

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	27 April 2016	TIME	19:30 to 20:53	VENUE	Via Skype
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ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Dr Pierre de Villiers	President (Chair)
Case Rijsdijk	Vice President, Garden Route Centre Chair, MNASSA Editor
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Peter Dormehl	Chair - Durban Centre
Eddy Nijeboer	Chair - Cape Centre
Jerome Jooste	Chair – Johannesburg Centre

Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor, Deep Sky Section Director
Dave Blane	Shallow Sky Section Director
Allen Versfeld	Imaging Section Director (connection/sound issues)

Apologies (a) /Absent

Prof Matie Hoffman	Vice President, Chair - Bloemfontein Centre
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Johan Smit	Chair –Pretoria Centre, Outreach and Dark Sky Section Director
Bosman Olivier	Membership Secretary
James Smith (a)	Web Manager
Steve de Vos (a)	Acting Chair - Midlands Centre
Chris de Coning (a)	ASSA Archiving, Astronomical History
Kos Coronaios (a)	Observing Director
Dr Claire Flanagan (a)	Convenor of Scholarships
Frikkie du Bruyn (a)	Cosmology Section Director
Dr Christian Hettlage	Web Master

ASSET

Tim Cooper (a) For ASSET Trustees

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome	P de Villiers welcomed everyone to the 4 th ASSA Council meeting for 2015/16 year.
	Apologies	Apologies received are noted in the minutes.
2	Previous Minutes	Council accepted the minutes of the meeting held 23 February 2016 (Proposed by C Stewart, seconded by C Rijsdijk).
	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	3 ASSA Communication 3.1 Centre Chair and Section Director Updates Reports were received from Deep Sky, Cosmology and Instrumentation Directors, Garden Route Centre, Cape Centre Newsletter and are attached to the minutes. P de Villiers confirmed - when asked by E Nijeboer - that the reports are requested before each Council meeting, thus ~ every two months. C Rijsdijk noted how he envies the talks listed in the Cape Centre Newsletter.

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P de Villiers offered to provide a draft format for the reports.

3.2 ASSA President visits to Centres

P de Villiers said he would be able to visit the KZN Centres, ~ 5 May or 30 June, Garden Route ~ end May/early June, Bloemfontein ~ June and will liaise further with the Chairs of these Centres.

He noted key comments from his visits to date to the Cape and Gauteng Centres: the common denominators for success of ASSA are the Centre Chairs, they are precious resources. In addition to the visits to date, the Centre reports have provided valuable further information about the Centres activities.

He re-iterated his intent to draft a report on ASSA in due course once the visits have been completed which will give overview of all ASSA and astronomy related activities in Southern Africa.

3.3 Outreach

3.3.1 SKA Outreach (24 Nov) *P de Villiers offered to send email to L Raynard on an initiative for educational outreach (workshop to enrich the DOE curriculum).*

(23 Feb) a date has been set with the circuit manager for four workshops for science teachers and a trial run with 600 Gr 6 learners.

P de Villiers reported that he has spoken to Wendy Colleyn and a workshop is planned for 27 April to discuss detail of the workshop for Science Teachers in the Overberg.

C Rijdsdijk informed that the ex-SciFest Director (with whom he has worked for a long time) is now with SKA - Outreach and is a valuable entry point for ASSA.

C Rijdsdijk raised concern that he is aware that individuals have approached the SKA on behalf of the ASSA and this could be seen as a conflict of interest. The meeting agreed with the principle he stated: if anyone is interested in approaching the SKA in the name of ASSA, it has to be done via the ASSA Council.

3.3.2 Other Outreach

P de Villiers noted:

- Successful event with the Overberg Home Schoolers (~ 65)
- Hermanus is building a full scale model of the Solar System along a pathway at Hemanus and students are helping with the construction.

3.4 ASSA Publications - SGAS

A Slotegraaf confirmed that his agreement with ASSA for SGAS 2017 was not yet formalised. P de Villiers asked AJ Nel (in absentia) to finalise.

