



ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	8 May 2023	TME	17:00 – 17:50	VENUE	Via Jitsi Meet
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ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Dr Daniel Cunnama	President (Chair)
Chris Stewart	Vice President
Dr Pierre de Villiers	Vice President
Adv AJ Nel	Treasurer
Case Rijdsdijk	Council Member, Chair – Garden Route Centre
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Dr Christian Hettlage	Chair – Cape Centre, Web Master
Derek Duckitt	Chair – Hermanus Centre, Cosmology Director
Johan Smit	Chair - Pretoria Centre
Appointees	
Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
Dave Blane	Double & Variable Star & Photometry & Spectroscopy Director (Acting)

Apologies (a) and Absentees

Tim Cooper (a)	Comet, Asteroid, Meteor (CAM) Director
Chris de Coning (a)	ASSA Archiving, Historical Director
John Gill (a)	Web Manager
Martin Heigan (a)	Imaging Director, Communications Coordinator
Dr Claire Flanagan	Convenor of Scholarships
Debbie Abel (a)	Chair – Durban Centre
Carmel Ives	Chair - Johannesburg Centre
Angus Burns	Observing Director
Prof Matie Hoffman	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre
Eddy Nijeboer	Membership Secretary
Allen Versfeld	Citizen Science
Kos Coronaios	Outreach, Media Liaison

Jitsi meeting link: <https://meet.jit.si/ASSAMeet>

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apology	<p>Daniel Cunnama opened the 3rd ASSA Council meeting for 2022/23, welcoming Council members. Apologies received before & after meeting are noted in Attendance list.</p> <p>Daniel extended a special welcome to Debbie Abel – the new Chair for ASSA Durban Centre. Daniel noted the passing of Prof Brian Warner and propose notification is sent to ASSA members.</p>
2	Previous Minutes & Matters arising	<p>Minutes of Council meeting on 7 February '23 attached to the agenda were accepted.</p> <p>Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are in italics. Current actions are underlined.</p>
3	ASSA Comms	<p>3. Communication</p> <p>3.1 Communications document (<i>Permanent item</i>)</p> <p>Council accepted the latest draft of the Comms document further to its review which now includes a slide noting the intent of the document. i.e. to detail ASSA's approach to achieve its objectives. The focus is now on the implementation of the approach by <u>all Council members</u>.</p> <p>3.2 Communication channels</p> <p>3.2.1 Website</p>

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	<p>Council members who have their personal emails linked to generic email links on the website such as “Report a Sighting”, Membership Secretary, etc., are receiving many spam mails. <u>Christian</u> undertook to ask for guidance from SAAO IT and also agreed that spam emails received be forwarded to him to share with SAAO IT.</p> <p>3.2.2 Communication mail groups <i>(7 Feb) As per the motivation in the agenda, Council agreed to only keep ASSAVIP.</i> Chris Stewart informed members of the deletion of the ASSA Announce and ASSA Discussion Groups, the Country Membership Intro Letter was changed by Eddy and John updated the ASSA website. <u>Council</u> agreed the item may be closed.</p> <p>3.2.3 2018 ASSA Symposium Presentation <i>(4 Oct) Feedback from Alison and Amith Rajpal on progress of 26 videos recorded at 2018 ASSA Symposium to edit into YouTube, place on ASSA YouTube Channel.</i> <u>Lerika</u> to follow up with <u>Alison</u> and discuss options to close the item.</p> <p>3.2.4 ASSA Cloud repository <i>(7 Feb) Chris de C confirmed he activated the cloud archive and invited <u>Directors and Centres</u> to copy their current & historical data to the cloud in their folders.</i> <u>Directors, Centre Chairs</u> to contact Chris de Coning on any issue encountered and keep him updated with progress.</p> <p>3.3 Mutual beneficial relationships</p> <p>3.3.1 External Entities: on-selling SGAS booklets <i>(7 Feb) Formalising comms to entities re offering Sky Guides for sale at their entities</i> Council noted that PRH advised the process to follow for on-selling Sky Guide booklets, ref 4.1.1 in the agenda. Entities approached to date: Wesgro and SANParks. Forward ideas on who to approach to on-sell booklets to Daniel or obtain further info from Lerika.</p> <p>3.3.2 ASSA Scholarship Committee & Editorial Board <i>(7 Feb) <u>Claire & Lerika & Case</u> to work on a draft email, offering free ASSA membership and annual Sky Guide to these two entities.</i> <u>Lerika</u> to follow-up with <u>Case and Claire</u>.</p> <p>3.3.3 Engaging with Night sky/ stargazing tours service providers Outcome further to Council discussing the request from a visitor to ASSA website “looking to connect with individuals or companies that organise stargazing evenings for groups”.</p> <p><u>AJ</u> offered to propose fee structure to the FSC for entities who want to advertise astronomical related services, e.g., organising stargazing evenings/parties across the country. The <u>FSC</u> would need to agree conditions such as: acceptance of such adverts is at discretion of the FSC, the advert is accepted in good faith, but should not be seen as endorsement. Once fee structure and conditions are agreed by the <u>FSC</u>, a call will be sent to known entities.</p> <p>3.4 Dark Sky</p> <p>3.4.1 Astro Tourism <i>(4 Oct) DSI Astro Tourism Strategy Plan: final plan to be presented January following which funding will be known. Funding is likely to be dependent on ASSA being registered as a PBO.</i> <u>Daniel</u> informed that the initiative is still in progress.</p> <p>3.4.2 Light pollution measuring <i>(7 Feb) <u>Wim Filmalter</u>’s application to IDA Light Monitor Grant Program was successful.</i> Council noted that Wim has received his device and awaits feedback from Cape Nature on when he could use it at Anysberg Reserve. Eleanor Muller (a member of the Dark Sky Group) advised she also received a device from the IDA. Eleanor will be key person to assist with application for IDA Dark Sky Certificate.</p> <p>3.5 ASSA Special Project – Global Meteor Network Project <i>(7 Feb) Tim informed funding approval has been received from a 2nd funder in January. Tim will</i></p>

