

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

<b>DATE</b>	26 May 2015	<b>TIME</b>	19:30 to 20:35	<b>VENUE</b>	Via Skype
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### ATTENDANCE

#### Council

Council	Role
Prof Matie Hoffman	President (Chair)
Dr Ian Glass	Outgoing Vice-President
Adv AJ Nel	Hon Treasurer
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Hon Secretary
Eddy Nijeboer	Vice Chair - Cape Centre
Case Rijdsdijk	Chair - Garden Route Centre, MNASSA Editor
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre

#### Appointees

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

#### Apologies (a) /Absent

Dr Pierre de Villiers (a)	Vice-President, Chair - Hermanus Centre
Maciej Soltynski (a)	Council Member
Peter Dormehl (a)	Chair - Durban Centre
Thinus van der Merwe (a)	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre
Frank Jacobs (a)	Chair - ASSA Cape Centre
Jerome Jooste	Chair – Johannesburg Centre
Chris de Coning (a)	ASSA Archiving, Astronomical History
Kos Coronaios (a)	Observing Director
Johan Smit	Outreach and Dark Sky Section Director
Frikkie du Bruyn (a)	Cosmology Section Director
Dave Blane	Shallow Sky Section Director
Allen Versfeld (a)	Imaging Section Director

#### ASSET

Tim Cooper (a)	For ASSET Trustees
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	<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
1	Welcome	M Hoffman welcomed everyone to the 5 <sup>th</sup> ASSA Council meeting for 2014/15.
	Apologies	Apologies received are noted in the minutes.
2	Previous Minutes	M Hoffman asked and received acceptance of the Council minutes of meeting held 16 February 2015. Proposed: C Rijdsdijk, Seconded: C Stewart.
	Agenda Matters arising	The agenda items as proposed were accepted.  Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Actions are underlined
3	ASSA's Comms channels	<b>ASSA Communication</b> <b>3.1 ASSA Observing and Outreach and Dark Sky</b> No item submitted for the agenda or discussed.  <b>3.2 ASSA Publications - SGAS</b> It was noted that 15 additional copies of SGAS 2015 were ordered by AJ Nel and delivered to L Cross as there were none left to send to new Country Members.  The principles around selling SGAS to members were again raised and confirmed:

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- SGAS may not be sold at a profit to any ASSA member.
- The cost price is determined by ASSA Treasurer and invoiced and cost depends on volume purchased.
- ASSA and a number of Centres include the SGAS as part of the membership fee eg Pretoria Centre. Optional inclusion for Cape Centre.
- But if a Centre decides to not include the SGAS as a membership benefit, they may not sell it at a price higher than what they have paid for it.

2016 SGAS: nothing discussed.

### 3.3 ASSA Publications – MNASSA and/or Editorial Board

MNASSA has been published for April. Many thanks to the team, specifically C Rijdsijk and I Glass.

### 3.4 ASSA Publications

*(16 Feb) C de Coning requested copies SGAS / MNASSA and Council agreed: L Cross to send 3 SGAS copies to C de Coning;*

SGAS 2015 copies were posted by L Cross. Item closed.

*(16 Feb) MNASSA printing subject to C de Coning presenting a cost estimate to Council and an invoice to Council in due course.*

No estimate and invoice yet received. Item closed.

### 3.5 Website

*(16 Feb) A Slotegraaf asked to be relieved from his current website maintenance duties, described as ASSA Web Manager role. C Hettlage, also wanted to reduce his effort but kindly agreed to stay on as ASSA Web Master and the link to the SAAO IT team for hosting issues. Going forward updating of the website could be done by Section Directors (and other Council Members) of relevant pages/portions of the website and to also update the Home Page. There is a requirement to find a suitable replacement Web Manager.*

L Cross noted that in discussion with C Hettlage it was suggested that James Smith (WebMaster of the ASSA Cape Centre website) be approached and asked if he would be able to assist. A Skype meeting with James and C Hettlage and A Slotegraaf has been scheduled for 27 May to discuss the matter. L Cross to report back to Council. (Update after the meeting: A Skype call was held on 27 May with James Smith, C Hettlage and A Slotegraaf. James Smith confirmed on 28 May “ it seems straightforward enough, I should be able to handle the task”. L Cross to formalise the introduction of James Smith to everyone.)

