

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	1 Dec 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
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Chris Stewart	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Mike Hadlow	Chair - Durban Centre
Peter Dormehl	Previous Chair - Durban Centre
Eddy Nijeboer	Chair - Cape Centre

Appointees

Dr Claire Flanagan	Convenor of Scholarships
Dave Blane	Shallow Sky Section Director
Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor, Deep Sky Section Director
Allen Versfeld	Imaging Section Director
Chris de Coning	ASSA Archiving, Astronomical History

Apologies (a) /Absent

Prof Matie Hoffman	Vice President, Chair - Bloemfontein Centre
Bosman Olivier (a)	Membership Secretary
Percy Jacobs (a)	Spectroscopy and Photometry Section Director
Clyde Foster (a)	Shallow Sky Section Director
Jerome Jooste (a)	Chair – Johannesburg Centre
Johan Smit	Chair –Pretoria Centre, Outreach and Dark Sky Section Director
James Smith (a)	Web Manager
Steffan Devos	Acting Chair - Midlands Centre
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	P de Villiers welcomed everyone to the 2 nd ASSA Council meeting for 2016/17 year.
	Apologies	Peter Dormehl noted that Mike Hadlow (present) has taken over as Chair, Durban Centre, as he was welcomed to his first Council meeting. Apologies received are noted in the minutes.
2	Previous Minutes	Council accepted the minutes of the meeting held 6 October 2016 (Proposed by C Rijdsdijk, seconded by C Stewart).
	Agenda	The agenda items as proposed were accepted.
	Matters arising	To note: Matters arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> and actions are underlined. Outcomes from the Finance Sub-Committee meeting held 2 November 2016 are included in the agenda below and annotated as (<i>2 Nov FSC</i>).

