

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	24 May 2021	TME	18:00 18:45	VENUE	Via TEAMS
-------------	-------------	------------	-------------	--------------	-----------

ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Chris Stewart	President (Chair)
Case Rijdsijk	Vice President
Dr Pierre de Villiers	Council Member
Dr Pieter Kotze	Council Member
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Clyde Foster	Council Member
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Wilmi Nel	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Piet Strauss	Chair - Durban Centre
Bosman Olivier	Chair - Pretoria Centre
Alison Coulter	Chair - Johannesburg Centre

Appointees

Douglas Bullis	Deep Sky Section Director
John Gill	Web Manager
Bruce Dickson	Cosmology Section Director
Dave Blane	Double and Variable Stars Section Director
Martin Heigan	Imaging Section Director
Chris de Coning	ASSA Archiving

Apologies noted as (a) /Absent

Marius Reitz (a)	Chair - Cape Centre
Percy Jacobs (a)	Photometry and Spectroscopy Section Director
Auke Slotegraaf (a)	SGAS Editor
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

ASSET (for distribution)

Tim Cooper	For ASSET Trustees
------------	--------------------

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apology	C Stewart welcomed everyone to the 4th ASSA Council meeting for 2020/21 year. Apologies received are noted in the attendance list.
2	Previous Minutes Matters arising	Minutes of Council meeting held 15 February (as attached to agenda) was approved (C Rijdsijk, P Strauss) and no comments offered. Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Current actions are underlined. Actions arising from Finance Sub-Committee ("FSC") meetings are noted in italics (<i>20 May FSC</i>).
3	ASSA Comms	3. Communication 3.1 Communications document

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
	<p><u>Permanent item</u> Latest version was attached to the agenda for review by <u>each Council Member</u>.</p> <p>3.2 Website <i>Permanent item: <u>Section Directors and Centre Chairs</u> are reminded to ask John Gill to effect any change to their pages on the website if they cannot do it themselves. (15 Feb) Suitable place for links to “Other Astronomical Societies/Affiliations” (J Gill)</i> J Gill added links to AfAS on the right hand panel of the website pages. No update received from <u>Council members</u> before the meeting.</p> <p>3.3 Update/Comments from Centres and Section Directors <i>Permanent item: <u>Section Directors and Centre Chairs</u></i> No update received from <u>Council members</u> before the meeting.</p> <p>3.4 Other Astronomical Societies / Affiliations <u>Permanent item</u></p> <p>3.4.1 African Astronomical Society (“AfAS”) https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org Council noted that AfAS arranged a special session for African amateur astronomy associations held 12 March, attended by Council members. AfAS shared list of societies in Africa which J Gill placed on the website (AfAS_Amateur_Astro_Assoc_Database).</p> <p>3.4.2 NRF/SAAO App (restricted) <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.</i> <i>(15 Feb) L Cross wrote to Pran Govender at SAAO asking if any outstanding item to discuss or to be shared with ASSA members and undertook to follow up with him.</i> The item is closed until further information is received from SAAO.</p> <p>3.5 ASSA Communication Coordinator <i>(20 Apr) Council agreed proposal with aim to curate information supplied electronically to deserving parties to further ASSA aims.</i> <i>(8 June) The first step was to collect and curate diverse information, with links on the website for people to browse & access.</i> <i>(16 Nov) Doug Bullis shared his work ref Astronomy Starter Kit.pdf.</i> <i>(15 Feb) The FSC at their meeting 11 Feb proposed that a Section Director – Astronomy Education, be sought and appointed. The scope and role to be agreed. (Council); To assist the process, L Cross to draft a discussion document.</i> It was noted that a voluntary group met 10 March and the outcome achieved is for ASSA to establish a role to facilitate the productive use of ASSA’s communication means and mechanisms in support of ASSA’s principles noted in the Constitution. Key focus areas of the role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enable collaboration / communication between ASSA and its External Entities, e.g. AfAS, SAAO, DSI, NRF SARAO, NRF SAASTA, IMO , IAU; - continually improve engagement / communication between ASSA and its Members, Centres, and the public. Excluded from the scope of the role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aspects already covered by other external entities such as career guidance. Title for the role proposed: “Communications Coordinator”. The document Proposal 210406.doc (attached) summarises the work done by the group. </p>