4 Scholarships

### 4 Scholarships 2015

#### 4.1 HartRAO-ASSA Scholarships x 3 (R42 000) and ASSA Scholarship x1

*(16 Feb) The scholarship applications dead line was 1 Feb. The ASSA Scholarship amount to be allocated for the ASSA Scholarship was not further discussed. M Soltynski suggested that Council discusses in due course that funds be ring-fenced in future.*

M Soltynski’s report was received before the meeting.

“The ASSA Scholarships Committee comprising I S Glass, A Gray, M West (HartRAO) and M G Soltynski (Convenor) considered 12 valid applications (a number of applications were rejected as invalid). The ASSA Scholarship was awarded to Brandon du Preez (UCT). “

AJ Nel confirmed that the amount awarded R15 000, was paid in February.

“The HartRAO-ASSA Scholarships (R14,000 each) were awarded to:  
Verlon Etsebeth (UNISA) who held a SAAO-ASSA Scholarship in 2014, Michael

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		<p>Sarkis (WITS); Jeremy Smith (UCT) who is studying electrical engineering. All the scholarship winners above are either in their 2nd or 3rd academic year of study. The decision was communicated to all applicants on February 26 and bank details for payment of the winners by ASSA Hon Treasurer were communicated to him on 26 February and 4 March.”</p> <p>AJ Nel reported that HartRAO was invoiced for R42 000 and payment was received from HartRAO (5 May) and payments made (6 May) to all students.</p>
5	Membership	<p><b>Membership</b>  <b>5.1 Membership report</b>  B Olivier reported that there are 64 Country Members. 5 new members:  Johan Uys - Mossel Bay  Ernst Marais - Middelburg  Nkululeko Lupuwana - Centurion  Craig Thompson - Edenvale  Shantel Saayman - Vanrhynsdorp (needs copy of SGAS)</p> <p>M Hoffman suggested that it would be good to keep count of member numbers per Centre. Each <u>Centre Chair</u> to report their numbers at each meeting (<u>L Cross</u> to remind Chairs via the agenda). C Rijsdijk asked that as new Country members join if the detail could be passed to him as well ( <u>Centre Chairs, Membership Secretary</u>).</p>
6	Governance	<p><b>6. Governance</b>  <b>6.1 2013-02-05 ASSA Funds Distribution Policy.doc</b>  C Stewart reported inconsistency in the file between Centres and Sections that need to be corrected. <u>C Stewart</u> and <u>AJ Nel</u> to communicate and send the final version to <u>L Cross</u> to distribute.</p>
7	Financial Matters	<p><b>7. Financial Matters</b>  <b>7.1 ASSA Audit 2011 -14</b>  <b>7.1.1 Signing of documents</b>  <i>(16 Feb) The Audit reports were received - are available on the ASSA repository set up by AJ Nel at <a href="http://1drv.ms/1ALTWww">http://1drv.ms/1ALTWww</a>.</i>  L Cross reported that the one page document covering approvals for all 4 years was rejected by R Glass. He asked that all the individual pages forming part of the document be signed by all the signatories noted. <u>L Cross</u> will continue with this quest.</p> <p><b>7.1.2 ASSA reply to the ASSA management letter (2011-2014) :</b>  <i>(16 Feb) <u>I Glass</u> kindly agreed to compile a reply as requested to the items raised in Annexure 1 on behalf of Council (based on the minutes of the meeting).</i>  A reply compiled by I Glass was sent on behalf of Council to R Glass on 4 March (assa reply to auditor 150304.pdf attached to the minutes and AJ Nel is asked to please place it on the 1drive). Item closed.</p> <p><b>7.1.3 VDP Application</b>  <i>(16 Feb) The letter also requests that ASSA immediately register for tax by means of a VDP-voluntary disclosure programme application. This must cover the past 3 years at a minimum. R Glass’ fee excl vat , for attending to the VDP application and rendition of tax returns for June 2012 to June 2014 will be R 4500. This proposal was accepted by Council using the key motivating factor that ASSA is involved in the commercial activity of selling SGAS’s.</i>  No progress yet from R Glass. May be awaiting items to be completed.</p> <p><b>7.1.4 Payment for audit services</b>  <i>(16 Feb) This letter requests R22 800 (incl) to be invoiced to ASSA as a “nominal</i></p>

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*recompense” for the 4-year audit completed. Council agreed to this request and will be advised to R Glass when replying to the Management Letter (L Cross)*

R Glass advised on 24 April that payment was received. Item closed.

