



ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	3 July 2023	TME	17:00 – 17:55	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
Eddy Nijeboer	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Dr Christian Hettlage	Chair – Cape Centre, Web Master
Derek Duckitt	Chair – Hermanus Centre, Cosmology Director
Debbie Abel	Chair – Durban Centre

Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
Dave Blane	Double & Variable Star & Photometry & Spectroscopy Director (Acting)
Tim Cooper	Comet, Asteroid, Meteor (CAM) Director

Apologies (a) and Absentees

Dr Ian Glass (a)	Council Member
Angus Burns	Observing Director
Chris de Coning (a)	ASSA Archiving, Historical Director
John Gill (a)	Web Manager
Martin Heigan	Imaging Director, Communications Coordinator
Dr Claire Flanagan (a)	Convenor of Scholarships
Carmel Ives	Chair - Johannesburg Centre
Johan Smit	Chair - Pretoria Centre
Prof Matie Hoffman	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre

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

Recording: https://www.dropbox.com/s/a9m8ve2fb1vd7xg/ASSAMeet_2023-07-03.webm?dl=0

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apology	Daniel Cunnama opened the 4 th ASSA Council meeting for 2022/23, welcoming Council members. Apologies received before & after meeting are noted in Attendance list.
2	Previous Minutes & Matters arising	Minutes of Council meeting on 8 May '23 attached to the agenda were accepted (Proposed by Chris Stewart, Seconded by Derek Duckitt) Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are in italics. Current actions are underlined.
3	ASSA Comms	<p>3. Communication</p> <p>3.1 Communications document (<i>Permanent item</i>) <u>Members</u> are welcome to offer updates to the document and updates will be shared as they arise.</p> <p>3.2 Communication channels</p> <p>3.2.1 Website Tim thanked Christian and SAAO IT for installing the anti-spam plugin. Tim has not received any spam via the Report a Sighting link on the website since the plugin installation.</p> <p>Eddy informed that he has not been receiving mail from membership@. After the meeting: Lerika and Eddy confirmed that the issue appears to be resolved.</p>

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	<p>3.2.2 2018 ASSA Symposium Presentation <i>(4 Oct) 26 videos recorded at 2018 ASSA Symposium were required to be edited into YouTube and placed on ASSA YouTube Channel.</i> Daniel offered to possibly get assistance to complete this action but would need a summary of the current status and what is required from <u>Auke</u> and <u>Alison</u>. (<u>Lerika</u>)</p> <p>3.2.3 ASSA Cloud repository The annual One Cloud subscription – due every June - was renewed by AJ. <u>Centre Chairs and Section Directors</u> to contact Chris de C with any problem in activating their access to the cloud space and uploading current and historical documents to their folders.</p> <p>3.3 Mutual beneficial relationships</p> <p>3.3.1 External Entities: on-selling SGAS booklets <i>(8 May) PRH advised the process to follow for on-selling Sky Guide booklets. Forward ideas on who to approach to on-sell booklets to Daniel or obtain further info from Lerika.</i> PRH and Cape Nature (Wesgro) & SANParks to be placed in contact to on-sell booklet. (<u>Lerika</u>).</p> <p>3.3.2 ASSA Scholarship Committee & Editorial Board – free Country Membership Scholarship Committee It was noted that Claire approached Sivuyile Manxoyi and Dr Vanessa McBride; Sivuyile accepted invite but still has to send his details to <u>Claire</u>. Such members are to be designated “G”, for Gratuitous Membership, on database. (<u>Eddy</u>)</p> <p>Editorial Committee As Gratuitous membership was offered to Dr Vanessa McBride as Scholarship Committee member, the only other member to extend such membership is Willie Koorts. <u>Daniel</u> offered to approach Willie given required input. (<u>Lerika</u>)</p> <p>3.3.3 Engaging with Night sky/ stargazing tours service providers <i>(8 May) AJ 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.</i> Proposal agreed for adverts in the 2024 Sky Guide: 1) Heading above advertising material to state: ads accepted in good faith, not endorsed; 2) To be placed in area/s to be proposed by Auke; 3) R250 per ad is proposed 4) Advertisers will also get ad mirrored in a to-be-determined space on the website; 5) Ads are not restricted to service providers, can also be material from entities such as SAAO; 6) All input to be finalised by end July <u>AJ</u> offered to start off an outline - with contribution from <u>Auke</u> - of an application form that can be sent to interested parties /mail list. Form to be signed off by <u>FSC</u>.</p> <p>3.4 Dark Sky</p> <p>3.4.1 Astro Tourism <i>(4 Oct) DSI Astro Tourism Strategy Plan. Funding likely to be dependent on ASSA being a PBO.</i> Daniel informed there is progress, albeit slow. No funding yet. Awaiting an official call to go out.</p> <p>3.4.2 Light pollution measuring <i>(7 Feb) Wim Filmalter’s application to IDA Light Monitor Grant Program was successful.</i> <i>(8 May) Wim received his device. Awaits feedback from Cape Nature/Anysberg to start.</i> No further progress - roads to Anysberg is still problematic due to flooding.</p> <p>3.5 ASSA Special Project – Global Meteor Network Project <i>(7 Feb) Tim informed funding approval has been received. He would need LOC/working group;</i> <i>(8 May) 4 cameras have been built with Raspberry Pi. Tim may have to pay VAT and would also require funding to provide a UPS to each camera and computer. The meeting supported AJ’s recommendation to support request for funding. FSC awaits further detail.</i> <u>Tim</u> reported 4 cameras were shipped to him from Croatia. Once received, he will be able to assess potential costs and will arrange the kick-off meeting.</p>

