

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	14 July 2014	TIME	19:30 to 21:20	VENUE	Via Skype
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ATTENDANCE

Council

Council	Role
Matie Hoffman	President (Chair)
Pierre de Villiers	Vice-President, Chair - Hermanus Centre
Ian Glass	Outgoing Vice-President
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Hon Secretary
Gary Els	Chair – ASSA Johannesburg Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre
Case Rijdsdijk	Chair - Garden Route Centre, MNASSA Editor
Lia Labuschagne	Outgoing Chair - ASSA Cape Centre

Appointees

Christian Hettlage	Web Master
Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor, Deep Sky Section Director

Apologies (a) Not Present

Pat Booth	Membership Secretary
Maciej Soltynski (a)	Council Member
AJ Nel (a)	Hon Treasurer
Peter Dormehl	Chair - Durban Centre

Also distributed to ASSET:

Tim Cooper for ASSET Trustees

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apologies	M Hoffman welcomed everyone to the 5 th 2013/14 Council meeting. Apologies received are noted in the minutes.
2	Previous Minutes Agenda Matters arising	The minutes of the meeting held 26 May 2014 were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting (C Stewart, C Rijdsdijk). The agenda was accepted. Matters arising from previous meeting are in <i>italics</i> in the minutes, actions underlined.
3	ASSA's Comms channels	Communication 3.1 ASSA Observing and Outreach M Hoffman asked for more information on work done in this area. The draft of ideas progressed to date by working group is attached for input by anyone. <u>B Olivier</u> reported that Pretoria Centre had a very good outreach session recently and he offered to provide the detail to C Rijdsdijk for inclusion in MNASSA. 3.2 Sections: Dark Sky <i>(26 May 2014) Group Membership was filed for on 20 May. It was agreed that:</i> - Council must find out what IESSA scope / effort is in terms of what they have in place to keep skies darker, e.g., light specs, statutory regulations; - Council should agree on what message ASSA would like to put to IESSA; - Also advise Prof Chetty (Astronomy Desk at the NRF) of the existence of the IESSA and what Group Membership entails. The communication to date with the IESSA Secretary was tabled (attached to the

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		<p>agenda) and discussed. C Rijdsdijk noted that annual subscription of R5000 was high and Council agreed that the benefits of joining (still to be assessed) should be compared to this cost. <u>L Cross</u> was tasked to ask the IESSA when ASSA Council representatives (J Smit, C Stewart, L Cross and if available M Hoffman) can meet with IESSA to discuss mutual benefits.</p> <p>3.3 Communication: “Ask an Astronomer” C Rijdsdijk’s report was discussed that he is aware that others also responding to “Ask an Astronomer” which could lead to either conflicting responses or being presented with a "fait accompli" answer from another. It was noted that the only known link to “Ask an Astronomer” is on http://assa.saao.ac.za/contact-us/ which links directly to C Rijdsdijk’s email address but <u>A Slotegraaf</u> undertook to see if there is another link/source somewhere in the communication channels such as Yahoo back-end that could conflict.</p> <p>A Slotegraaf suggested - and was fully supported by Council - that it would be excellent if the Q&A arising from “Ask an Astronomer” communication could be archived on the website for perusal. <u>C Rijdsdijk</u> and <u>A Slotegraaf</u> will communicate on how to take this suggestion further.</p> <p>3.4 ASSA Publications - SGAS A Slotegraaf reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the contract provided by AJ Nel has been signed • the next edition is progressing well and the first draft is due in August • I Glass has kindly agreed to do the proof reading • advertisers’ rate was agreed in discussion with AJ Nel and I Glass • no new advertisers to date and more could be accommodated. Both M Hoffman and L Cross offered to forward a request to advertise to interested party when received from A Slotegraaf. <p>3.5 ASSA Publications – MNASSA and/or Editorial Board C Rijdsdijk extended a plea for input from <u>Centre Chairs</u> or <u>anyone</u> who becomes aware of possible suitable material for MNASSA and to put him in touch with possible willing authors. <u>L Labuschagne</u> offered to submit couple of book reviews and also copy Cape Centre minutes. <u>A Slotegraaf</u> offered to contact Dr Wolfgang Steinicke for a possible article.</p>
4	Scholarships	<p>Scholarships</p> <p>4.1 SAAO-ASSA Scholarships M Soltynski advised Council before the meeting that SAAO has advised him “no money available for the 3 SAAO-ASSA scholarships for 2015 (The amount for 2014 was 3 x R12K=R36000). This is due to DST budget cuts. I will be looking into this further”. <u>M Hoffman</u> offered his assistance in communication with SAAO.</p> <p>4.2 Scholarship request to ASSET: The Council meeting 26 May 2014 (under item ASSET) recorded agreement for approaching ASSET to support an ASSA Scholarship. The letter to ASSET included: “Council is accordingly seeking ways to bolster the Scholarship fund...and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss details”. Guidance given by T Cooper (ASSET representative) on 26 May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the request be sent to the ASSET Secretary C Turk; - an amount be proposed and ASSET would consider this against the constraints of

