

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	16 November 2020	TME	18:00 19:00	VENUE	Via Teams
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ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Chris Stewart	President (Chair)
Case Rijdsdijk	Vice President, Chair – Garden Route Centre, Communications, Ed Board
Dr Pieter Kotze	Council Member
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Clyde Foster	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Marius Reitz	Chair - Cape Centre
Piet Strauss	Chair - Durban Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair –Pretoria Centre

Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
Dave Blane	Double and Variable Stars Section Director
Martin Heigan	Imaging Section Director
Douglas Bullis	Deep Sky Section Director
John Gill	Web Manager
Chris de Coning	ASSA Archiving

Apologies noted as (a) /Absent

Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Wilmi Nel	Membership Secretary
Dr Pierre de Villiers (a)	Council Member
Percy Jacobs	Photometry and Spectroscopy Section Director
Bruce Dickson	Cosmology Section Director
Dr Claire Flanagan (a)	Convenor of Scholarships
Dr Christian Hettlage (a)	Web Master
Kos Coronaios (a)	Observing Director
Allen Versfeld	Citizen Science Section Director
Thinus van der Merwe	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre
Carmel Ives	Chair – Johannesburg Centre

ASSET (for distribution)

Tim Cooper	For ASSET Trustees
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	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apology	C Stewart welcomed everyone to the 2 nd ASSA Council meeting for 2020/21 year. Meeting detail: invites to join the Teams session were sent to members by Chris Stewart. No connection issues were advised such as attendees having problems in joining.
2	Previous Minutes Matters arising	Minutes of short Council meeting held 28 September (attached to agenda) was proposed to be approved by C Rijdsdijk and accepted by the meeting. Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Current actions are underlined. Actions arising from Finance Sub-Committee meetings are noted in italics. Slides referred to are in the presentation in support of the minutes.

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3 ASSA Comms	<p>3. Communication</p> <p>3.1 Communications document <i>Permanent item</i> <u>L Cross</u> to schedule a session to finalise slides 4, 5 and 6</p> <p>3.2 Website <i>Permanent item:</i> <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>3.3 Update from Centres and Section Directors <i>Permanent item:</i> <u>Section Directors</u> and <u>Centre Chairs</u> are welcome to raise any item at the Council meeting and/or send an update to <u>L Cross</u> to include in the agenda before the meeting.</p> <p>3.4 Other Astronomical Societies <i>Permanent item</i></p> <p>3.4.1 African Astronomical Society ("AfAS") Request for volunteers sent 28 June (13 Jul) Niruj Mohan Ramanujam, Chairperson, Outreach Committee, African Astronomical Society https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org asked for volunteers.</p> <p>a) Working Group on "African Astronomy Calendar" <u>Doug Bullis</u> was happy to be nominated as ASSA Representative on this group. (28 Sep) <u>L Cross</u> placed <u>D Bullis</u> in touch with Niruj. <u>Doug</u> 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. <u>L Cross</u> to inform Niruj that <u>Doug</u> is the contact. <u>Doug</u> will inform is there is any item going forward that needs discussion. Proposed this item is closed.</p> <p>b) Promoting amateur astronomer associations (13 Jul) Niruj Ramanujam requested form to be shared and completed https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU2NF0IR84aAwMYPEJSsSSbdDYH2ySlw7tEFvgwtdikIgJYw/viewform The AfAS aim to enable all to (1) connect with each other and (2) help smaller groups to establish themselves with help from others. (28 Sep) <u>C Rijsdijk</u> completed form on behalf of ASSA and <u>L Cross</u> 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. <u>L Cross</u> to inform Niruj to share information with ASSA. Proposed this item is closed.</p> <p>c) 'Starter kit' for amateur astronomy clubs in schools and similar institutions (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 <u>L Cross</u> placed <u>D Bullis</u> in touch with Niruj. Refer to the progress noted under item 9. <u>L Cross</u> to provide update to Niruj and then it is proposed to close this item.</p>

