

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

<b>DATE</b>	8 June 2020	<b>TME</b>	18:00 to 19:30	<b>VENUE</b>	Via Skype
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### ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Chris Stewart	President (Chair)
Case Rijdsdijk	Vice President, Chair – Garden Route Centre, Communications, Ed Board
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Clyde Foster	Council Member
Dr Pierre de Villiers	Council Member
Dr Pieter Kotze	Council Member
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Wilmi Nel	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Piet Strauss	Chair - Durban Centre
Marius Reitz	Chair - Cape Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre
Carmel Ives	Chair – Johannesburg Centre

### Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
John Gill	Web Manager
Dave Blane	Double and Variable Stars Section Director
Allen Versfeld	Citizen Science Section Director
Bruce Dickson	Cosmology and Astrophysics Section Director
Douglas Bullis	Deep Sky Section Director
Percy Jacobs	Photometry and Spectroscopy Section Director
Martin Heigan	Imaging Section Director

### Apologies (a) /Absent

Chris de Coning	ASSA Archiving (connection issue)
Dr Claire Flanagan (a)	Convenor of Scholarships
Dr Christian Hettlage (a)	Web Master
Kos Coronaios (a)	Observing Director
Prof Matie Hoffman	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre

### ASSET (for distribution)

Tim Cooper	For ASSET Trustees
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	<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)</b>
1	Welcome Apology  Issues to connect	C Stewart welcomed everyone to the 4 <sup>th</sup> ASSA Council meeting for 2019/20 year. The attendance was excellent.  Apologies to Chris de Coning who together with Lerika Cross was connected to a different ASSA Council Webex invite. Next time will be perfect.
2	Previous Minutes  Matters arising	Minutes of Council meeting held 20 April 2020 (attached to agenda) was approved.  <b>Note:</b> Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Current actions are underlined. The Finance Sub-Committee meeting was held 3 June and outcomes are noted as ( <i>3 June FSC</i> ) in these minutes.

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Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
3	<p><b>ASSA Comms</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Welcome /Intro note to Country Members</b>  <i>C Stewart, AJ Nel, Wilmi Nel</i> to finalise and distribute a refreshed note that can be sent to all country members and can also be shared with all Centres so that they can include the ASSA Communication channels in their intro comms to their members.</p> <p><b>3.2 Communications document</b>  <i>Permanent item</i>                      The Comms document was updated at and after the meeting, latest version is attached.</p> <p><b>3.3 Website</b></p> <p><b>3.3.1 Spam being sent from John Gill ASSA email</b>                      Mail is generated from John Gill's ASSA email address for new membership which C Hettlaage noted as "probably a spambot (ab)using the form. The solution would be to bite the bullet and add a Captcha."                      (After the meeting: C Stewart, J Gill, A Slotegraaf confirmed to reinstate Captcha. L Cross has asked Christiaan to proceed and it was implemented 14 June)</p> <p><b>3.3.2 Refreshing the Directors' and Centre pages</b>  <i>Section Directors</i> and <i>Centre Chairs</i> were reminded to keep their pages up to date.</p> <p><b>3.4 Update from the Centres and Section Directors</b>                      The Section Directors and Centre Chairs provided updates and some excellent efforts were reported on current initiatives e.g. in Spectroscopy, Shallow Sky, Double Stars. C Rijdsdijk reminded to please send him content on all meaningful work to publish in MNASSA.</p> <p>With virtual meetings now being the norm, B Olivier proposed that Centres and Directors make use of the opportunity to share their Webex/Zoom meeting links on general ASSA comms channels, such as ASSA-Discussion, etc, giving all ASSA Centre Members and Country members the benefit.</p> <p>Auke and M Reitz are working on alternative options on how best to allow participating during events and posting Youtube links after the events. They offered to inform all on their experience and recommendations.</p> <p>It was also recommended that the efforts by the Directors and Centre Newsletters be shared with all Centres and Country Members via the ASSA comms channels.</p> <p><b>3.5 Other Astronomical Societies in Southern Africa</b>  <i>Permanent item</i></p>
4	<p><b>Publications</b></p> <p><b>4. ASSA Publications</b></p> <p><b>4.1 SGAS 2021</b>  <i>(3 Jun FSC) AJ Nel advised that Struik is opening on 8 June</i>                      Auke reported that he will have the draft in next couple weeks  <i>Centre Chairs</i> to email their latest information to Auke and J Gill ASAP</p> <p><b>4.2 MNASSA</b>  <i>(20 Apr) Volunteers to contact C Rijdsdijk who will in due course provide a list of potential contributors that could be included in the communications document. (All) Council</i> to still list potential contributors.</p>