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		<p>ASSET's annual income stream.</p> <p>Council confirmed that <u>M Soltynski</u> may propose a sum to Council and <u>M Hoffman</u> will assist in this regard.</p>
5	Membership	<p>Membership</p> <p>5.1 Membership: Nothing reported.</p> <p>5.2 Country Membership subscription: Council agreed to keep the subscription the same for 2014/15 year which commenced on 1 July. Stated at present on the website is: "An entrance fee of R 50 is payable on joining, as well as an annual subscription of R 55, which includes a copy of the Sky Guide for the following year". No change is required on the website as the Membership Application Form does not quote the year.</p> <p>5.3 Membership badges: I Glass reported that he found couple hundred ASSA buttonhole badges (photo attached) issued by ASSA by Membership Secretaries years ago. <u>Council</u> agreed these look special and discussed options of how best to deploy these in future. It was finally agreed that the badges should be used going forward for merit awards as and when appropriate to deploy.</p>
7	Governance	<p>Governance</p> <p>6.1 Certificates and Awards – not listed in the Constitution <u>A Slotegraaf</u> confirmed that he will send a proposal to L Cross for distributing and confirmation by Council.</p> <p>6.2 New ASSA Centres' Chairs: Cape Centre: Frank Jacobs (not present) is the new Cape Centre Chair and thus a new Council member. <u>Current Centre Chairs</u> to forward names of new Chairs.</p>
8	Financial Matters	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>7.1 Auditing of 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13 financials <i>(31 Mar) Bookkeeping services: the meeting of 31 March 2014 agreed that a max of R5 000 may be incurred by Council to finalise the bookkeeping required to allow sign off of the audits for the last 3 years and to make a recommendation of how best to proceed to get painless audits in future.</i> <i>(26 May) AJ Nel said that he will finalise documents back to the Auditor by end June. Some recommendations made by CTF (Rudolf Strydom):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Create a central electronic repository, such as Google drive or Dropbox, to keep electronic versions of all bank statements and documents, as well as emails containing approvals for expenses from committee members, if applicable. This will ensure an easily transferable and searchable filing system;</i> 2) <i>Annually (or more often), request a qualified bookkeeper or accountant to compile a trial balance in preparation for the audit.</i> <p><u>AJ Nel</u> to confirm when the relevant documentation has been deposited in a central repository and made available to R Glass the Auditor. M Hoffman expressed Council's hope to have all previous year's financials audited by the time of the AGM.</p> <p>7.2 Financials 2013/14</p>

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		<p>M Hoffman asked for confirmation from <u>AJ Nel</u> that the current financials would be ready for presentation at the AGM and also if it will be forwarded to CTF Services to compile a trial balance for presenting to the Auditor as proposed by CTF Services.</p> <p>M Hoffman asked if CTF Services will present ASSA with an invoice for work done, L Cross replied that she has asked them but not sure if they will.</p> <p>7.3 ASSA registering as non-profit organisation (26 May) <i>AJ Nel advised that he has submitted request for an NPO.</i> No progress reported.</p> <p>7.4 Request for funding from A Slotegraaf for Deep Sky Section: Council debated the funding request as submitted in the agenda. The outcome was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep-Sky talk by Dr Wolfgang Steinicke at SAAO in September 2014 – funding of catering: Council agreed to fund R1000 max for catering. • Graphic artist: logo and branding material for Big Five observing project: Council agreed to fund R1500 max. • Council will consider request for further funding once the logo and branding material is done.
8	ASSA Endowment Trust	<p>ASSET No communication from ASSET received or discussed.</p>
9	ASSA 2014 Symposium	<p>ASSA Symposium: 25 – 27 Sep 2014 (Hosts: Durban Centre) P Dormehl will be asked to circulate an update to Council.</p>
10	General	<p>General 10.1 AGM Date and Venue: Many thanks to ASSA Johannesburg Centre for agreeing to host the AGM at SAASTA Observatory on Wednesday 6 August at 19:30. Notification will be sent to all ASSA members</p> <p>10.2 M Hoffman extended Council’s appreciation to Lia Labuschagne for her valuable contribution on Council.</p>
10	Next meeting	<p>M Hoffman closed the meeting at 21.20 AGM 6 August 19:30 at the Johannesburg Observatory</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments to the minutes:

- Observing and Outreach ideas (item 3.1)
- Photo of ASSA buttonhole badges (item 5.3)

ASSA special focus areas

Section	Director	Area	ASSA
Shallow Sky	D Blane	ASSA Website	C Hettlage
Deep Sky	A Slotegraaf	Scholarships	M Soltynski
Cosmology and Astrophysics	F de Bruyn	ASSA Observing	K Coronaios

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Southern African Astronomy History	C de Coning	ASSA Communications	C Rijdsdijk
Dark Sky	J Smit	ASSA Outreach	J Smit
Imaging	A Versfeld	ASSA Archives	C de Coning
Instrumentation	C Stewart		

Checklist:

- 1 Feb Scholarship application dead line
- 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 notice 1st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1st Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive
- 1 Oct Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik