

## ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

<b>DATE</b>	28 September 2020	<b>TME</b>	18:20 to 18:50	<b>VENUE</b>	Via ZOOM
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### ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Chris Stewart	President (Chair)
Case Rijdsdijk	Vice President, Chair – Garden Route Centre, Communications, Ed Board
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Wilmi Nel	Membership Secretary
Clyde Foster	Council Member
Marius Reitz	Chair - Cape Centre

### Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
Dave Blane	Double and Variable Stars Section Director

### Unable to connect

Dr Pierre de Villiers	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Dr Pieter Kotze	Council Member
Douglas Bullis	Deep Sky Section Director
John Gill	Web Manager
Bruce Dickson	Cosmology and Astrophysics Section Director

### Apologies noted as (a) /Absent

Dr Ian Glass (a)	Council Member
Percy Jacobs (a)	Photometry and Spectroscopy Section Director
Martin Heigan (a)	Imaging 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
Allen Versfeld (a)	Citizen Science Section Director
Thinus van der Merwe (a)	Bloemfontein Centre Representative
Piet Strauss (a)	Chair - Durban Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre
Carmel Ives	Chair – Johannesburg 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 1 <sup>st</sup> ASSA Council meeting for 2020/21 year.  <b>Connection issues via Zoom:</b> several invitees had issues connecting. Some succeeded in connecting and some failed and abandoned the attempt to connect after some 20 min.  Action on the <u>FSC</u> : how to secure seamless connection for the next meeting.
2	Previous Minutes  Matters	Minutes of Council meeting held 13 July 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 21 September and outcomes

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arising	are noted as <i>(21 Sep FSC)</i> in these minutes.
3 ASSA Comms	<p><b>3 Communication</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Welcome /Intro note to Country Members</b>  <i>(13 Jul) Once finalised, <u>Centres</u> to note ASSA Communication channels (and publications) to also include in comms to their new members /renewal requests.</i>  The latest version of the Intro Note was noted and is attached to the minutes for <u>Centres</u> to consider information to also include in their communications to members.  Item is considered closed.</p> <p><b>3.2 Communications document</b>  <u>Permanent item</u>  It was reported that some feedback was sent to J Gill and L Cross regarding generic email addresses to place on the website and in ASSA publications.  It is proposed that a session to finalise ides 4,5 and 6 is scheduled (<u>L Cross</u>).</p> <p><b>3.3 Website</b>  <u>Permanent item: <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.</u></p> <p><b>3.4 Update from Centres and Section Directors</b>  No information to share was noted.</p> <p><b>3.5 Other Astronomical Societies</b>  <u>Permanent item</u></p> <p><b>3.5.1 African Astronomical Society ("AfAS") Request for volunteers sent 28 June</b>  <i>(13 Jul) Niruj Mohan Ramanujam, Chairperson, Outreach Committee, African Astronomical Society <a href="https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org">https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org</a> asked for volunteers.</i></p> <p><b>a) Working Group on "African Astronomy Calendar"</b>  <u>Doug Bullis</u> was happy to be nominated as ASSA Representative on this group.  L Cross placed D Bullis in touch with Niruj.  Doug provided an update after the meeting:  He will provide calendrical and sky-guide information when they request it, but not allow his assistance to be perceived as official ASSA involvement in their activities.</p> <p><b>b) Promoting amateur astronomer associations</b>  <i>(13 Jul) Niruj Ramanujam requested form to be shared and completed <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU2NF0IR84aAwMYPEJSsSSbdDYH2ySlw7tEFvgwtdiklgJYw/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU2NF0IR84aAwMYPEJSsSSbdDYH2ySlw7tEFvgwtdiklgJYw/viewform</a> The AfAS aim to enable all to (1) connect with each other and (2) help smaller groups to establish themselves with help from others.</i>  C Rijdsijk completed form on behalf of ASSA and L Cross sent request to ASSA-Discussion and Centre Chairs. The meeting requested that ASSA (<u>L Cross</u>) contacts Niruj to ask how the information received is shared to all, such as contact details of other Societies in Africa.</p> <p><b>c) 'Starter kit' for amateur astronomy clubs in schools and similar institutions</b>  <i>(13 July) 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. <u>A Versfeld</u> and <u>D Bullis</u> were willing to be ASSA volunteers on this initiative</i>  L Cross placed D Bullis in touch with Niruj. Any update on this, <u>Doug and Allen</u>?</p>