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3	ASSA Comms	<p>3 ASSA Communication</p> <p>3.1 Council communication</p> <p>3.1.1 Communication document: It was noted that input is still required on the role for Section Director - ASSA Archiving, Astronomical History. <u>C de Coning</u> offered to provide (latest version attached to the minutes).</p> <p>3.1.2 Astronomy Activity Summary: It was tabled that P de Villiers sent 3 Excel sheets to Council and Appointees as examples of what information he would like to collect from Centres (and also from entities external to ASSA such as Clubs eg WRAC)</p> <p>It was agreed that a dedicated skype session is to be scheduled with the Centre Chairs (<u>L Cross</u> to schedule)</p> <p>3.2 ASSA Publications - SGAS 2017</p> <p>P de Villiers expressed his congratulations obo Council to A Slotegraaf for another excellent issue for SGAS 2017.</p> <p>AJ Nel reported that payments to ASSA from the Centres are in progress - no specific issue raised.</p> <p>3.3 ASSA Publications – MNASSA and/or Editorial Board</p> <p>C Rijdsdijk reported that the response to his call for input from private South African Observatories for the next edition was “very good”.</p> <p>The first 2017 issue will cover what such Observatories produce / focus on.</p> <p>3.4 Websites</p> <p>It was noted again that it is the responsibility of <u>Section Directors, Centre Chairs, Appointees</u> to check that their pages on the ASSA website are up to date. And if the Centres’ websites (where there are websites) link to ASSA’s site and include other agreed documents such as the Constitution.</p> <p>It was proposed that another skype session is held to focus on this. (<u>L Cross</u> to schedule)</p> <p>3.5 Dark Sky</p> <p>3.5.1 Dark Sky benchmark initiative</p> <p><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.</i></p> <p><u>P de Villiers</u> reported that he will follow up with M Hoffman and if no outcome by the next meeting, the item will be closed.</p> <p>3.5.2 Dark Sky Director: There is no nomination for this role, yet. P de Villiers noted that he has communications from both Carol Botha (who advised that she will not be interested in taking up the role) and Cliff Turk (a past Dark Sky Director).</p> <p>3.6 Essays</p> <p><i>(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.</i></p> <p><i>(6 Oct) It was discussed that worthy essays could be included on the website and MNASSA.</i></p> <p>The matter of how - and to whom - to get the message out to encourage submission of essays for possible publication on website and MNASSA. And also who will decide what will be published. Options discussed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform members via Centre newsletters - Stimulate interest via other communication means <p>As a start it was agreed that content to attract interest should be placed on the website and <u>C</u></p>
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		<p><u>Rijsdijk</u> was asked to draft content for consideration.</p> <p>3.7 Communication with Country Members and Clubs outside Centres <i>(6 Oct) P de Villiers reconfirmed his intent to make contact with established astronomy clubs.</i> P de Villiers reported that he has made contact with a number of clubs including Senekal, WRAC, OOG, Groot Brak River, SPARC (Southern Peninsula Astronomy Club) and they are all keen to have communication with ASSA and also be involved with activities. The effort is still continuing.</p> <p>3.8 Photometry and Spectroscopy workshops via Skype A Slotegraaf noted that the excellent workshops (2 sessions for each area) were held during November. Comments were made by others who attended and there was agreement that it was an excellent model to take forward. C Stewart noted that the two Photometry sessions had ~ 20 attendees and the two Spectroscopy sessions ~ 11. Congratulations were extended to the session presenters P Jacobs and D Blane. C Rijsdijk asked for information on MNASSA and will advise if anything more than the attached report from the Section Director could be provided.</p> <p>3.9 Upcoming Annular Eclipse in February 2017: C Flanagan advised that the next annular eclipse is due on the last Sunday in February 2017. The meeting recommended that the same process as for this year's eclipse be followed as it worked well. To commence the process it was suggested that the information be placed on the ASSA webpage (<u>C Flanagan, A Slotegraaf, A Versfeld, K Coroniaios, L Cross</u> will arrange a skype session if required)</p>
4	Scholarships	<p>4. Scholarships (HartRAO -ASSA Scholarships x 3 and ASSA Scholarship x1)</p> <p>4.1 Update <i>(6 Oct) C Flanagan confirmed that HartRAO - ASSA Scholarships will again be three and will be R16 000 each. Applies to 1st years.</i> AJ Nel confirmed that R19 000 will be made available for ASSA Scholarship (which is for 2nd and 3rd and possible Honours' year) C Flanagan informed that advertising will now commence.</p> <p>4.2 Scholarship donation from PE Peoples Observatory Society <i>(6 Oct) The donation of R300 000 for scholarship purposes which was addressed to C Rijsdijk by the PE Peoples Observatory Society was lauded.</i> <i>(2 Nov FSC) The reply to the donors of the donation of R300 000 was discussed.</i> <i>It was agreed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>That the amount is to be paid into the ASSA account currently used for Scholarships. <u>AJ Nel</u> to provide the account details soonest to C Rijsdijk to reply to the donors (This action was completed by AJ after the meeting)</i> - <i>The amount and income from the investment must be accounted for separately and would need to be reported on separately. This account is at present referred to by ASSA as the 'business account';</i> - <i>A return of at least R20 000 pa is expected;</i> - <i>It is expected that the signatories to the ASSA accounts would need to be finalised before monies could be withdrawn from the 'scholarship account' (covered under other agenda item);</i> - <i>The Scholarship is named the Cooke Scholarship.</i> <p><i>(Whether a formal agreement is to be signed with the donors was not discussed.)</i> C Rijsdijk confirmed that there has not yet been communication about a formal agreement between the parties around the donation now known as the Cooke Scholarship to include any possible conditions such as aimed for 2nd and 3rd year students, capital not to be eroded and only income (to be ring fenced from other ASSA funds) be deployed.</p>

