

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	18 Nov 2013	TIME	19:30 to 20.28	VENUE	Via Skype
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ATTENDANCE

Present

	Role
Matie Hoffman	President (Chair)
Ian Glass	Vice-President
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Pat Booth	Membership Secretary
Auke Slotegraaf	Sky Guide Editor
Christian Hettlage	Web Master
Peter Dormehl	Chair - Durban Centre
Gary Els	Chair – ASSA Johannesburg Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre
Case Rijdsdijk	Chair - Garden Route Centre, MNASSA Editor
AJ Nel	Treasurer
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Maciej Soltynski	Council Member

Apologies (a) Not Present

Pierre de Villiers (a)	Vice-President, Chair - Hermanus Centre
Lia Labuschagne (a)	Chair - ASSA Cape Centre Chair

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Well done, Matie !</p>	<p>M Hoffman welcomed everyone to the 3rd 2013/14 Council meeting. Apologies received are noted in the minutes.</p> <p>Digital Planetarium opening – 2 Nov: At the start of the meeting, B Olivier, extended congratulations to M Hoffman on the opening of the Digital Planetarium. B Olivier attended the event on behalf of the ASSA and he said he was very impressed with the experience. This was also voiced by P Dormehl who also attended the event. All attendees offered their congratulations on an excellent endeavour very well done.</p>
2	<p>Previous Minutes, Matters arising</p>	<p>Previous Minutes of Meetings Minutes of meeting on 14 October 2013 were accepted (C Rijdsdijk, AJ Nel). Matters arising from previous meeting are in <i>italics</i> in the minutes, actions underlined.</p>
3	<p>Governance</p>	<p>Governance 3.1 Constitution <i>(12 Sep) Changes agreed to be included in final draft and distributed to Council:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Revisions required for registering Non- Profit Organisation.</i> - <i>To allow all members of Council to be eligible to be nominated as Vice-President, thus when the Centre Chairs for the next year are known.</i> - <i>Consider a provision of internet voting procedure, e.g. Survey Monkey.</i> - <i>Editorial Board to be included.</i> <p>AJ Nel sent the updated draft Constitution to Council before the meeting. He noted that the document is annotated with the amendments done; the main amendment being that the Vice President will be elected from Council (see clause 7.2.1).</p> <p>The meeting agreed not to arrange for a positive voting process but rather to have the changed Constitution considered as accepted unless there is a 50% negative vote cast. The following process was agreed:</p>

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		<p>(1) The draft (which is also attached to these minutes) to be placed on the new website (<u>C Hettlage, A Slotegraaf</u>);</p> <p>(2) <u>All Council members</u> to study the document and give their final comments to AJ Nel (copy L Cross) by 25 Nov;</p> <p>(3) <u>Centre Chairs</u> to inform their members – via their monthly meeting and /or newsletter and/or mailing lists – of the main change to the Constitution and that the document is available on the website http://assa.saa.ac.za/about/assa-constitution/ and that comments should be forwarded as advised on the website by no later than 10 December.</p> <p>(4) Country members will be reached via the ASSA_Info mail list (<u>L Cross</u>).</p> <p>3.2 Frequency of meetings (new item raised by M Soltynski): M Soltynski raised an agenda item to propose that “no more than 6 Council meetings be held per calendar year”. Council discussed the proposal and the consensus was a Council meeting every 2nd month, taking into account holidays. The new proposed dates are listed in ...below and will be confirmed or changed as the need arise closer to the time of each meeting.</p>
4	Financial Matters	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>4.1 Auditing of 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13 financials (12 Sep) AJ Nel advised the meeting that the Financials for the year 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/13 were forwarded to the ASSA Auditor, R Glass – 7 August – currently under “audit”. <u>AJ Nel</u> advised that R Glass advised before the meeting that he will try and finalise audit of all three financial years before the end of December and he will follow-up again before mid-Dec.</p> <p>4.2 Two signatories to withdraw funds and increasing the withdrawal limit AJ Nel noted that the R20 000 limit on single payment could be considered for increase as some payment amounts are now over that limit. He also proposed that it will be good practice to add another signatory to the internet payment process. Council discussed and agreed to increase the once off internet payment limit to R50 000 and to add M Hoffman as a secondary authorised person for release of payments.</p> <p>4.3 Items in abeyance until there is substance to report</p> <p>4.3.1 ASSET (12 Sep) Council agreed that <u>M Hoffman</u> will make contact with I Glass and M Soltynski for background to the ASSA/ASSET communication. Matter still in abeyance but M Hoffman proposed to discuss ASSA/ASSET with I Glass and P de Villiers when next in the Cape (11, 12 Dec). C Risjdijk also noted that he will be talking with A Gray (an ASSET Trustee) on 20 November.</p> <p>4.3.2 ASSA registering as non-profit organisation (12 Sep) Await final ASSA Constitution to be presented to the Department</p> <p>4.3.3 Investment of ASSA Funds - 2013 (12 Sep) The item is on backburner in consequence of insufficient funds to justify the combination of the accounts (R 500 000.00 required).</p>
5	Membershi	Membership