Ideas for SGAS 2017:

Consider including list of contacts that public can contact for Outreach activities:

Closing date for SGAS input:

Images / minor amendments: late July / Early August:

Substantial text: end June

SGAS Competition:

The Finance Sub Committee to consider if funds can be made available for another competition.

A Slotegraaf noted that his view is that the purpose of the competition is “buying awareness creation”. He will analyse the responses received.

Outcomes from 2016 Competition to consider learning for possible next time:

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If there is another Competition, Struik will again be asked to help with marketing. Method of entry will be reviewed to see if it can/should change from postal only entries. Non-postal entries are dependent on using an unique number per entry. Marketing: Centres should be asked to include marketing in their communication to their members.

3.5 ASSA Publications – MNASSA and/or Editorial Board

Book Review Editor:

C Rijdsdijk informed Council that he is looking for someone to perform the role of Book Review Editor. Everyone to consider and forward nomination/s to C Rijdsdijk.

Some of the principles used in the past were that the Book Review Editor could approach publishers for a book to review or ASSA would be requested to fund a new book for review. It was suggested that a request could be sent to the ASSA mail lists (C Rijdsdijk). Centre Chairs could also put out requests for reviews (as is done by the Cape Centre) to be sent to C Rijdsdijk to include in MNASSA.

Latest edition MNASSA:

C Rijdsdijk informed that the May edition will be on the website before the end of April and extended his appreciation to I Glass for his contribution.

P de Villiers extended thanks to C Rijdsdijk for his excellent effort with MNASSA.

MNASSA General:

A Slotegraaf specifically noted his appreciation to C Rijdsdijk for his effort on MNASSA and re-iterated his view on the importance of the publication being the journal and record of astronomical events in South Africa.

P de Villiers agreed to send a note to Centre Chairs to ask for their support in contributing content to the MNASSA publication and to inform their members on how to obtain MNASSA via the ASSA website and notification via the mail list.

C Rijdsdijk noted that there is an article by C de Coning in the next edition of MNASSA covering how the ASSA Archive works which should make for interesting reading.

3.6 Website

Outreach on the website:

C Rijdsdijk suggested that should anyone (the Public) want to have some sort of outreach activity, there should be a contact on the website where people can request such a visit/activity for a club/school group etc.

A Slotegraaf confirmed the principle agreed was that Section Directors are responsible for keeping information current and relevant under their pages on the website and thus J Smit was asked for his contribution to update the Outreach page.

L Cross to convene a telecom session with the relevant contributors to the website to discuss:

- Section Directors to keep their pages active and current on the website.
- Specifically the Outreach page should include contributions from Centres, ASSA Members, etc;
- Dates information: review where data should be kept up to date by whom else be removed;

P Dormehl noted that the ASSA website when going onto MNASSA page shows a 2013 date. This was discussed and A Slotegraaf offered to fix it straight away (meeting thanked