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		<p>AJ Nel informed that two payments have been deposited (R100 000 each) and confirmed that the first Cooke Scholarship will be for 2018.</p> <p>Suitable information for the Cooke Scholarship needs to be placed on the appropriate ASSA website page (<u>C Flanagan, C Rijsdijk</u>) and also in MNASSA in due course (<u>C Flanagan, C Rijsdijk</u>)</p>
5	Membersh ip	<p>5.1 Membership <i>(2 Nov FSC) AJ Nel informed that the notice to Members is already quoting the current Country Membership fee as R65. (After meeting: The AGM did not report the increased Membership Fee in the minutes).</i> Council was asked to formally note the subscription fee of R65 per year wef 1 July 2016 (R50 joining fee remains) and was accepted by Council. <u>B Olivier and J Smith</u> to confirm website has been updated to reflect this.</p> <p>5.2 Hon Membership <i>(6 Oct) the amount to advise Hon Members to claim is requested from <u>AJ Nel</u> to inform. (2 Nov FSC) AJ Nel proposed after the meeting that the increase is along the inflationary lines, i.e. average from 1 Jul 2015 to 30 June 2016 which is 6.5% or R 32,50 taking it up to R 532.50).</i> Council noted and accepted the new benefit for Honorary Membership of R532.50 per year as agreed at the Financial Sub-Committee by the and Hon Members to be notified (<u>L Cross</u>)</p>
6	Governan ce	<p>6 Governance</p> <p>6.1 Council and Appointees 2016/17 Mike Hadlow confirmed he is Durban Centre Chair and Prof Hoffmann will remain noted as Bloemfontein Chair until otherwise informed.</p> <p>6.2 Amendments to the ASSA Constitution - Independent Compiler <i>(6 Oct) The AGM approved the amendment to the ASSA Constitution to include the following resolution on “An Independent Compiler”. The Constitution required amendment to include the revision (<u>AJ Nel</u>).</i> <i>(2 Nov FSC) AJ Nel amended the Constitution after the meeting.</i> Council was asked to formally note the revised Constitution - also attached to the minutes - which need to be replace the previous Constitution on the website (<u>J Smith</u>)</p> <p>6.3 New Award: Overbeek Award <i>(6 Oct) 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. The first two nominees motivated and agreed to: Berto Monard and Andre van Staden. C Rijsdijk requested in email dd 3 November for Council to give consideration to possibly adding a financial award to the Award. P de Villiers noted that perhaps an accompanying medal would be appropriate and mentioned some options for where a medal could be produced.</i> The outcome of discussion was to schedule a dedicated skype session with: P de Villiers. IS Glass, C Rijsdijk, C Stewart, in order to finalise the award and place it in context of other existing Awards. (<u>L Cross</u> to schedule)</p>
7	Financial Matters	<p>Financial Matters Outcomes from the Finance Sub-Committee meeting held 2 November 2016 included in the agenda annotated as <i>(2 Nov FSC)</i></p> <p>7.1 Financials for 2015/16</p>

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The 2015/16 financials were forwarded to Ronnie Glass as the Independent Compiler on 4 November and subsequent questions from him to CTF Services have been processed. No formal feedback yet received.

7.2 Honoraria - MNASSA:

(6 Oct) 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 of contributors;

(2 Nov FSC) After meeting: AJ Nel confirmed that C Rijdsdijk and IS Glass was paid on 10 Sep and Koorts on 20 Sep 2016)

Council was requested to note the outcome from the Financial Sub-Committee.
Item closed.

7.3 Finalising the three signatories on ASSA accounts and combine investment account

(2 Nov FSC) A discussion held on how best to achieve this objective.

Outcome: to keep the signatories to individuals who can be in Cape Town at the SBSA Pinelands branch. The selected individuals proposed and accepted are: Dr P de Villiers, Dr IS Glass and Adv AJ Nel.

Actions arising: AJ Nel to suitably amend the resolution and forward for circulation to and acceptance by Council soonest. (AJ Nel compiled and sent a resolution to the Finance Sub-Committee and this action will be taken further by P de Villiers as the President needs to sign the resolution. The documentation would then be presented to SBSA Pinelands by AJ Nel and the other signatories at suitably convenient times.

Council was asked to formally note the decision made on 2 November 2016 and the subsequent resolution for the new signatories as Dr P de Villiers, Dr IS Glass and Adv AJ Nel.

