

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	6 Oct 2016	TIME	19:30 to 20:36	VENUE	Via Skype
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ATTENDANCE

Council

Council	Role
Dr Pierre de Villiers	President (Chair)
Case Rijdsdijk	Vice President, Garden Route Centre Chair, MNASSA Editor
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Bosman Olivier	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Peter Dormehl	Acting for Chair - Durban Centre
Eddy Nijeboer	Chair - Cape Centre
Jerome Jooste	Chair – Johannesburg Centre

Appointees

Dr Claire Flanagan	Convenor of Scholarships
Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor, Deep Sky Section Director
Allen Versfeld	Imaging Section Director
Percy Jacobs	Spectroscopy and Photometry Section Director
Clyde Foster	Shallow Sky Section Director

Connection issues with Skype

Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Dave Blane	Shallow Sky Section Director

Apologies (a) /Absent

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

ASSET

Tim Cooper (a)	For ASSET Trustees
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	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apologies	P de Villiers welcomed everyone to the 1 st ASSA Council meeting for 2016/17 year. Apologies received are noted in the minutes. Note: some attendees had problems connecting to Skype call; next meeting should note and resolved the issues.
2	Previous Minutes Agenda Matters arising	Council accepted the minutes of the meeting held 27 April 2016 (Proposed by P de Villiers, seconded by C Rijdsdijk). The agenda items as proposed were accepted. Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Actions are underlined
3	Eclipse 1/9/16 ASSA Project	3 ASSA Project: Eclipse 1 Sep P de Villiers again stressed that the project was a huge success and congratulated and thanked everyone mainly Claire, Kos, Auke and Allen Case that got involved. And also thanked anyone who will send in any contributions in due course to MNASSA.

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		<p>He said that in his Centre's community the interest will continue and there will be solar observations scheduled at local schools.</p> <p>Some lessons learnt were noted by Auke and he suggested that it would be good to get a core team together in similar formalised way to respond to other upcoming events. C Flanagan suggested that maybe the best approach is for every meeting (or at the beginning of the year) to consider if there are upcoming events and then get those who are interested in participating forming similar groups such as the one for the Eclipse. An agenda will be added (<u>L Cross</u>).</p> <p>If there is an upcoming event covering outreach then <u>K Coronaios</u> is asked to take the lead and gather an interested group to participate.</p>
4	ASSA's Comms	<p>4 ASSA Communication</p> <p>4.1 Council communication</p> <p>The latest version of the Communication document is attached.</p> <p><u>L Cross</u> to ask updates from C Flanagan and <u>C de Coning</u> for their roles as the detail noted does not do justice to what they actual do as Scholarships Convenor and Historical Section Director. (C Flanagan supplied during meeting and update is included in the attached)</p> <p>All the reports received are attached to the minutes.</p> <p>P de Villiers requested recording his gratitude of all the reports received. Specifically noting the impressive reports from the Cape Centre Chair (E Nijeboer) and the new Shallow Sky Director (C Foster). He thanked all for their enthusiasm and asked to keep the momentum.</p> <p>4.2 ASSA Publications - SGAS</p> <p>4.2.1 SGAS 2016</p> <p>Further to the question at the AGM from Neville Young about how many Sky Guides were in fact sold by Struik: this reply was received via A Slotegraaf from Struik's Pippa:</p> <p>“Sales as follows: 1761 TRADE 2133 NON TRADE 5 CURIO 96 EXPORT TOTAL SOLD 3995 ASSA (which would fall into NON-TRADE) took 300 @ R17.26 per copy and a further 332 at less 50%. The 2017 edition will be available in book shops, and ready to be mailed to ASSA: during the last week of October. We really enjoy this working relationship and are very pleased to be associated with the ASSA and the Sky Guide publication. It works well for us, and I hope it works for you too.”</p> <p>4.2.2 SGAS 2017</p> <p>It is understood that AJ has not yet ordered any SGAS 2017. ASSA Centres were asked to get their orders through to AJ. The cost is R55 per SGAS. L Cross to send another reminder to Centre Chairs on number for next year.</p> <p>4.3 ASSA Publications – MNASSA and/or Editorial Board</p> <p>C Rijdsdijk offered to again send out a reminder for input to the final edition of the year which will focus on private observatories. He confirmed everything is in line for this</p>

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edition required at end of the October.