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		<p>Auke).</p> <p>P de Villiers proposed and meeting agreed that Centre websites should have a link to the ASSA Website and the MNASSA website. <u>Centre Chairs</u> were asked to note and action (<u>P de Villiers</u> to include this in his note to the Centre Chairs).</p> <p>3.7 Dark Sky benchmark initiative <i>(13 July) M Hoffman reported that he and Auke are preparing a plan - for possible submission to the NRF - on process for establishing benchmark for measuring light. A Slotegraaf reported that he had no update in this matter.</i></p>
4	Scholarships	<p>4. Scholarships HartRAO -ASSA Scholarships x 3 and ASSA Scholarship x1 C Flanagan submitted her report before the meeting (attached to the minutes) and also noted highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the four scholarships have all been awarded, and the ASSA scholarship funding paid over to UCT; - one awardee did not need the full scholarship, so the balance was allocated to a fifth candidate; - four of the scholarship holders are previous holders; one is new; - huge thanks to AJ Nel for working at the speed of light on payments. <p>P de Villiers extended the Council's appreciation to C Flanagan for her excellent effort in respect of Scholarships. He also noted that he will discuss some general principles regarding the ASSA Scholarships.</p>
5	Membership	<p>5 Membership 5.1 Membership report and number of members per Centre: <u>L Cross</u> to follow up with <u>B Olivier</u> to provide the information and not wait for the next meeting: Centre and Country Membership numbers</p>
6	Governance	<p>6 Governance 6.1 All Centre Constitutions Council discussed and agreed that all <u>Centres</u> make available to C de Coning a paper copy of their Constitutions for him to place in the ASSA Archive. (<u>C de Coning</u> to advise Chairs how he would prefer to receive such a paper copy).</p> <p>6.2 Centre AGMs Centre AGM's must be completed by late July. To keep to this deadline is to allow specific contact detail for Centres - which is considered important - to be included in the SGAS 2017 eg contacts for Outreach.</p>
7	Financial Matters	<p>7. Financial Matters 7.1 Ensure a fixed-cost benefit to Hon Members <i>(27 Feb) AJ Nel proposed at the meeting in November 2015 that the benefit should rather be a fixed annual financial contribution and tabled a proposal of R500 book gift voucher from Amazon or another internet based company. The voucher would be drawn by AJ Nel as Treasurer and emailed to the Hon Members as and when their current annual benefit is due.</i> L Cross confirmed that a note was sent to all Hon Members advising of the changed benefit and the couple of queries that were returned were handled by AJ Nel. It was proposed and agreed that the item be closed.</p> <p>7.2 Register for SARS (Voluntary Disclosure) Item outstanding from the Management Letter for 2013/14 year: Register a VDP-</p>

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voluntary disclosure programme application - to cover the past 3 years as a minimum.
(23 Feb) CTF Services to be asked for this task. AJ Nel to process a formal request to CTF Services and ask if they are willing to do the VDP and at what cost.
L Cross informed the meeting that the request was sent to CTF Services and feedback is awaited.

7.3 Financial Sub-Committee

P de Villiers proposed - and the meeting agreed - that a Finance Sub Committee (comprising P de Villiers, AJ Nel, C Rijdsdijk, L Cross) be tasked to consider and come up with proposals to present to Council to cover at least these aspects:

- Software to benefit the ASSA main publications;
- Funding of special projects requests received for the 2016 year eg Oral Histories Project (submitted by C de Coning obo A Slotegraaf);
- Concept of Honoraria. To take an objective view of giving financial recognition;
- If monies should be allocated to a SGAS 2017 Competition and basis of allocation (eg Rand amount per member);
- Finalising the three signatories (Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Secretary) on ASSA accounts and combine investment accounts.

L Cross to arrange a telecom session at the earliest time.

7.4 Recording Oral Histories/Indigenous star stories

(23 Feb) C Rijdsdijk offered to put through a proposal to the NRF to also capture Indigenous Star Stories.

C Rijdsdijk submitted an update before the meeting that he spoke to - and received support and suggestions from - Dr Beverley Damonse of the NRF and Prof. Thebe Medupe UNW, who both suggested that a proposal be submitted to Prof Nithaya Chetty, NRF Dep CEO and Head of the Astronomy sub-Agency.

C Rijdsdijk will draw up a proposal for Council to look at and contribute before submitting.

7.5 Financial Statements ending 30 June 2015

(Not discussed at the meeting but to note.

Many thanks are extended to I Glass for:

- opening the ASSA post at the SAAO
- and forwarding to L Cross the 2 signed bound copies of the Annual Financial Statements for the accounting period 30 June 2015 ASSA received from Crowe Horwath.

L Cross to deliver both copies to offices of CTF Services.)

8 Checklist Review

8 Actions arising from the Checklist Review

8.1 Awards 2016

31 March was the closing date for Award nominations.

Dave Blane has submitted his nomination for a General Observing Certificate Award for the solar and sunspot observations made this past year.

C Rijdsdijk mentioned that he feels that there has been a distinct lack of awards the last couple of years.

It was discussed and agreed that the President and Vice- Presidents will manage the award process for the year to ensure fairness and act like an impartial Award Panel.

P de Villiers offered to draft a note requesting award nominations from Section Directors