P de Villiers informed Council of the very good news that he and I Glass had themselves registered as account signatories at SBSA Pinelands - although the process took them 1hr and 35 min. AJ Nel will do his registration on 8 December and advise completion of the process.

7.4 Special Funding

7.4.1 (2 Nov FSC) Software for ASSA Main publications: An amount of ~R7 500 pa was approved in principle for this item and will take the form of a monthly subscription, ~R565 pm.

Council was asked to note this outcome. Item closed

7.4.2 (2 Nov FSC) Special Projects: AJ Nel confirmed that the budget for the year is not to exceed ~ R20 000 which will include items for outreach. The period for this expense would be from 1 March 2017 to end Feb 2018. The outcome from the proposals will be available by end February 2017.

Council was asked to note the decision from the FSC of 2 November.

It was agreed that it would be necessary to get the proposals back by 13 January 2017 to have it assessed by the Financial Sub Committee before the next meeting on 21 February 2017.

It was note that the previous submission by the ASSA Historical Section will be included in the assessment.

A note to formally inform ASSA members will be discussed with P de Villiers and C Rijdsdijk before distributing (L Cross)

7.4.3 ASSA Outreach

(2 Nov FSC) C Rijdsdijk proposal for outreach projects was discussed and it was decided that a revised request will be drafted and presented. The main issue noted was that Centres are autonomous entities and have outreach as an objective. However, this does not preclude

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		<p><i>applications by individuals / group of individuals to apply for funding/refund under the scope of Special Projects</i></p> <p><u>P de Villiers and C Rijdsdijk</u> to still discuss the proposal</p>
8	Other Projects	<p>8 Other projects</p> <p>8.1 Recording Indigenous star stories</p> <p><i>(27 April) C Rijdsdijk 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. C Rijdsdijk advised that the item may be closed.</i></p>
9	ASSA Symposium	<p>9 ASSA Symposium 2018</p> <p>A latest proposal from C Rijdsdijk was received for a next ASSA symposium in 2018 to be held at the SAAO in Cape Town and is attached to the minutes.</p> <p>P de Villiers said that he supports the proposal positively and enthusiastically and thanked C</p>
10	ASSA Endowment Trust	<p>10 ASSET</p> <p>It was noted that ASSET Trustees were asked about the financial accounts which were not tabled at the recent AGM (a requirement noted in their Trust Deed) and responded (both T Cooper and IS Glass) that they are aware of this need and have and are following up on this</p>
11	Checklist	<p>11 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>
12	General	<p>12 General items</p> <p>12.1 Tony Jones:</p> <p>E Nijeboer informed Council of the passing away of Tony Jones a long standing Cape Centre and ASSA member. Notice received from the Cape Centre on 24 November 2016:</p> <p>“It is with great sadness that we announce that Tony died yesterday morning. He passed away peacefully at home with Karen and his daughter at his side. He was a dedicated amateur astronomer who, for many years, was active in observing, in astrophotography and in organizing Dark Sky evenings. He was a patient and knowledgeable teacher and, at one time, he and Karen regularly assisted at the SAAO open nights. Despite his stature and expertise, no task was beneath him, from manning the Cape Centre shop to making tea and washing up. He and Karen was a devoted couple who did everything together and were liked and respected by all. She put her own life on hold to nurse him to the end and our heartfelt condolences go to her, as well as to Tony’s family. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.”</p> <p>12.2 Centre for Astronomical Heritage:</p>

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		A Slotegraaf informed Council of the NPO established for the protection of astronomical heritage and pointed everyone who is interested in learning more about the NPO to read the attached document he provided.
13	Next meeting	Next skype meetings for 2017, all at 19:30: 21 Feb, 23 May, 25 July, AGM 2 August (Venue to be decided)

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments:

Refer 3.1.1

ASSA Communication 161126.pptx

Refer 6.2:

2016-11-02 ASSA Constitution - Compiler Clean.docx

2016-11-02 ASSA Constitution - Compiler Markup.docx

Refer 9:

Proposal for an ASSA Symposium Nov 2016

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