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
	<p>Council approved Communications Coordinator role and agreed a request is included in the call to be sent to everyone for 2021 succession planning process (<u>L Cross</u>).</p> <p>3.6 Letter for your neighbourhood <i>(8 June) From Oleg Toumilovitch to ASSA-Discussion on 30 March 2020:</i> <i>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> <i>(15 Feb) Council agreed that this item be included in the scope of the previous item.</i> Proposal: to be dealt with by the incoming Communications Coordinator. Item is closed.</p> <p>3.7 Communication from Centres and Section Directors, to Country/Hon Members Council noted the proposal from Hermanus Centre (attached). It was agreed invitations to a broader group than ASSA members is up to the organiser of the event. Also agreed: it is good conduct to confirm beforehand with speakers that recording may proceed. Council agreed that a mail will be sent to Council covering guidelines for sharing invites / meeting recordings for formal sign off before placing these in the Communications document (<u>L Cross</u>).</p> <p>A mail group for Country/Hon Members to be established and they should be invited to join the Group to receive updates/invites aimed at ASSA members (<u>C Stewart, L Cross</u>).</p>
4	<p>Publications</p> <p>ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1 SGAS 2021 <i>(15 Feb) RandomHouse distributed 2020 edition, the correct booklets were received late December by ASSA. Several queries from Country and Hon Members were received asking the whereabouts of their Sky Guides. AJ Nel agreed to send out email to Country & Hon Members informing of delay and advising when/how their booklets were mailed. SGAS “marketing” – including for e-version - to be on website (<u>Auke, J Gill</u>)</i> It was noted that reports of no delivery are still being received from Country and Hon Members. A survey was requested to be sent to all Country and Hon Members to enquire if they have received their SGAS for 2021. (<u>AJ Nel, C Stewart</u>).</p> <p>Options for delivery of 2022 edition to be proposed for discussion and finalisation at the next meeting. (<u>Council</u>)</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA <u>C Rijdsijk</u> reported that he and Dr I Glass agreed to introduce a new section for Centre News in MNASSA and will solicit input for content from the Centres.</p> <p>4.3 Nightfall <i>(15 Feb) “Nightfall articles turn up on a Google search originate from ISSUU.COM web page, not from the ASSA's link to that page.” (<u>C Stewart, D Bullis, L Cross</u>)</i> The Nightfall link on the website https://assa.saa.ac.za/about/publications/ connects to D Bullis’ ISSUU.com web page. D Bullis explained the technical considerations in choosing ISSUU and the annual fee he paid but supported Council’s decision to look at options to align the Nightfall editions with those of MNASSA. It was agreed to take the proposal further with the SAAO in the first instance to confirm how it could be implemented. (<u>L Cross</u>). Council agreed that if require a donation could be made to the SAAO for the hosting space on their servers.</p> <p>D Bullis advised he is working on the next issue of Nightfall.</p>

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
	<p>4.4 Other Astronomy related publications <i>(15 Feb) ASSA could potentially support further Astronomy related publications. Struik has expressed interest in the publication of astronomy material developed by ASSA members. <u>Authors</u> of appropriate material could discuss with Struik if they are interested and revert to Council with a recommendation regarding potential ASSA endorsement / financial support.</i> <i>Proposals to be further discussed by <u>FSC</u> and tabled with Council for sign off:</i> 1) ASSA to develop parameters for involvement in publications authored by ASSA Members; 2) Governance needs to be established; to be separate from the Editorial Committee which manages the publications produced by ASSA and include at least Treasurer and President. <u>AJ Nel</u> offered to prepare guideline recommendation for the FSC to consider in the first instance before taking it to Council.</p>
5	<p>Scholarships</p> <p>5. Scholarships <i>Permanent item: R20 000 per scholarship in 2020 for ASSA Scholarship and Cooke Scholarship. Scholarships for 2021 is suspended.</i> <i>(15 Feb) AJ Nel advised higher than anticipated growth achieved by the Glacier Fund (a 2-year-old investment which hold funds for both Scholarships) and proposed that R40 000 is drawn from the fund which could be deployed for bursaries in 2022. The motion was carried to withdraw R40 000 from the ASSA Glacier Fund.</i> <i>At the FSC held 20 May, AJ Nel reported R40 000 was withdrawn from the Fund in prep of 2022 Scholarships.</i></p>
6	<p>Member ship</p> <p>6.1 Country Membership 2021 <i>AJ Nel reported that 7 new Country members have signed up.</i> <i>B Olivier reported that he is still receiving messages forwarded by membership@</i> <i>L Cross noted that the issue was escalated to C Hettlage to take further with SAAO IT.</i></p> <p>6.2 Honorary Membership <i>Permanent item: ASSA has 12 Hon Members. Max 15</i> http://assa.sao.ac.za/about/awards/honorary-members/</p>
7	<p>Gover nance</p> <p>7. Governance</p> <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”. AJ Nel undertook to compile a draft update to the Constitution and if approved ratified at the next AGM.</i> <i>(21 Sep) AJ Nel confirmed that the draft amendments to the Constitution was sent to CTFS for sign off before presenting to Council and finalising the document.</i> <i>15 Feb) AJ Nel informed the process is being run in parallel with finalising the 2020 financials.</i> <u>AJ Nel</u> reported at 20 May FSC the item is in progress with SARS seeing that the financials are close to being signed off.</p> <p>7.2 AGM 2020 wrap up and 2021 <i>(28 Sep) Overbeek Medal Awards: Ian Glass kindly initiated process with Pagliari for 3 additional medals and boxes and to have 2 medals engraved for: 2020 Magda Streicher, 2021 Clyde Foster. The 3rd medal will be kept at SAAO.</i> <i>(15 Feb) It was proposed that the handover of medals to Magda and Clyde proceed, considering that the AGM is likely be held virtually. Handover of medals be arranged in</i></p>