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		<p>3.6 Outreach 3.6.1 The “Big 5” “Big 5” Astrophoto Challenge closed 30 June and Martin will now upload submissions to Flickr site and Judges (Martin, Chris S, Angus) should finalise winners ~mid July in time for AGM.</p>
4	Publications	<p>4. ASSA Publications 4.1. SGAS 4.1.1 SGAS 2024: Availability and Distribution Availability: Auke and AJ are confident SGAS 2024 booklet and digital version should be available for distribution by latest end November.</p> <p>Distribution: Council noted the analysis by Chris S comparing PAXI and PUDO delivery mechanisms for SGAS (attached to the minutes). Highlights from the analysis and discussion at the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensuring delivery of the SGAS is disproportionately important to retaining Country Members. 2) PUDO Locker-to-locker is R50 essentially R10 cheaper than PAXI (for SGAS size parcel). 3) Locker-to-door is an additional benefit of delivery to recipient home for R60. 4) A good option to explore is if ASSA could be a PUDO-point to make life easier for MemSec. 5) PUDO delivers to areas where there is no PEP store. 6) PUDO lockers are open 24x7 unless load shedding in area where locker is. <p>Eddy agreed to ASSA offering Country members a delivery choice of PAXI and PUDO. He noted there are still details to unpack, such as Home to Locker option. (<u>Chris S, Eddy, Lerika</u>)</p> <p>ASSAVIP mail list to be informed of the new Country Membership rate and alerting members to the PAXI and PUDO delivery options and polling their choice of delivery. (<u>Lerika</u>)</p> <p>4.1.2 2024 SGAS booklet cost to Centres AJ proposed, and Council accepted, to charge Centres R100 for 2024 SGAS booklet.</p> <p>4.1.3 Digital version of Sky Guide <i>(8 May) 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.</i> <u>AJ to liaise with PRH on discounts similar to the booklets and potential impact on membership fees. Lerika to coordinate process of eBook options.</u> AJ noted that communication is still in progress with PRH, but that an ebook discount does not appear to be impossible (<u>AJ</u>)</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA <i>(8 May) Case asked replies from number of members, i.a., on increasing submissions</i> Case noted he has received quite a bit of feedback on his “future of MNASSA” enquiry. He noted the next edition will be published soon.</p> <p>4.3 Southern Skies Angus informed that he is working on the next issue despite facing a number of challenges.</p> <p>4.4 CAM Notes Tim noted that the 3rd Quarter issue is in progress.</p>
5	Scholarships	<p>5. Scholarships http://assa.saa.ac.za/about/scholarships/ 5.1 2024 Bursaries <i>(8 May) AJ asked for more time before proposing the sums available for next year’s ASSA and Cooke Scholarships but indicated that it will be a min of R25 000 ea.</i> <u>AJ asked to await feedback from CTFS on the financials before proposing the bursary amounts.</u></p> <p>5.2 Communication with Bursars <i>(8 May) Offering Country Membership with no subscription joining / annual fee as long as they</i></p>