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4	<p><b>Publications</b></p> <p><b>4. ASSA Publications</b></p> <p><b>4.1 SGAS 2021</b> Price R85 to all ASSA members. AJ confirmed that Country Members receive the SGAS as part of their membership fee (since 2012), which was increased this year to R85 (as is normally done by all Centres). <u>AJ Nel</u> will send reminders to the Centres to order their SGASs from him.</p> <p><b>4.2 MNASSA</b> It was agreed not to solicit a list of volunteers/contributors to MNASSA but to keep reminding Centres and Directors about contributions.</p> <p>Further to a recent communication relating to an incident where the origin of data submitted and published was not acknowledged, it was agreed that formal communication to Centres and Directors is required – which should be acknowledged as received - as a reminder to ensure that the source of content / contributions, whether it is to MNASSA or local newsletters, acknowledges all sources of information if not original.</p> <p><b>4.3 Nightfall</b> Next edition is in progress. Update after the meeting from Doug:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- current page count is 110 with excellent pieces by Magda, Carol Botha, Martin Heigan, and astro-image features by Tiann Niemand (a new member) and Angus Burns.</li> <li>- Extended piece about the difficulties of imaging planetary nebulae, plus a lively account written by a young American woman astronomer who was sent to SA on an imaging mission and wrote her impressions of our skies and landscape. On deck are finalising the front-&amp;-back matter.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Scholarships</b></p> <p><b>5. Scholarships</b> <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. <u>AJ Nel</u> agreed to send mail to Nielen Schaefer (<a href="mailto:nielen@iafrica.com">nielen@iafrica.com</a>) Detail to place on the website to be provided by <u>C Flanagan</u>. AJ sent a thank you letter to Nielen. <a href="https://assa.saa.ac.za/about/scholarships/">https://assa.saa.ac.za/about/scholarships/</a> has not yet been updated (<u>C Flanagan, J Gill</u>)</i></p>
6	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p><b>6. ASSA Membership</b></p> <p><b>6.1 Country Membership 2020</b> No update on number of members provided.</p> <p><b>6.2 Honorary Membership 2020 /21</b> C Rijdsdijk raised the question is all Honorary Membership donations were processed by <u>AJ Nel</u> and he offered to check and confirm that they have all been successful and acknowledged.</p>
7	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p><b>7 Governance</b></p> <p><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.</i></p>