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
	p matters	<p>5.1 Membership: membership status, issues P Booth submitted the following information 91 Country members incl Hons New country members: MR J DAWSON PO BOX 561 KROONDAL 0350 MR JBH TITSHALL 25 MILLIKEN RD PRESTBURY PIETERMARITZBURG 3201</p> <p>C Hettlage noted that the first online application from the new website was received and he forwarded it to P Booth for processing.</p> <p>5.2 Sky & Telescope subscription for Ronnie Glass as Hon Member: <i>(12 Sep) P Booth to again forward the mail to Ronnie and also ask him if he needs help to subscribe himself and claim back from AJ Nel.</i> <u>P Booth</u> to action when she can.</p> <p>5.3 Refunding ASSA related expenses to Membership Secretary When asked, P Booth confirmed that she has a number of expenses in order to fulfil the duties of Membership Secretary and would like to be able to reclaim such costs. After some discussion, including the fact that in the past there were Honoraria paid to some roles on Council, Council agreed to ask P Booth to provide Council with an amount she would consider fair to be compensated for in respect of related expenses.</p> <p>5.4 Increasing Country Membership - in abeyance until there is substance to report <i>(12 Sep) Proposals to increase ASSA's "country member" base: from outside SA borders and inside RSA borders. Council to think more on specifics – a 2014 Objective.</i></p>
6	Comms	<p>Communication</p> <p>6.1 Website, etc The new ASSA website was made live on 13 November by SAAO IT.</p> <p>Council expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation to A Slotegraaf for all his effort with the revised format and population of the new website and he in turn expressed his appreciation and thanks to C Hettlage for his help and support and also to K Coronaios for his input.</p> <p>A Slotegraaf will be having separate communication and skype sessions with the Centre Chairs and Section Directors to get their portions of the website properly populated and to explain the process of updating same.</p> <p>The <u>Centre Chairs</u> and <u>Section Directors</u> were again reminded to advertise the new website and new ASSA communication channels.</p> <p>L Cross confirmed when G Els asked that the role of Section Director for the Photometry and Spectroscopy Section was vacant at present (ref to the minutes of meeting held 12 September)</p> <p>6.2 ASSA Publications – SGAS I Glass expressed his appreciation and congratulations to the Editor A Slotegraaf for his efforts on the 2014 SGAS which has started appearing in shops.</p> <p>M Hoffman asked if a list of all the outlets that the SGAS will be sold. It was noted that this can be obtained from Struik and <u>AJ Nel</u> undertook to get the information from</p>