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	<p><b>4.3 Nightfall</b> Douglas Bullis advised that the latest edition of Nightfall is available, and he asked John Gill to post the link on the relevant page on website. Once the link is posted, <u>Douglas</u> will send out the link via the various mail groups. He asked for <u>everyone</u> to please give him feedback on the links given in the publication.</p>
5	<p><b>Scholarships</b></p> <p><b>5. Scholarships</b> The ASSA and Cooke scholarships for 2020, amount R20 000 per scholarship, were paid out. The ASSA Scholarship was awarded to Tessa Collins, a very active member of Jhb ASSA. The Cooke Scholarship was awarded to Anza-Tshilidzi Mulaudzi. Both are in their 3rd year of a BSc in Physics &amp; Astrophysics, at Wits; both are executive members of the Wits Astronomy Club.</p> <p>The FSC recommended that scholarships for 2021 be suspended as result of poor performance of invested funds. This was confirmed by Council. All advertisement needs to be suspended (<u>C Flanagan</u>)</p>
6	<p><b>Member ship</b></p> <p><b>6. ASSA Country Membership</b> <b>6.1 Country Membership 2020</b> Current total Country Membership to be advised (W Nel)</p> <p><b>6.2 Align all Hon Member Lists</b> <u>A Slotegraaf and Wilmi Nel</u> to confirm website list matches theirs. <a href="http://assa.sao.ac.za/about/awards/honorary-members/">http://assa.sao.ac.za/about/awards/honorary-members/</a></p>
7	<p><b>Gover nance</b></p> <p><b>7 Governance</b> <b>7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary ...) Application</b> <i>(27 Nov 19) Proposal by CTF Services (below the agenda) was accepted: “bold highlighted portions seem to be missing from the constitution”. <u>AJ Nel</u> undertook to compile a draft update to the Constitution and if approved ratified at the next AGM. <u>AJ Nel</u> to provide in due course.</i></p> <p><b>7.2 Items due on checklist</b> <u>L Cross</u> to facilitate progress of the items due on the checklist.</p> <p><b>7.4 AGM 5 August</b> It was discussed and agreed that ASSA Pretoria will be happy to host the AGM via Webex. Many thanks, Bosman!</p>
8	<p><b>Financial</b></p> <p><b>8. Financial Matters</b> <b>8.1 Budget items 2020/21</b> 2020/21 budget to be tabled after June 2020. (AJ Nel)</p> <p><b>8.2 SGAS Electronic Publication</b> <i>(20 Apr) <u>AJ Nel</u> offered to prepare a proposal to Struik for consideration. AJ Nel to report progress in due course once Struik has opened.</i></p> <p><b>8.4 Independent Compiler: Stepping down</b> <i>(19 Mar FSC) CTF Services agreed to take over the role of Independent Compiler. Chris Stewart reported that a thank you note was sent to CTFS att. R Strydom</i></p>
9	<p><b>Astro</b></p> <p><b>9.Astronomy Course /Education Section</b></p>