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	<p><i>(21 Sep) <u>AJ Nel</u> confirmed that the draft amendments to the Constitution was sent to CTFS for sign off before presenting to Council and finalising the document.</i> Work in progress was noted.</p> <p><b>7.2 AGM wrap up</b> Website was updated by J Gill with all relevant supporting documents,</p> <p>All the award gift donations requests were received and paid by AJ Nel.</p> <p>Certificates: L Cross had the certificates printed and posted using Postnet: Director Certificate for Rodney Hyman and José da Silva, President's Award to Ronnie Glass</p> <p>Overbeek Medal Awards: Further to the approval from the Financial Sub Committee, Ian Glass kindly initiated the process with Pagliari for 3 additional medals and boxes and to have 2 medals engraved for: 2020 Magda Streicher, 2021 Clyde Foster AJ Nel already paid Pagliari for the medals' work. The 3<sup>rd</sup> medal will be kept at the SAAO by Ian Glass. Handover to be arranged in due course.</p>
8	<p><b>Financial</b></p> <p><b>8 Financial Matters</b> <b>8.1 Budget items 2020/21</b> <i>(21 Sep) AJ Nel presented the 2020/21 budget.</i> The meeting noted the budget provided by AJ Nel – the latest version is attached to the minutes – and commented positively.</p> <p><b>8.2 SGAS Electronic Publication</b> <i>(21 Sep) AJ Nel provided examples of e-version of SGAS for sale</i> The meeting noted the new e-publication of SGAS, see attached to the minutes. The cost would be R98.</p> <p><b>8.3 Independent Compiler Appointment</b> AGM confirmed appointment of Peter Carlisle of CTFS as Independent Compiler. His Auditing business is independent of the normal bookkeeping and tax work done by CTF services for the ASSA. C Stewart sent a thank you to CTFS (R Strydom) and AJ Nel has had communications with Peter. This item is considered closed.</p>
9	<p><b>Astro Course</b></p> <p><b>9. Astronomy Course /Education Section</b> <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 &amp; access.</i> <i>(13 July) A Versfeld agreed to be custodian of content for now. Actual content does not necessarily be forwarded to Allen but at least the detail such as: title, audience aimed at, size of file (eg 4Mb), format of file (eg, .pdf, .mp4, .avi, etc)</i> <u>Allen</u> to provide update of content received.</p>
10	<p><b>ASSET</b></p> <p><b>10 ASSET</b> No new information to report.</p>
11	<p><b>Royal Obs 200th anniver</b></p> <p><b>11. 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Royal Observatory</b> This will be a virtual celebration to be held 20 to 22 October. To date: A virtual meeting was held with ASSA Council and Appointees with Dr Daniel Cunama and he sent requirements where ASSA could contribute and this was shared</p>

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	sary	with ASSA-Discussion group on 17 August with the request to submit contributions to the SAAO by 25 August. A number of members are supporting the event. The latest programme / information will be shared as this becomes available.
12	IAU 2024	<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>
13	General	<p><b>13. General items</b></p> <p><b>13.1 Letter for your neighbourhood</b> <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. (13 July) <u>Douglas Bullis and Allen Versfeld</u> kindly volunteered to start a draft. Any progress to report, <u>Doug and Allen</u>?</i></p> <p><b>13.2 NRF/SAAO App (restricted discussion)</b> An app is in progress by the SAAO on which the SAAO would like input from ASSA. As the app has not yet been launched, this info should be treated as restricted information. <u>Volunteers</u> who are interested in participating in providing content for the App such as podcasts, workshops, Picture of the Day, Calendar, Astronomy Today, is to contact <u>L Cross</u> who will place these volunteers in touch with SAAO.</p> <p><b>13.3 Face-to-face vs Virtual Centre meetings</b> M Reitz of Cape Centre enquired about how other Centre is finding and dealing with the tendency to have more virtual sessions. C Stewart gave positive feedback on how he observed Johannesburg and Pretoria Centres are holding their virtual sessions. There was agreement that these supplement face-to-face sessions as and where these can be held and allow a wider audience to join and be exposed to other Centres' sessions. This was beneficial and positive contribution to bring ASSA members in closer contact. It was noted that Cape, Johannesburg, and Pretoria Centres' normal meeting premises are still closed.</p>
14	Closure	C Stewart closed the meeting. Next meetings to be scheduled

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

### Attachments in support of minutes:

In support of item 3.1 : 2020-08-17 ASSA Membership Confirmation Letter  
 In support of item 3.2 : ASSA Communication 20-07-19 v1  
 In support of item 5 : 2020-09-21 ASSA Letter to PE Peoples Observatory  
 In support of item 8.1 : 2020-09-21 ASSA Budget Summary 2020 /2021  
 In support of item 8.2 : SGAS e version

### 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

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- 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      | 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive notice  |
| 1 Oct    | Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik  |
- Annual refresh of the Communications document after the AGM
- END**