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		<p>Struik and also the sales sources of the ebook version.</p> <p>6.3 ASSA Publications - SGAS <u>AJ Nel</u> to post invoices to the Centre.</p> <p>P Booth noted that she has the envelopes ready to post the SGAS in the week of 25 Nov and also the slips (announcing the new ASSA communication channels) for inserting in the envelopes.</p>																																
7	Focus areas	<p>7 ASSA special focus areas</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="499 602 1399 1111"> <thead> <tr> <th>Section</th> <th>Director</th> <th>Area</th> <th>ASSA</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Shallow Sky</td> <td>D Blane</td> <td>Scholarships</td> <td>M Soltynski</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deep Sky</td> <td>A Slotegraaf</td> <td>ASSA Observing</td> <td>K Coronaios</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cosmology and Astrophysics</td> <td>F de Bruyn</td> <td>ASSA Communications</td> <td>C Rijdsdijk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Southern African Astronomy History</td> <td>C de Coning</td> <td>ASSA Outreach</td> <td>J Smit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dark Sky</td> <td>J Smit</td> <td>ASSA Archives</td> <td>C de Coning</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Imaging</td> <td>G Els</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Instrumentation</td> <td>C Stewart</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>7.1. ASSA Outreach A Skype session was held on 11 Nov attended by a group (I Glass, A Slotegraaf, K Coronaios, L Cross) to discuss the draft long term strategy for Education/Outreach/Science and Mathematics Awareness sent to the SAASTA mail list Astronet by K Govender. The group prepared a draft reply (below the minutes) and Council agreed that it may be sent by <u>M Hoffman</u> to K Govender.</p>	Section	Director	Area	ASSA	Shallow Sky	D Blane	Scholarships	M Soltynski	Deep Sky	A Slotegraaf	ASSA Observing	K Coronaios	Cosmology and Astrophysics	F de Bruyn	ASSA Communications	C Rijdsdijk	Southern African Astronomy History	C de Coning	ASSA Outreach	J Smit	Dark Sky	J Smit	ASSA Archives	C de Coning	Imaging	G Els			Instrumentation	C Stewart		
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8	ASSA 2014 Symposium	<p>8 ASSA Symposium: 25 – 27 Sep 2014 (Hosts: Durban Centre) Nothing to report. Item will be kept on the agenda.</p>																																
9	General	<p>9. General 9.1 Review of checklist: 1 October: Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with STRUIK. This was noted by Council. AJ Nel noted that it was a “rolling” contract with Struik.</p>																																
10	Next meeting	<p>M Hoffman closed the meeting at 20.26. Next meetings scheduled: 19.30 via Skype: 10 Feb, 24 March, 19 May, 14 July AGM 6 August in Bloemfontein (to be confirmed)</p>																																

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments to the minutes:

Item 3.1

Latest version of the Constitution:

2013-09-12 ASSA Constitutional Amendments With Explanations (updated 19 Nov 13)

Item 7.1

From ASSA

To: Mr Kevin Govender

Re: Astronomy Desk Panel 3 (Astronomy Education/Outreach/Science And Mathematics Awareness)
Draft Long Term Strategy

Dear Kevin

You will be glad to hear that a Sub-Committee of ASSA (The Astronomical Society of Southern Africa) has discussed the above document and we will be happy to support and work with the Panel as the plan unfolds.

The draft already contains a number of aspects to which ASSA believes it can contribute value and we are looking forward to the final document.

ASSA will be willing to participate in any way that we can as a voluntary society and look forward to seeing a central body in place that can coordinate projects and perhaps act as a funding conduit for well thought out proposals.

As mentioned to some extent in the document, ASSA and its around 800 members are already responsible in one way or another for a good deal of public education and outreach. Noteworthy among our activities are the publicly available Sky Guide with about 5000 copies sold each year. A formal long term plan for Astronomy Outreach and committed resources to drive it, will allow ASSA to focus its efforts in support. Thank you for the effort the Panel has already put into this very worthwhile document.

With our best regards

Item 9:**Checklist:**

- 1 Feb Scholarship application dead line (changed 27 Jan 2013)
- 31 Mar Closing date for nominations for: Honorary Members and Awards
- 15 April Deadline for Secretary to send to Council list of nominations.
- 30 April Deadline for agreement with Struik of the printing schedule for the following SGAS
- 1 Jun Call for nominations for Council;
- 30 Jun Closing date for nominations for Council, receipt of Section reports, receipt of report from Scholarships Convenor, submission of items for placing on the Agenda of the AGM, Financial year end;
Council to review appointment and roles of all Council Appointees including the Section Directors;
- 1 Jul Submission of annual updated ASSA membership form, Country Members: Subs renewal
- 31 Jul Closing date for ballot for Council nominations: **Centre AGMs to be concluded before the AGM;**
- AGM 1st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1st Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive notice
- 1 Oct Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with STRUIK