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		<p><i>prepare a presentation to explain what needs to be achieved/ assistance from ASSA. He would need a LOC/working group of ~ 3 people of which Kos Coronaios will assist with outreach.</i></p> <p>Tim's update on the Special Project was noted:</p> <p>Four cameras have been built together with Raspberry Pi computers, awaiting shipment to South Africa. Depending on the shipping terms, he may have to pay 15% VAT on these, He would require funding to provide a UPS to each camera and computer and asked for suggestions. He has a slide presentation ready to present to potential interested partners. Once the cameras and computers arrive a decision is needed on schools where these will be placed. Stipulation from the sponsor is that they have to be use for STEM initiatives at high school level. Writing of the curriculum materials is in progress within the GMN Outreach Project Working Group. Tim is responsible for writing the Meteor Science module, target date for completion is end July. He would appreciate anyone within ASSA who is interested in participating in the local organising group for the GMN Outreach Project to contact him.</p> <p>Chris S commented that options for the UPS will depend, i.a. on power draw from the devices and the comms mechanism. The meeting supported AJ's recommendation to support request for funding for the project, in principle. The FSC awaits further detail from <u>Tim</u>.</p> <p>Tim is ready with a presentation to explain what needs to be achieved/ assistance from ASSA. A call for volunteers to be made. (<u>Tim</u>, <u>Lerika</u>)</p> <p>3.6 Outreach</p> <p>3.6.1 The Big 5 and Astrophoto Challenge</p> <p>https://assa.sao.ac.za/sections/deep-sky/big5/</p> <p>An Astrophoto Challenge, focusing on the Big 5 - as an outreach option towards encouraging observing – was accepted by the meeting. It will aim to announce winners at the AGM and have images available for 2024 Sky Guide. Team: <u>Martin, Chris, Angus, Auke, Daniel, Lerika, John</u></p>
4	Publications	<p>4. ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1 SGAS</p> <p>4.1.1 PRH process for on-selling SGAS booklets</p> <p>PRH's process for distribution of booklets, was noted as recorded in the agenda.</p> <p>4.1.2 Digital version of Sky Guide</p> <p>The meeting noted that eBook vouchers were sent by PRH – with proviso that recipients have a gmail address - to Hon Member José Campos (in Portugal) and Martin, as approved by the FSC.</p> <p>An option to offer ASSA Members the choice of a 2024 SGAS eBook instead of booklet to be unpacked and presented to the FSC by AJ and Lerika.</p> <p><u>AJ</u> to liaise with PRH on discounts similar to the booklets and potential impact on membership fees. <u>Lerika</u> to coordinate process of eBook options with help from Martin and Chris S.</p> <p>4.1.3 SGAS 2024</p> <p>“Deadline for agreement with Struik of the printing schedule” is be removed from checklist.</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA</p> <p>Case asked for replies to invite to a number of members to comment on i.a., increasing the number of submissions for publications in MNASSA.</p> <p>Note: the same issue was raised by Angus at the Feb meeting, for Southern Skies, i.e. “<i>it was a task gathering sufficient material from around the country to publish</i>”.</p> <p>4.3 Southern Skies</p> <p>No update yet from Angus.</p>
5	Scholarships	<p>5. Scholarships http://assa.sao.ac.za/about/scholarships/</p> <p><i>Permanent item: The ASSA and Cooke Scholarships for 2023 is R25 000 each.</i></p> <p>5.1 2023 Bursaries</p> <p>The meeting noted the Bursars for 2023, as informed by Claire obo the Scholarship Committee and</p>

