

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	13 July 2020	TME	18:00 to 19:00	VENUE	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
Dr Pieter Kotze	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Piet Strauss	Chair - Durban Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre
Carmel Ives	Chair – Johannesburg Centre
Thinus van der Merwe	Bloemfontein Centre Representative

Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
John Gill	Web Manager
Dave Blane	Double and Variable Stars Section Director
Allen Versfeld	Citizen Science Section Director
Douglas Bullis	Deep Sky Section Director

Apologies (a) /Absent

Adv AJ Nel (a)	Treasurer
Wilmi Nel (a)	Membership Secretary
Clyde Foster (a)	Council Member
Percy Jacobs (a)	Photometry and Spectroscopy Section Director
Martin Heigan (a)	Imaging Section Director
Dr Pierre de Villiers (a)	Council Member
Marius Reitz (a)	Chair - Cape Centre
Bruce Dickson (a)	Cosmology and Astrophysics Section Director
Chris de Coning (a)	ASSA Archiving (connection issue)
Dr Claire Flanagan (a)	Convenor of Scholarships
Dr Christian Hettlage (a)	Web Master
Kos Coronaios (a)	Observing Director

ASSET (for distribution)

Tim Cooper For ASSET Trustees

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apology Issues to connect	C Stewart welcomed everyone to the 5 th ASSA Council meeting for 2019/20 year. Several apologies were received as result of power outages and loadshedding. Issue to note: the call was dropped after 60 minutes (due to the Webex use rule of max 50 min usage) but those who then just clicked JOIN the meeting were connected again.
2	Previous Minutes Matters arising	Minutes of Council meeting held 8 June 2020 (attached to agenda) was approved. Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Current actions are underlined. The Finance Sub-Committee meeting was held 9 July and outcomes are noted as <i>(9 July FSC)</i> in these minutes.
3	ASSA	Communication

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Comms	<p>3.1 Welcome /Intro note to Country Members The welcome note to Country Members was finalised and is attached to the minutes. D Bullis requested that the note includes a link to the Nightfall web page with a link to https://assa.sao.ac.za/sections/deep-sky/nightfall/ as well as a link to John Gill's Ndaba. After the meeting it was also discussed what other publications should specifically listed other than pointing to the website and highlighting where to find the Centres' detail which will point to their newsletters. (C Stewart, Case Rijdsdijk, AJ Nel, W Nel to discuss/agree and finalise)</p> <p>Once finalised, <u>Centres</u> to note the ASSA Communication channels (and publications) to also include in comms to their new members /renewal requests.</p> <p>3.2 Communications document <u>Permanent item</u> Latest Comms document is attached to the minutes for perusal and updates to offer. NOTE TO ALL: please have a look at pages 4,5 and 6 and advise how to update the red wording and also copy John Gill on any changes to effect on the website.</p> <p>3.3 Website 3.3.1 Keep website updated: Directors' and Centre pages REMINDER: <u>Section Directors</u> and <u>Centre Chairs</u> are reminded to please ask John Gill to effect any change to their pages on the website.</p> <p>3.4 Update from Centres and Section Directors C Stewart expressed his appreciation and delight to Thinus van der Merwe for his willingness to attend the meeting and to coordinate refreshing formalisation of the Bloemfontein Centre. Chris noted that the Centre is one of the stalwarts of astronomical community. Thinus has commenced engaging some old guards such as Matie Hoffmann, Dawie van Jaarsveld, Hannes Pieterse and is making progress.</p> <p>Updates were given by Centre representatives, Carmel, Bosman, Piet, on virtual meetings held and cancellations of Star Parties due to Covid-19. Bosman also informed that he was recently hospitalised for 8 days due to Covid-19 but is recovering well.</p> <p>Dave Blane informed on his recent participation in AAVSO webinar where a lot of free software was noted for observing eclipse and eclipsing binaries. He is continuing his exciting long-term project of observing Eta Carina.</p> <p>3.5 Other Astronomical Societies <u>Permanent item</u></p> <p>3.5.1 PMB <u>C Stewart</u> noted that communication was noted from a person Ewan Vos from a PMB centre and he undertook to provide the email details to Piet Strauss who offered to contact Ewan.</p> <p>3.5.1 African Astronomical Society ("AfAS") Request for volunteers sent 28 June The meeting referred to the mail from Niruj Mohan Ramanujam, Chairperson, Outreach Committee, African Astronomical Society https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org sent to L Cross and forwarded to all on 28 June.</p> <p>Volunteers who have kindly agreed to work with Niruj and the AfAS and report back are noted below.</p>