### 7.1.5 Actions from the Management Letter

#### Progressed

AJ Nel reported that all statements for one market link account has been received for 5 years from SBSA Pinelands and was placed on the 1drive <http://1drv.ms/1ALTWww>

Membership Secretary on on-going basis:

- Send Member List to CTF Services each month.
- Reconcile payments between the current account statements and the members list

Pastel was introduced and Management Accounts from July 2014 to end March 2015 were compiled by the Accountants and sent to Auditor on 23 April 2015.

For AJ Nel and accountants to note:

All payments to have a corresponding invoice processed instituted.

The year's totals of subscriptions, donations and advance payments needs to be recorded. If donations to ASSET, these will need to be set aside and forwarded to ASSET.

#### Outstanding - to be actioned by the next ASSA Council meeting:

Marketlink Accounts (AJ Nel):

- AJ Nel is waiting for statements for 5 years for the 2<sup>nd</sup> market link account and send these to CTF Services to record in the books of account.
- Monthly statements to be obtained.
- Purpose of Market Link accounts to be confirmed by Council in due course once access obtained. .

Need to capitalise ASSA income (Council in due course) :

- Current account: is over R 300 000 in the account. This means that interest is not being earned at rates that the Marketlink accounts earn, to the Society's detriment.

Transferring the 3 accounts to the new signatories (AJ Nel, I Glass, B Olivier)

I Glass visited SBSA Pinelands on 21 May 2015 to start the process.

Confirmation was requested by R Glass that the current account is now recorded in the name of the Society. (AJ Nel)

Quarterly financial statements (commencing from 30 September 2014) to be sent to R Glass. AJ Nel to keep track and ensure the CTF Services provide these to L Cross to send to R Glass.

#### 7.2 Comments on Monthly accounts:

*(16 Feb) monthly working account statements from SBSA should be viewed by a number of Council Members. Specifically the President and Vice-Presidents be tasked to view the monthly accounts which will be placed on <http://1drv.ms/1ALTWww> (AJ Nel)*

AJ Nel has placed the documents for April and May on the 1drive. Item closed

#### 7.3 ASSA registering as non-profit organisation

AJ Nel noted that Council's discussions at the previous meeting confirmed that ASSA will not be registering as a NPO at this stage. Item closed.

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### **7.4 Observing Sections funding**

*(16 Feb) Further to a mail sent on all Council members and Appointees on 2 Feb 2015 to remind Members and Appointees about the ASSA Funds Distribution Policy finalised in February 2013, two requests were received.*

#### **7.4.1 From Observing Director**

*(16 Feb) K Coronaios requested to visit 7 Centres between May and Dec 2015.*

*Value R19739.50. Key benefits are to raise interest with the public and that a visit would attract a few hundred people to a viewing session.*

*Outcomes:*

- *A pilot visit is proposed to one or two Centres - Bloemfontein Centre agreed to be the pilot, subject to the Bloemfontein Committee approval - with the purpose for the Observing Director to detail the objectives, costs and benefits to table with Council (this does not have to wait for the next Council meeting);*
- *A report - after the visit - would detail and assess the success for other Centres;*
- *The objectives must detail how the visit will further astronomy in general (to be in line with the funding objective).*

Extract from the email from K Coronaios to L Cross before the meeting but not received by L Cross in time to notify Council. Extract from his email:

- Pilot visit to Bloemfontein Centre: still waiting to hear from the Centre regarding dates during next school holidays (June/July) - which is the only time that suits;
- Have had to make other plans and cannot see myself making a long trip to Bloemfontein this year;
- Pretoria and Johannesburg Centres are closer and would give me time to visit one over a weekend. This might be a better option for a pilot visit - if Council approves. Would like to discuss DLSR/CCD photometry methods with Jerome so maybe a visit to the Johannesburg Centre would be suitable. Topic to be decided but could be amateur contributions to astronomy or astrophotography/video.