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		<p>detailed in the agenda. AJ has already processed payments from the ASSA account to the Bursars.</p> <p>The meeting had no objection to the proposal detailed in the agenda for Claire to communicate to current and past Bursars, which include: Offering Country Membership to Bursars with no subscription joining / annual fee for as long as they are ASSA Bursars, and a complementary Sky Guide booklet which they can collect from ASSA Centre nearest to them or if they are not in South Africa, ASSA can consider ebook option, and an invite to join the ASSAVIP Mail list. Current and past Bursars will also be invited to contribute to MNASSA and informed how such contribution will be beneficial to them. Past Bursars will be invited to join as full Country or an ASSA Centre Member.</p> <p>Current Bursars to be noted as a Bursar Membership category, designated "B" on the Country Membership List maintained by the Membership Secretary. (<u>Eddy</u>) <u>Claire</u> to provide <u>Eddy</u> with the completed Membership forms.</p> <p>5.2 2024 Bursaries <u>AJ</u> asked for more time before proposing the sums available for next year's two Scholarships but indicated that it will be a min of R25 000 ea.</p>
6	Member ship	<p>6. Membership 6.1 Country and Honorary Membership <i>13 Honorary Membership (max 15)</i> No detail provided by Eddy on Membership stats.</p> <p>6.2 2024 SGAS distribution to Country members <i>(7 Feb) Council members in attendance expressed concern on PAXI process for couriering SGAS e.g., delivery time > 2 weeks. To consider another/additional option for 2024 booklet.</i> Additional options to be pursued for distribution of the 2024 booklet. <u>AJ</u> offered DSV as a possible option to explore and PUDO is also still an option. Options to be discussed re. delivery time, reducing risk of delivery detail error, cost, effort required by Membership Secretary, and finalised to Council (<u>Eddy</u>, <u>AJ</u>, <u>Lerika</u>)</p>
7	Gover nance	<p>7. Governance 7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary Disclosure Program) Application <i>(7 Jul) CTFS to be asked on process PBO registration and to provide a quotation</i> <i>(7 Feb) CTFS kindly offered to not charge ASSA unless the cost involved becomes substantial.</i> <i>CTFS requested, i.a 3 unconnected persons to provide personal information, and a SARS rep.</i> The 3 willing unconnected persons (Daniel, Chris S, Pierre with Pierre the SARS representative) has completed the forms required by CTFS. <u>CTFS</u> will now start the application process.</p> <p>7.2 Checklist review Outcomes agreed in preparation for the 2023 AGM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed date for AGM is 2 August 5pm, to be held virtually hosted by a willing Centre. - Nomination for Incoming Vice President change to be tabled at AGM further to Pierre's nomination of Derek Duckitt, Derek accepting, and the nomination supported by Case Rijdsdijk, Chris S, and Daniel Cunnama. - Reminders to be sent by end June for items noted in the Checklist. </p>
8	Financial	<p>8. Financial Matters 8. 1 Financials AJ informed he is sending monthly financials to CTFS. <u>AJ</u> agreed to propose new fees for 2023/4 Country Membership and Sky Guide charge.</p>
12	General	<p>12. General items No item raised.</p>
13	Closure	<p>Daniel thanked attendees for their contribution and closed the meeting 17 :50 (new record for Council meetings)</p>

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		<p>Next Council meeting is proposed for Monday 3 July at 5pm</p> <p>Centre monthly meetings: Hermanus Centre: 3rd Monday. Cape Centre and Jhb Centres: 2nd Wednesday. Durban Centre: 2nd Wednesday. Pretoria Centre: 4th Wednesday.</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments in support of minutes:

In support of Item 2: ASSA Minutes 230207 v4

In support of Item 3.1: ASSA Communication 230513

In support of item 7.1:

APPROVAL OF PBO

Section 30 of the Income Tax Act No. 58 of 1962 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.

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
- 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 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