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	<p>a) Working Group on "African Astronomy Calendar" <u>Doug Bullis</u> was happy to be nominated as a ASSA Representative on this group. <u>Auke</u> was also nominated, and Doug will keep everyone informed of this initiative.</p> <p>b) Promoting amateur astronomer associations Everyone was encourage to share the form with other astronomical clubs and groups to complete and send to "Niruj Mohan Ramanujam" niruj@africanastronomicalsociety.org The form is at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU2NF0IR84aAwMYPEJSsSSbdDYH2ySlw7tEFvgwtdikIgJYw/viewform (Case Rijdsdijk completed the form after the meeting on behalf of ASSA)</p> <p>The AfAS aim is to enable all to (1) connect with each other and (2) help smaller groups to establish themselves with help from others.</p> <p>c) 'Starter kit' for amateur astronomy clubs in schools and similar institutions This aims to have (1) online resources on how to start a group, suggested activities etc, (2) info on what material to acquire and where to acquire them from, in Africa, (3) try and develop a prototype physical kit if possible.</p> <p><u>Allen Versfeld</u> and <u>Douglas Bullis</u> were willing to be ASSA volunteers on this initiative.</p>
4	<p>4. ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1 SGAS 2021 It was noted that content was basically complete. There is no price yet.</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA <u>Council</u> to consider and list potential contributors.</p> <p>4.3 Nightfall Doug reported that the latest edition was completed and sent out to all channels. The next edition is scheduled for mid Sep and both Magda Streicher and Carol Botha will provide content.</p>
5	<p>5. Scholarships</p> <p>Scholarships <i>(8 June) R20 000 per scholarship, were paid. The ASSA Scholarship was awarded to Tessa Collins and Cooke Scholarship to Anza-Tshilidzi Mulaudzi. FSC recommended that scholarships for 2021 be suspended.</i></p> <p>To wrap up the process, <u>AJ Nel</u> agreed to send mail to Nielen Schaefer (nielen@iafrica.com) (if Claire has not already done so?) Detail to place on the website to be provided by <u>C Flanagan</u>.</p>
6	<p>6. ASSA Country Membership</p> <p>6.1 Country Membership 2020 (9 July FSC) The FSC agreed the 2020 / 21 subscription rate for Country Members will be R85 and to joining fee will remain at R50. Renewal notifications will be sent out to current Country Members (<u>W Nel</u>)</p>
7	<p>7 Governance</p> <p>7.1 1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary ...) Application</p>

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	<p><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.</i></p> <p><u>AJ Nel</u> to provide in due course.</p> <p>7.2 AGM 5 August Host: ASSA Pretoria Time to start: 6pm for 6:30pm start Medium to use: Webex is proposed. The free version allows for 50 minutes and the agenda will perhaps have to break the AGM into 2 sessions and ask the attendees to just rejoin the meeting again (just by clicking JOIN again on the invite that will be sent out by the host Centre). Agenda and notifications: Lerika and Bosman</p> <p>Special presentation: Clyde Foster on “Clydes’s Spot- An amateur astronomer’s contribution in today’s world of Planetary Science”.</p> <p>Reports to be received as soon as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications Report - Editorial Board Report - ASSA Deep Sky Section report - Observing Director and Outreach Officer - History Section Report - Shallow Sky Section - Variable and Double Star - Astrophotography-Section-Report - ASSA Citizen Science Section report - Instrumentation Section Report (<i>Received</i>) - Spectroscopy Section Report - Cosmology Report (<i>Received</i>) - Report on the Scholarships Project - ASSET Report - Financial Report <p><u>Centres</u> should please inform on their governance structure as soon as their AGMs are done and send these to J Gill to update on the website and Auke (in case needed for SGAS) and L Cross (for sharing with all).</p>
8	<p>Financial</p> <p>8. Financial Matters 8. .1 Budget items 2020/21 2020/21 budget to be tabled after June 2020. (AJ Nel)</p> <p>8.2 SGAS Electronic Publication <i>(20 Apr) <u>AJ Nel</u> offered to prepare a proposal to Struik for consideration.</i></p>
9	<p>Astro Course</p> <p>9.Astronomy Course /Education Section (Astronomy Course /Education Section <i>(20 Apr) Council agreed proposal with aim to curate information supplied electronically to deserving parties to further ASSA aims.</i> <i>(8 June) It was agreed that the first step was to collect and curate diverse information, with links on the website for people to browse & access.</i></p>

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	<p><u>A Versfeld</u> agreed to be the custodian of content for now and to prepare a list of all contributions, propose categorisation of content, etc.</p> <p><u>All</u> contributions to be forwarded to Allen in preparation for a session to discuss next step.</p> <p>NB: It is noted that the actual content does not necessarily be forwarded to Allen at this time but at least the detail such as: title, audience aimed at, size of file (eg 4Mb), format of file (eg, .pdf, .mp4, .avi, etc)</p>
10	<p>ASSET</p> <p>No new information to report.</p>
11	<p>Royal Obs 200th anniversary</p> <p>11. 200th anniversary of Royal Observatory This will be a virtual celebration to be held 20 to 22 October. <u>Marius Reitz</u> is in contact with Daniel Cunama and kindly offered to keep ASSA informed of any support required. Below provided by Dr Ian Glass.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div>
12	<p>IAU 2024</p> <p><i>Permanent note: All input for the event be forwarded to Case Rijdsijk for onward communication to the Organising Committee. https://astronomy2024capetown.org/</i></p>
13	<p>General</p> <p>13. General items</p> <p>13.1 Letter for your neighbourhood <i>(8 June) From Oleg Toumilovitch to ASSA-Discussion on 30 March 2020: 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 importance of correct installation of lighting devices.</i></p> <p><u>Douglas Bullis and Allen Versfeld</u> kindly volunteered to start a draft.</p>
14	<p>Closure</p> <p>C Stewart thanked everyone for their contribution and closed the meeting. The next meeting will be scheduled after the AGM on 5 August.</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments in support of minutes:

In support of item 3.1 : 2020-06-19 ASSA Membership Confirmation Letter

In support of item 3.2 : ASSA Communication 20-07-19

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

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 st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1 st 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