4.4 Websites

P de Villiers noted that a reminder should again please be made to Section Directors and Centre Chairs to check that their pages on the ASSA website are up to date.

And also that the Centres' websites link to ASSA's site and include other agreed documents such as the Constitution.

P de Villiers also noted that he will use the very useful resources posted on the website by eg, Clyde, Claire and Auke for the outreach to schools in Hermanus.

4.5 Dark Sky benchmark initiative

(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.

P de Villiers did try and contact M Hoffman on this item. A Slotegraaf also confirmed that he has had no further update.

4.6 Essays

(28 June) ASSA mission is to encourage and support enjoyment of astronomy, observing and outreach. It was proposed that a call be put out for essays.

It was not finalised at the meeting who need to put out the call for essays (Council)

It was discussed that worthy essays could be included on the website and MNASSA; reservations were expressed of publicising same in the SGAS.

C Rijdsdijk commented that the Royal Society has an annual essay competition.

4.7 Communication with Country Members and Clubs outside Centres

The intent of the item was to discuss how to improve communication with non-ASSA clubs (such as Louis Trichardt and West Rand Astronomy) and Country Members.

C Rijdsdijk noted that GRASSA has very good communication with the Groot Brak River Club run by Andrew Gray in Mossel Bay. The Club has ~ 103 members.

P de Villiers reconfirmed his intent noted at the AGM to make contact with the established astronomy clubs.

4.8 An ASSA Symposium

Comments received from C Rijdsdijk for Council to consider.

- Do we need to have a Symposium every 2 yrs? Could it not be every 3 yrs or maybe just at an appropriate time for a special occasion/event? Like 1987A's 30th birthday with the Theme SNe. Other themes could be Celebrating HST, "Amateur Science - Astrophotography, Spectroscopy and Photometry" as theme or Celebrating Hipparcos and have "Cosmic Rulers" as a theme;
- It takes quite some effort and needs to be somewhere where there is a critical mass of members/professionals to make it work.
- It must be planned at least 1 yr ahead of time and could possibly coincide with other ASSA events. This means late 2017 or early 2018 would be the earliest times.
- One outcome should be better relations/interactions between amateurs and professionals.

It was discussed that these comments specifically the objective to improve relationships between amateur and professionals, were very valid.

It was agreed that a separate Skype session be arranged before the next Council meeting

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		<p>and C Rijdsdijk will communicate with L Cross to get item prepared for discussion.</p> <p>4.9 ASSA Outreach funding C Rijdsdijk proposal for outreach projects was tabled - the full request is attached and will be discussed by the <u>Financial Sub-Committee</u>.</p>
5	Scholarships	<p>5 Scholarships (HartRAO -ASSA Scholarships x 3 and ASSA Scholarship x1) 5.1 Update C Flanagan reported that the website was updated which include a couple of small changes to the application process.</p> <p>She confirmed that HartRAO - ASSA Scholarships will again be three and will be R16 000 each. Applies to 1st years. She also requested confirmation of the how much the ASSA's Scholarship amount would be. (It was understood that <u>AJ Nel</u> proposed R19 000 but this requires his formal confirmation). This fund applies to 2nd, 3rd and possibly Honours' year.</p> <p>The various channels of marketing the Scholarships were discussed and confirmed by C Flanagan.</p> <p>5.2 Scholarship donation from PE Peoples Observatory Society The donation for scholarship purposes which was addressed to C Rijdsdijk by the PE Peoples Observatory Society (and is attached to the minutes) was lauded by P de Villiers and members and formally referred to the <u>Financial Sub-Committee</u>.</p> <p>C Rijdsdijk also kindly offered to make some proposals on the investment aspects noted by the Society in time for the Sub-Committee meeting. He noted that they propose it for 2nd and 3rd year students.</p> <p>P de Villiers noted that this was a fantastic offer by the Society and expressed his gratitude to C Rijdsdijk for his involvement with the Society in getting the proposal to ASSA. He raised the question of what the Fund should be called. C Rijdsdijk commented that maybe the Cooke Scholarship should be considered.</p> <p><u>C Flanagan</u> offered to send her input on the proposal to C Rijdsdijk and the Financial sub-committee for consideration when replying to the Society.</p>
6	Membership	<p>6 Membership 6.1 Membership B Olivier informed before the meeting that "only 75 people renewed and therefore suggests that we order 90 copies of the SGAS to accommodate possible new members".</p> <p>The Country Membership will increase next year from the current R65.</p> <p>6.2 Hon Membership: the amount to advise Hon Members to claim is requested from <u>AJ Nel</u> to inform.</p>
7	Governance	<p>7 Governance 7.1 Council and Appointees 2016/17 The latest list is attached and shows the update for Durban Centre Chair as Peter Cramb as stand for Mike Radlow who may not be able to attend each meeting.</p> <p>The Centre Chair roles that are still not clear: Midlands Centre and it is assumed that Bloemfontein is still Prof M Hoffman but still needs to be confirmed. P de Villiers will</p>