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	<p>3.4.2 NRF/SAAO App (restricted discussion) <i>(21 Sep) 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.</i> <u>L Cross</u> has not received comments from <u>any volunteers</u> and will advise SAAO (Pran) accordingly.</p>
4	<p>4. ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1 SGAS 2021 Auke confirmed Struik has received SGAS 2021. Delivery is now the focus. The meeting asked <u>AJ</u> to send put a notice to all advising the eta for delivery. Chris de Coning reminded that he needs 3 copies for the archives (<u>AJN</u>)</p> <p>SGAS Electronic Publication <i>(21 Sep) AJ Nel provided examples of e-version of SGAS for sale</i> <i>(28 Sep) The cost would be R98.</i> Auke advised that the e-version is in place for SGAS 2021 and kindly undertook to provide “marketing material” to place on the website and distribute to Centres for publication.</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA Case gave an update that the publication is likely to now be quarterly and also advised that a summary of guidelines (eg scope, focus, benefits for contributors and ASSA) will be done which can be distributed (even to students at universities) to encourage contributions to MNASSA.</p> <p>4.3 Nightfall Doug reported that he is working on a next edition and have received some valuable input from Martin Heigan and Yolanda Combrink.</p>
5	<p>5. Scholarships <i>Permanent item: R20 000 per scholarship in 2020 for ASSA Scholarship and Cooke Scholarship. Scholarships for 2021 is suspended.</i> Meeting asked for confirmation and copy of outcome/update sent to Nielen Schaefer (nielen@iafrica.com) – please note the letter attached in confirmation <u>C Flanagan and J Gill</u> to confirm that the website has been updated https://assa.saa0.ac.za/about/scholarships/</p>
6	<p>6. ASSA Membership</p> <p>6.1 Country Membership 2020 Update requested on number of members who renewed and new members (<u>W Nel</u>).</p> <p>6.2 Honorary Membership 2020 /21 <i>(28 Sep) 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.</i> Update from <u>AJN</u> requested on the payments made to Honorary Members (who accepted the offer and was paid and who did not)</p>
7	<p>7 Governance</p>

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nance	<p>7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary ...) Application <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. (21 Sep) <u>AJ Nel</u> confirmed that the draft amendments to the Constitution was sent to <u>CTFS</u> for sign off before presenting to Council and finalising the document. Update to be provided by <u>AJN</u></i></p> <p>7.2 AGM wrap up <i>(28 Sep) 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 3rd medal will be kept at the SAAO by Ian Glass. Handover to be arranged in due course. <u>Ian Glass</u> kindly offered to follow-up with Pagliari on progress make on the Medals and to if delivery to the SAAO safe has been achieved.</i></p>
8	<p>Financial</p> <p>8 Financial Matters</p> <p>8.1 Budget items 2020/21 <i>(21 Sep) AJ Nel presented the 2020/21 budget. Permanent item in case there is a change required during the year.</i></p>
9	<p>Astro Content</p> <p>9 Astronomy Content</p> <p>9.1 Astronomy Course /Education Section <i>(20 Apr) Council agreed proposal with aim to curate information supplied electronically to deserving parties to further ASSA aims. (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. (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) Doug Bullis provided an update at the meeting and shared his work to date after the meeting with Council and assa-discussion – refer to file Astronomy Starter Kit.pdf attached to the minutes – and asked for critique/suggestions.</i></p> <p><i>Doug compiled his update after speaking with 3 educators and a secondary school librarian on how to best introduce young people to astronomy, aka a 'Starter Kit'. The consensus was that a physical kit is impractical on many grounds, chief of which are the wide age and economic diversity of potential users, and adequate guidance to their instructors. The better option is cellphone and tablet apps. Doug intend to reproduce an extensively illustrated version in the next Nightfall. to provide update of content received.</i></p> <p>9.2 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. (13 July) <u>Douglas Bullis and Allen Versfeld</u> kindly volunteered to start a draft. <u>Doug</u> is still considering content for this item.</i></p>
10	<p>ASSET</p> <p>10 ASSET No new information to report.</p>

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11	Royal Obs 200th anniversary	<p>11. 200th anniversary of Royal Observatory The very successful virtual celebration was held 20 to 22 October. It was proposed and agreed that ASSA will address a formal note to Dr Cunnama and his team. <u>Chris Stewart</u> agreed to draft a formal letter and share with all.</p> <p>For the record, Dr Cunnama's mail to attendees, 19 November 2020: "If there are any sessions you missed or would like to watch again, recordings of the presentations and posters are now available via our YouTube channel and can be easily accessed via the SAAO website or the link below: https://www.saa.ac.za/symposium-recorded-talks/ Please note that some presentations were proprietary and cannot be made available."</p>
12	IAU 2024	<p>12. IAU 2024 <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	General	<p>13. General items</p>
14	Closure	<p>C Stewart thanked attendees for their contribution and closed meeting at 7pm.</p> <p>Next meetings proposed : 15 February, 17 May, 19 July at 6pm - 7pm. And the AGM on 4 August. The Financial Sub Committee (FSC) will meet the week before the monthly meetings.</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments in support of minutes:

- 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 9.1 : Astronomy starter kit notes.pdf

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**

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- 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)

- 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 1st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1st 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**