subscription.</p> <p>4.3 Status of handover – Treasurer</p> <p>R van Rooyen and AJ Nel agreed to commence the handover the coming week; R van Rooyen offered to process payments such as MNASSA up to 25 February if required. The following will be advised to Standard Bank in order to change signatories:</p> <p>Due to the resignation of Mr R van Rooyen from the Council of the Astronomical Society of Southern Africa (“ASSA”), the Council formally confirms the appointment of Adv AJ Nel as Hon Treasurer of the Society from 5 February 2011.</p> <p>“Council approves that the handover process of all the financial activities and responsibilities from Mr R van Rooyen to Adv Nel now commences.</p> <p>The ASSA Council APPROVED that the current signatory R van Rooyen is removed and that Adv AJ Nel is added to the list of signatories which include that of Me LA Cross and Mr ME Poll of all relevant accounts including that of the existing bank cheque account (Account: 276 188 349) held with Standard Bank, Pinelands,</p> <p>All the other existing arrangements with Standard Bank remain unchanged.”</p> <p>4.4 M Poll requested that Council note with gratitude the offer of Johan Retief of the Hermanus Centre to take over the post of Membership Secretary. Although Ian Glass’ offer was accepted by Council, Johan has indicated that he will still be available if the need arises. The correspondence is attached to these minutes.</p>
5	Membership	<p>5.1 New Members</p> <p>Council ratified these proposed members (provided by I Glass) who have sent in their application forms and are listed as having paid:</p> <p>Mr S Badari, Kempton Park Ms LM Botha, Durban North Mr P Casado, Wilgeheuveld Mr R Cronje, Irene Mr AB Du Plooy, Langenhovenpark Dr PR Du Toit, Hatfield Mr JDJ Ferreira, Umgeni Park Mrs JM Ferreira, Umgeni Park Mr T Ferreira, Cape Town Dr EH Gouws, Stellenbosch Mr M Hess, Paarl Mr WL Kok, Lambton Mr GJ Krige, Hermanus Ms S Lock, Tyger Valley Mr JT Potgieter, Doonside Mr HG Ratcliffe, Kloof Mr JAL Schreuder, Monte Vista Mr RH Suberg, Malvern Mr T Van Der Merwe, Bloemfontein Mr S Van Der Walt, Stellenbosch</p>

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		<p>Mr R Van Rooyen, Derdepoort Park Mr H Viljoen, Wierdapark Mr J Visser, Westville Mr C A Abrahams, Grassy Park</p> <p>5.2 I Glass reported as at 4 Feb 2011, membership was: 156 full members; 13 honorary</p> <p>5.3. I Glass, in answer to M Poll's question about the membership request from Mr Siddiquee from India, said that Mr Siddiquee was advised that his membership could not be accepted because he could not pay the membership fee.</p> <p>This discussion raised the issue of overseas member subscription fees: the best option proposed: normal subscription fee to be paid but all costs (over and above that for local members) incurred by ASSA (for distribution to foreign destination) would have to be recovered.</p>
6	Financial Management	<p>6. 1 Update on the financial statements and audits to date:</p> <p>Email from Cliff Turk:</p> <p><i><u>"The 2005/2006 accounts were completed by me and passed to the Auditors on 19 Aug 2009. The Auditors completed these and they were presented to Council and signed by the members present after which they went back to the Auditors for their final signature. On final return from the Auditors they were passed to the Editor of MNASSA for publication as usual. -</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The 2006/2007 accounts were completed by me on 7 Dec 2009 and went through the same procedure as above.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The 2007/2008 accounts were completed by me on 1 May 2010 and also went through the above procedure except that the then MNASSA Editor (Willie Koorts) says he cannot trace the copy for publication. I am providing him with a photocopy of a copy I made for my use in case of any mishaps.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The 2008/2009 accounts were completed by me on 29 Nov 2010 and are still with the Auditors. I know the audit is just about completed and think it has just been slightly delayed by the recent holidays. As soon as their report is received, I will arrange the necessary signatures from members of that year's Council and return the documents to the Auditor for his final signature. On receipt of the signed final copies I will send one to the present MNASSA Editor and also a copy to you.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The 2009/2010 accounts have been started by me and I hope to have them completed by the end of February or soon after. Once I have the year end figures available I will send a copy to Rynhardt at the same time as passing all the documents to the Auditor. The latter has never yet changed my final figures, so I am sure they can be accepted for use at that stage. When the audit report is received I will arrange for it to be signed as required and obtain the final signature from the Auditor so that it can be published in MNASSA. MNASSA holds copies of all the financial statements since its publication started in 1941, but I do not know what happened to earlier years. I have copies of some of the reports for more recent years and will put them together and send on to you or Rynhardt once I am finished with my work on the 2009/2010 accounts.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>-</u></i></p> <p><i><u>I will also be able to provide all the supporting vouchers for the period I have been Treasurer. I believe many of the old records were at one time passed to the Director of the Historical Section and he may still have them, but I am not certain of this.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>-</u></i></p> <p><i><u>I am sending copies of this email to the Auditor (Ronnie Glass), the Director of the Historical Section (Chris de Coning) and the new Treasurer (Rynhardt van Rooyen.)"</u></i></p> <p>6.2. L Cross to write to C Turk to advise him of the pending Treasurer handover and to include AJ Nel in all correspondence.</p> <p>6.3 (also 7.3 in the agenda): TAX implications on ASSA of the new arrangements around</p>