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follow up with Matie about who represents ASSA Bloemfontein.

Welcome was extended to the new appointees: Percy Jacobs for Spectroscopy and Photometry, Clyde Foster for Shallow Sky, and Kos Coronaios who added Outreach Director role to his current role as Observing Director.

7.2 Amendments to the ASSA Constitution - Independent Compiler

The AGM approved the amendment to the ASSA Constitution to include the following resolution:

“An Independent Compiler’s Report on the financial statements be prepared and submitted together with the financial statements for the approval by members at the annual general meeting. The firm or individual engaged to prepare such a Report for the new financial year, be appointed at the annual general meeting. “

The current items in the ASSA Constitution refer to audit process and will be suitably amended after the meeting and all ASSA members will be informed when the final version is on the website:

- *18.4. The financial statement shall be audited by the auditor or auditing firm appointed at the previous AGM.*
- *18.5. Financial statements for each financial period shall be prepared and submitted for approval to the council once completed and audited.*
- *19.8.5. to elect an auditor or auditing firm for the ensuing year;*
- *12.2.3. to receive the treasurer's unaudited financial statement for the year ended 30 June;*
- *Glossary*

It was tabled that ASSA appoints Ronnie Glass of Chartac Advisory Services Pty Ltd as ASSA’s Independent Compiler.

The Constitution required amendment to include the revision (AJ Nel).
And then be communicated to all members (AJ Nel, L Cross, B Olivier)

L Cross reported that R Glass asked “where are the financials for 2016” and she will follow up with AJ Nel and CTF Services.

7.3 New Award: Overbeek Award

Council noted the motivation of a new ASSA award by the ASSA Award Sub-Committee (comprising the President and Vice Presidents) for the new Overbeek Award.

C Flanagan commented to C Rijdsdijk to add the wording that the award is for amateur astronomers.

The formal information to be included on the website (J Smith)

(Case to please reread the principles below as updates have been made - in red)

“The Overbeek Award

The council of the society established an award in October 2016 to be known as the Overbeek Award in honour of Daniel Michael Overbeek, one time President of the ASSA and prolific observer of Variable Stars.

Awards shall be made from time to time as the President **and Vice Presidents**, hereafter called the panel shall decide.

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Awards shall be made, without distinction of nationality or language, to any ASSA member **and amateur astronomer** whose observational astronomy has been published in a recognized astronomical journal, including MNASSA.

The panel shall evaluate the nomination and certificate to bear the citation to indicate for what the award is made.

The panel can consult suitably qualified referees to report on the nomination under consideration for an award.

Procedure for making an award: nominations substantiated by written reasons, in respect of observational astronomy to be published in a journal of recognised standing, including MNASSA, within the previous five years, may be made to the ASSA Secretary by any member of the ASSA in good standing.”

The first two nominees motivated and agreed to by the Panel are:
Berto Monard and Andre van Staden.

C Rijdsdijk will give suitable wording for the certificates to L Cross who will produce the certificates and arrange notification of the award (by the President) to the two recipients.

7.4 ASSA Sections

At the AGM it was proposed that “Council consider splitting the section on Photometry and Spectroscopy into two sections”. Council considered the proposal and key comments made:

- Relatively similar tools, techniques;
- Not sufficient interest in the country to split sections
- Two are interwoven and pointless to separate
- Does depend on the interest and extend to which the Director wants to contribute to scope of Section.

The appointed Director, P Jacobs, answered that he was keen to encourage people and grow the number of people involved in both areas and Council agreed to keep the scope Spectroscopy and Photometry.