The item was not discussed as the email from K Coronaios was not received in time by L Cross. (It is suggested that K Coronaios sends a formal request to L Cross for forwarding to Council for consideration - to allow processing of the request before the next meeting).

#### **7.4.2 Launch of the Big 5 of the African Sky”**

*(16 Feb) A Slotegraaf requested R10 160 for the “Launch of the Big 5 of the African Sky” observing project in order to “faciliate the launch & promotion of the “Big 5 of the African Sky” observing programme”. Benefits will be judged by “number of reports received and published on website. Budget breakdown provided.*

*Outcomes:*

- *Council approved R10 160 to be deployed as noted;*
- *Section Director to track and report to Treasurer on the deployment of funds;*
- *Any grantee must present invoices to the Treasurer for payment;*
- *Section Director will provide reports on outcomes/benefits achieved against expenditure as project progresses.*

A Slotegraaf reported that preproduction has been completed, printing still has to be done. He will shortly be in touch with Hennie Maas iro the launch. No monies yet required to be spent. He will send invoice when funds are required.

#### **7.4.1 Project to construct a scale model of Proxima and the Sun using the distance**

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		<p><b>between Johannesburg and Cape Town as a baseline</b></p> <p>The proposal was submitted by C Rijdsdijk in support of the celebrations of the centenary of Proxima's discovery and is attached to the minutes. The main intent was to create a permanent record of the event. He reported that he has communicated with the SAAO who is willing to participate in the project. The support of the Jhb Observatory - and any funding contributions - will still be obtained.</p> <p>C Rijdsdijk agreed to contact Cape Centre who also offered to be involved.</p> <p>Council discussed the project and agreed to allow a ceiling of R10 000 towards building of the structures or plaques and C Rijdsdijk may thus continue with project detail and work with SAAO and ASSA and SAASTA.</p>
8	ASSA Endowment Trust	<p><b>ASSET</b> <i>(16 Feb) Trustees of the ASSA Trust intend to meet in Cape Town to discuss the way forward.</i></p> <p>T Cooper advised that there has been no progress since Cliff Turk's operation. He has been in discussion with the members of ASSET and has offered to travel to Cape Town at his own cost to enable a face to face meeting to try and progress this issue finally. A date of 25 June has been agreed.</p>
10	General	<p><b>General items</b></p> <p><b>10.1 Midlands Centre</b> F de Bruyn wrote to Council that a meeting of members of the former Midlands Centre has been convened and they decided to unanimously to resurrect the ASSA Centre and asked permission from Council to use the name "Midlands Centre" - which was agreed to by Council. They will use the same constitution as the former Centre which F de Bruyn is asked to submit to Council for the record.</p> <p><u>A Slotegraaf</u> kindly offered to contact F de Bruyn to include their detail in SGAS 2016.</p> <p><b>10.2 General</b> M Hoffman reported that he met with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Honorary Rangers of South Africa: they were interested to hear about the Big 5 of Southern Africa Sky. They will make people aware of the it and may even include in their training to support their members and tourist.</li> <li>- SA Radio League: many of them are communicating with ASSA</li> </ul> <p><b>10.3 Checklist review</b> Everyone to please note the upcoming deadlines in the checklist below and forward nominations to Council to L Cross. <u>AJ Nel</u> offered to provide a list of positions which are up for renew.</p>
11	Closure  Next meeting	<p>M Hoffman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20:35</p> <p>Next Meetings: 13 July at 19:30 via Skype. AGM 5 August in Cape Town to be hosted by ASSA Cape Centre ( <u>Eddy Nijeboer</u> to contact L Cross regarding planning of event)</p>

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Attachments to the minutes:

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Proxima Scale Model.pdf

### ASSA special focus areas

Section	Director	Area	ASSA
Shallow Sky	D Blane	ASSA Website	C Hettlage James Smith
Deep Sky	A Slotegraaf	Scholarships	M Soltynski
Cosmology and Astrophysics	F de Bruyn	ASSA Observing	K Coronaios
Southern African Astronomy History	C de Coning	ASSA Communications	C Rijdsijk
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 1<sup>st</sup> Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1<sup>st</sup> Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive notice
- 1 Oct Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik

**END**