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		<p>the Sky Guide: Key comments made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assume ASSA does not want to pay tax; - Earnings less than R100 000 no tax is payable - To pay tax ASSA would have to register as NPO. Would require a change to the constitution to cater for a NPO – will entail small things to change; - Alternative is to convert to a legal or semi- legal entity such as a Trust (a quick process). Trust is perpetual entity; - Section 21 Company is complex. Constitution would need a substantial rewrite, personal liability; - There is an amnesty in tax arrears till Aug <p>Key decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AJ Nel will involve Cliff and the current Auditors (in the conversation on the tax issue. - This matter will be taken further together as part of the ASSA review – AJ Nel would need to first take into account the true financial status and the outlook for the future. <p>(Also see the email from the current ASSA Auditor in Annexure Annexure that was attached to the Agenda).</p> <p>6.4.Payment of Sky Guide 2011 Advertisers R van Rooyen advised L Cross that J Smit has – as acting Business Manager - prepared invoices for the advertisers and sent out the invoices.</p>
7	Editorial Board Matters	<p>7.1 Sky Guide Africa South 2012: Council acknowledged and thanked the update submitted by M Solynski:</p> <p>“Progress is well ahead of schedule and a meeting was held with Struik on Feb 1 to introduce Auke Slotegraaf and to discuss price, page counts and milestone dates. An electronic survey of members (first ever) regarding SGAS was conducted, and 28 responses were received. No negative feedback was received. A number of useful suggestions were made. So far about 3800 copies of SGAS 2011 have been sent out by Struik, out of a print run of 4500. It seems that Struik has not managed to sell more than ASSA did last year, up to this point and this was discussed with Struik.”</p> <p>7.2 Selection of candidates for scholarships: M Soltynski requested: “ that R20 000 be transferred into the scholarship account from general funds. This type of action was undertaken from time to time by Cliff Turk in the past. Proceeds from SGAS should be used to build up the scholarship fund”.</p> <p>This request could not be finalised by Council because of the pending Treasurer handover but the issue would be taken further by AJ Nel once the handover has been completed.</p> <p>7.2 New Sky Guide Editor Council accepted as read the mails sent by the President to the outgoing and incoming Sky Guide Editors, Wayne Trow and Auke Slotegraaf</p> <p>7.3 MNASSA. I Glass noted that the latest MNASSA is ready to be sent out. The meeting discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the intent to only offer MNASSA in hard copy print to members up to June, unless on special request; - to be able to assess the estimated cost and method of printing any MNASSA copies after June, it would be excellent if an indication can be obtained of who would still require hard copies;