Council agreed that it should be kept under a single Director and see how it goes.

8 Financial Matters

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P de Villiers recommended a practical proposal that going forward, the Financial Sub-Committee meets on all financial items before any Council meeting in order to progress financial related items. And outcomes of such meetings to be submitted wherever appropriate prior to Council before Council meetings.

This was fully supported.

No further item under Financial Matters was discussed as AJ Nel was not present at the meeting.

8.1 Financials for 2015/16

Report of current status of final financials from ASSA Accountants (AJ Nel)
Financials to be submitted to the ASSA Independent Compiler (AJ Nel, L Cross)

8.2 Financial Sub-Committee (P de Villiers, AJ Nel, C Rijdsdijk, L Cross, B Olivier)

8.2.1 Brought forward items

Progress is requested from AJ Nel:

- *Honoraria - MNASSA: Income from MNASSA (Monthly Notes of the Astronomical Society of Southern Africa) being listed on the South African Journals site, www.sabinet.co.za, to be distributed to MNASSA Editor and Team*

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		<p><i>of contributors;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Finalising the three signatories (Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Secretary) on ASSA accounts and combine investment account</i> <p>8.2.2 Items for the year to be considered by Sub-Committee: <i>23/2/16 AJ Nel proposed that 75% of net income could be deployed for special projects that are accepted by Council. All proposals to be submitted for Council attention by 10 March for consideration before the next Council meeting in April.</i></p> <p>Council to suggest items to be considered by the Sub-Committee for Special Projects for 2016/17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Special Projects brought forward from previous year to be finally decided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral Histories Project (submitted by C de Coning obo A Slotegraaf) in January 2016 b) New request: possibility of 2017 Sky Guides being sponsored for outreach groups. (A Slotegraaf to motivate) c) Others to be motivated <p>Looking at just over R 16k for special projects for 2017</p> <p>8.3 Recording Indigenous star stories <i>(27 April) C Rijdsijk will draw up proposal for Council to look at and contribute before submitting to Prof Nithaya Chetty, NRF Dep CEO, Head of the Astronomy sub-Agency. Update if any (CR)</i></p>
9	ASSA Endowment Trust	<p>9 ASSET No item was reported from ASSET.</p>
10		<p>10 Checklist review</p> <p>1 Feb Scholarship application dead line</p> <p>31 Mar Closing date for nominations for: Honorary Members and Awards</p> <p>15 April Deadline for Secretary to send to Council list of nominations.</p> <p>30 April Deadline for agreement with Struik of the printing schedule for the following SGAS</p> <p>1 Jun Call for nominations for Council; Annual review of website</p> <p>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;</p> <p>1 Jul Submission of annual updated ASSA membership form, Country Members: Subs renewal</p> <p>31 Jul Closing date for ballot for Council nominations: Centre AGMs to be concluded before the AGM;</p> <p>AGM 1st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1st Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive notice</p> <p>1 Oct Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik</p>
11	General	<p>11 General</p> <p>11.1 Image of the Month on the ASSA website: A Versfeld reported that he has delegated the image of the month to Neil Viljoen and he is doing a good job thus far.</p>
12	Next meeting	<p>Next meetings: The next meetings: 22 Nov, 21 Feb, 23 May, 25 July, AGM 2 August</p>

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Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments:

ASSA Communication 161021 refer 4.1
 ASSA Outreach funding - refer item 4.9
 PE Peoples Observatory Society donation - refer 5.2
 Council and Appointees 2016/17 161023 - refer 7.1
 Reports from Centre Chairs and Section Directors

ASSA special focus areas

Section	Director	Area	ASSA
Shallow Sky	D Blane	ASSA Website	C Hettlage James Smith
Deep Sky	A Slotegraaf	Scholarships	C Flanagan
Cosmology and Astrophysics	F de Bruyn	ASSA Observing	K Coronaios
Southern African Astronomy History	C de Coning	ASSA Communications	C Rijdsdijk
Dark Sky	TBA	ASSA Outreach	K Coronaios nominated
Imaging	A Versfeld	ASSA Archives	C de Coning
Instrumentation	C Stewart		

Checklist review (Include items from the Letter of the President and President's Report after AGM)

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; **Annual review of website**
 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
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END