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
	<p><i>Gauteng. ASSA Pretoria Centre is willing to host a small celebratory session; Chris Stewart to be the custodian of the medals until the handover; Arrangements to commence to get the Medals from SAAO.</i></p> <p>Update (<u>C Stewart, AJ Nel, B Olivier</u>)</p> <p>The handover of the Overbeek Medals has been arranged by B Olivier and C Stewart. The small gathering will include Andy and Margie Overbeek and will be held in Centurion on 26 May. Photos and summary will be provided for MNASSA.</p> <p>7.3 Upcoming items in Checklist (refer to list below agenda)</p> <p><i>(15 Feb) Council agreed to the proposal and the motion was carried: Chris Stewart will remain as ASSA President until the AGM in 2022.</i></p> <p>No response yet from Council further to request for nominations for Hon Members and Awards. Formal reminders to be sent out (<u>L Cross</u>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for nominations of Council Members requesting confirmation of who would like to remain in their roles; include new role of Communications Coordinator. - for annual Reports <p>Virtual AGM will be held 4 August, hosted by Pretoria Centre (<u>B Olivier</u>)</p>
8	<p>Financial</p> <p>8 Financial Matters</p> <p>8.1 2020 Financials</p> <p><i>(15 Feb) Draft financials were received from <u>CTFS</u>; queries are being progressed by <u>AJ Nel</u>; the process is likely to be finalised within the next 2 weeks.</i></p> <p><i>Thereafter the financials will be reviewed /audited and signed off by the <u>Independent Compiler, Peter Carlisle</u> whose Auditing business is independent of the normal bookkeeping and tax work done by CTF services for the ASSA.</i></p> <p><u>AJ Nel</u> reported at the 20 May FSC the item is in progress.</p>
9	<p>ASSET</p> <p>9 ASSET</p> <p><i>(Permanent item)</i></p> <p>No new information to report.</p>
10	<p>Royal Obs 200th anniversary</p> <p>10. ASSA Centenary, Friday 1 July 2022</p> <p><i>(15 Feb) Further to the alert from Chris de Coning a notification of ASSA Centenary to all and ideas requested for commemoration/ celebration. Ideas thus far received:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Whatever happened to the Glass Plates in SA's observatories (Doug Bullis)</i> 2) <i>New Landlords of Jhb Obs to be included in planning (refer Short History Note)</i> 3) <i>Shared activity/ies by all Centres</i> <p>Suggestion welcome from all.</p>
11	<p>IAU 2024</p> <p>11. IAU 2024</p> <p><i>Permanent note: All input for the event be forwarded to Case Rijdsdijk for onward communication to the Organising Committee. https://astronomy2024capetown.org/</i></p> <p><u>C Rijdsdijk</u> offered to contact Dr Cunama as Incoming President for 2021/22 and confirm his support to run with communications /interaction with Organising Committee.</p>
12	<p>General</p> <p>12. General items</p> <p>12.1 2018 ASSA Symposium Presentation</p> <p><i>(15 Feb) Auke appealed to the meeting for help with the videos he recorded at the 2018 ASSA Symposium, 26 presentations. Ideally, these should be edited into YouTube and then placed on the ASSA YouTube Channel. <u>Alison Coulter</u> kindly offered assistance.</i></p> <p>A Coulter reported the considerable task is still in progress.</p> <p>Although AJ Nel confirm that as the Symposium was a public forum, presenters can't</p>

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		<p>object to have their presentations in the public domain, <u>C Rijsdijk</u> undertook to contact the presenters to inform them of the project in progress.</p> <p>12.2 Any other general item No other general item raised.</p>
14	Closure	<p>C Stewart thanked attendees for their contribution and closed the meeting at 6 :45pm.</p> <p>Next meetings proposed : 19 July at 6pm - 7pm. 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 3.1 : ASSA Communication 21 04 02

In support of item 3.5 : Proposal 210406.doc

In support of item 3.7: PROTOCOL FOR SHARING RECORDINGS OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS

In support of item 7.1

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)

- 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

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

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; 1st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1st 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