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
8	Website	<p>8.1 Proposal on mail list to members from C Hettlage</p> <p>Council accepted the proposal and detail as presented in the mail from C Hettlage (see attachment to Agenda). Actions arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C Hettlage to request formal approval from SAAO to host the mail list; - Moderators: WebMaster, Secretary, Membership Secretary - Administrators: WebMaster and Membership Secretary - Non-members may join the mail list but only members may post - Once the technical set up is complete the Moderators will agree the content of an email to be sent from WebMaster to invite all members to join the mail list in order to receive notification of E-MNASSA. The guidelines for posting to the mail list will need to be explained to subscribers
9	Historical Section	<p>9.1 R5 000 donation to the Historical Section for scanning old minute books for storage on the Historical Section website.</p> <p>Council accepted as read the annexure to the minutes explaining the history and origin of the monies which were approved by Council for donating to the Historical Section as defined.</p>
10	Cosmology Section Report	<p>The report as submitted by JF de Bruyn was acknowledged and will be held over for tabling at the AGM</p>
11	KZB Midlands Wind-Up	<p>The Council acknowledged the documentation submitted by the KZN Centre and asked the Secretary to extend the Council's appreciation of doing a good job in winding up the Centre affairs in accordance with the requirements of the constitution.</p>
12	ASSA Review	<p>12.1 The summary document sent out by the Secretary of all the comments received on the questionnaires and also of previous work done in 2005/6 by ASSA, was acknowledged by Council. Feedback was requested by 4 Feb and L Cross reported that 4 responses were received</p> <p>12.2 Next steps agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both M Poll and I Glass suggested and the meeting agreed that a synopsis would be compiled of the key recommendations that affect the constitution. These changes should be the minimal possible to address the key issues identified; - The following members present at the meeting (M Poll, I Glass, AJ Nel, C Stewart, L Cross) are to compile a synopsis; - The recommendations will be turned into a preamble to a revised constitution (to be drafted by M Poll, AJ Nel) - Timing is crucial and the work considered urgent. Timing will be established as soon as summary of the recommendations have been done – it was agreed that L Cross should start the process.

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	Agenda Points	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
13	Historical Section archive: donate to UCT Archive	<p>Proposal from C de Coning to donate the ASSA Archive to UCT Archive</p> <p>13.1 Council considered and approved the proposal – see Annexure attached to the Agenda – from C de Coning to safeguard the original documents in ASSA’s archive, which in its current location, will not survive the winter rains in Cape Town. Council expressed its gratitude to C de Coning for the initiative and asked that C de Coning be asked to continue with the process.</p>
14	General	<p>14.1 Communication among Council Members</p> <p>The issue of attaching an e-signature to emails was discussed and it was proposed that Council Members be asked to remove e-signatures from their mails to outside entities - if it is within their power to do that.</p> <p>14.2 Astronomy Desk</p> <p>Council acknowledged as read the correspondence from the President to Prof Hellberg of the Astronomy Desk. (see annexure)</p> <p>14.3 "Astronaut tour" to Bloemfontein</p> <p>Council acknowledged as read the report back from the President on his visit to Bloemfontein as ASSA representative.</p>
15	Closure Next Meeting	<p>M Poll thanked everyone for their contribution and closed the meeting at 11.40</p> <p>Next Council Meeting Sat 2 April 2011 10:00 start.</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____
 Chair: M Poll

Attachment to the minutes

Refer to item 4.4 in the minutes

From: [Johan Retief](#) **To:** [John Saunders & Irene Saunders](#)

Sent: Friday, January 07, 2011 8:18 AM

Subject: Re: Fw: Resignation of Membership Secretary and Treasurer

Hi John,

I am not against volunteering for the job as membership secretary, but would like to see a job description/portfolio description for the post. One can deduce somewhat of the job content from the ASSA constitution and it would seem fairly a straight forward administrative task, one that can be done from your home. I would, however, impose a condition as well in that I have **no intention** to attend meetings (I have attended all the meetings I ever wanted to attend during my professional career and intend to stop attending meetings altogether by the end of 2011).

Could you please ask ASSA for a job description and then I will advise you whether you can nominate me. Regards, Johan.