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Course	<p><i>(3 July) The meeting discussed and agreed that there is merit to embark on a project (27 Jan '20) The proposal drafted by P de Villiers was provided.</i></p> <p><i>(20 Apr) Council agreed proposal for "Education" Section with aim to curate information supplied electronically to deserving parties to further ASSA aims.</i></p> <p>C Stewart, P de Villiers had a discussion after the meeting to discuss the merits of the proposal for a new Section. It was agreed that the first step was to collect and curate diverse information, with links on the website for people to browse &amp; access.</p>
10 ASSET	<p><b>10 ASSET</b> No new information to report.</p>
11 Royal Obs 200th anniversary	<p><b>11. 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Royal Observatory</b> <i>(20 Apr) C Stewart, C de Coning to give talk. <u>M Reitz</u> offered to coordinate. From Dr Glass after the meeting: " As it stands now, we will aim to have small unveiling of our Heritage site in October, main Festival and Symposium will very likely happen in 2021."</i></p> <p>Dr Glass indicated that an online conference may be decided on but no decision yet. <u>Dr Glass /M Reitz</u> kindly undertook to keep Council posted on further developments.</p>
12 IAU 2024	<p><b>12. IAU 2024</b> <i>Permanent note: All input for the event be forwarded to Case Rijdsdijk for onward communication to the Organising Committee. <a href="https://astronomy2024capetown.org/">https://astronomy2024capetown.org/</a></i></p>
13 General	<p><b>13. General items</b></p> <p><b>13.1 Letter for your neighbourhood</b> (item was not discussed at the meeting) From Oleg Toumilovitch to ASSA-Discussion on 30 March 2020: Dear all, I would like to ask members of Council to discuss and initiate a project, called for example "Letter for your neighbourhood". The idea is to compile a 1-A4 page document, formally undersigned by ASSA, which would highlight an importance of keeping outside lighting of houses to the minimum and and importance of correct installation of lighting devices. This page could be printed by any member and distributed in his / her neighbourhood if and when required. It could be also distributed via e-mails and messages to neighbourhood groups, which are very popular these days. The page should be informative, astronomy-related and friendly. It could include text and couple of photographs, demonstrating the night sky difference for light-polluted area and dark sky area. Some phrases come to mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Let your children see the stars from the comfort of your home</li> <li>- Walk out in the evening and point binoculars to the stars</li> <li>- There might be an astronomer living in your neighbourhood</li> </ul> <p>This is something ASSA could do, no costs attached :)</p> <p>To discuss at <u>Council meeting</u> and if supported, appoint volunteer to start the draft.</p> <p><b>13.2 Any other general item.</b></p>
14 Closure	<p>The final Council meeting before the AGM is proposed for 13 July via Webex at 18 :00</p>

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

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

### Attachments in support of minutes:

ASSA Communication 200508

### In support of item 7.2

#### 23.3.3 APPROVAL OF PBO

*Section 30* which gives the Commissioner the right to approve a public benefit organisation for the purposes of the Act provides that the Commissioner will approve such an organisation if

- it complies with such conditions as the Minister may prescribe
- it has submitted to the Commissioner a copy of its constitution, will or other written instrument under which it has been established in terms of which it is:
  - required to have at least three unconnected persons to accept fiduciary responsibility
  - **prohibited from directly or indirectly distributing any funds to any person (otherwise than in the course of any public benefit activity) and is required to utilise its funds solely for the objects for which it has been established**
  - required on dissolution to transfer its assets to a section 30(3)(b)(iii) organisation (see below). In the case of a branch or agency of an association incorporated and tax exempt in another country, it can also distribute the assets of the organisation to any other person provided that those assets were acquired from a source outside the Republic
  - **is prohibited from receiving any donation which is revocable at the instance of the donor**
  - **required to submit to the Commissioner any amendments to its constitution**
- the Commissioner is satisfied that it is not knowingly party to a tax-avoidance scheme
- **it has not paid remuneration to any employee, office bearer, or member which is excessive**
- it complies with reporting requirements determined by the Commissioner

Note that a PBO no longer has to be registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organisations Act (Act 71 of 1997) to qualify for tax exemption, but, the Director of Non-Profit Organisations as defined in that Act can request the Commissioner to withdraw the approval of any PBO if it has been convicted of any offence under the Act.

**END**

#### **Checklist** (covered under Governance item 7)

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| 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 President and Vice President list of nominations   |
| 30 April   | Deadline for agreement with Struik of the printing schedule for next SGAS  |
| 1 June     | Call for nominations for Council; Annual review of website   |
| 1 June     | New Country Membership fees to be agreed by 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   |
| 1 Oct      | Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik  |
|            | Annual refresh of the Communications document after the AGM  |
- END**