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		<p>are ASSA Bursars, and complementary Sky Guide booklet and invite to ASSAVIP mail list Current Bursars to be noted as Bursar Member category, designated "B" on Membership List (<u>Eddy</u>)</p> <p>Current Bursars – free membership: Claire has invited ASSA’s current 2 Bursars to join as Country Members (category “B”). Both accepted the kind invite and are now Country members until June 2024.</p> <p>Council discussed and agreed that previous Bursars who are still to graduate could also be offered the same as current bursars, ie category “B” and thus encourage them to stay in touch and contribute. <u>Lerika</u> to check with <u>Claire</u> if ASSA still has contact with such bursars.</p> <p>Previous Bursars: <u>Daniel</u> offered to draft a note to previous bursars, encouraging them to join as Country or Centre members, offering them the opportunity to contribute to the ASSA (such as content for publication, be it of academic or personal nature) and to stay in touch, if they wish.</p> <p>5.2 Increasing contact with Students Options discussed: 1) It was not agreed to provide a “student rate” for membership but rather that students could be contacted and encouraged to join the local/nearest ASSA Centre. 2) AJ suggested possibility of establishing ASSA Satellite Centres at the 4 Universities with communication encouraging them to contribute/engage with ASSA. Daniel offered to find out who to contact. 3) ASSA get most of its scholarship applicants via their supervisors / lecturers, via the SA-Astronomers mailing list. Daniel agreed to send a post “advertising” membership through that list from time to time to encourage them to get involved. A group discussion session to be arranged to unpack and finalise the detail (<u>Lerika</u>)</p>
6	Member ship	<p>6. Membership 6.1 Country and Honorary Membership 13 Honorary Membership (max 15) Eddy reported: Country members 101, 13 Hon Members, 85 recurring members, 1 Associated Member (from Botswana Astronomy Society), 2 Bursar members.</p> <p>2024 Country Membership renewal was agreed at R150 which will include SGAS & courier cost.</p>
7	Gover nance	<p>7. Governance 7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary Disclosure Program) Application (7 Jul) CTFS to be asked on process PBO registration and to provide a quotation (7 Feb) CTFS kindly offered to not charge ASSA unless cost involved becomes substantial. (8 May) The 3 willing unconnected persons (Daniel, Chris S, Pierre with Pierre the SARS rep.) have completed forms required by CTFS. <u>CTFS</u> will now start the application process. <u>CTFS</u> application is in progress.</p> <p>7.2 Solar Section Council noted Jacques van Delft’s kind offer to resurrect the Solar Section as Director (detail noted in the agenda) and his appointment was fully supported by a number of members with whom he previously engaged with while Solar Director, including Chris S, Pierre, Case, Auke. It was noted that having Jacques’s participation, could enable closer engagements with ASSA Bloemfontein, which would be excellent. Jacques to be provided with all the required Council detail (<u>Lerika</u>).</p> <p>7.3 Outreach Director Council was delighted to accept Pierre’s offer to take on the role of Outreach Director. More detail on his approach to the role and engaging with Centres/members/entities, will follow.</p> <p>7.4 Checklist review – in prep of the AGM (8 May) Outcomes agreed in preparation for the 2023 AGM: - Proposed date for AGM is 2 August 5pm, to be held virtually hosted by a willing Centre.</p>

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		<p>- <i>Nomination for Incoming Vice President to be tabled at AGM further to Pierre's nomination of Derek Duckitt, Derek accepting, nomination supported by C Rijsdijk, Chris S, and Daniel</i></p> <p>Council noted that Derek of Hermanus Centre has agreed to host the AGM.</p> <p><u>LERIKA</u> to send out Notice of AGM to ASSAVIP on 4 July and also follow up with all members about their input for the AGM, including Annual Reports, Centre Chairs, updated Country membership form, award nominations.</p>
8	Financial	<p>8. Financial Matters</p> <p>8.1 2023/4 Financial Budget</p> <p>AJ noted he already provided a categorised expense detail for year ending 2023. More detail will follow after the CTFS financials.</p> <p>Regarding the budget for the AGM, the cost could be ~10% increase on last year.</p>
9	General	<p>9. General items</p> <p>9.1 IAU General Assembly: 6 – 15 August 2024</p> <p>Council noted the summary Ian wrote (attached to the minutes) about the upcoming IAU, which is intended for use in the ASSA 2024 Sky Guide and MNASSA.</p> <p>Ian is on the Organising Committee and arranging a focus meeting on Astronomy in Africa. Daniel offered to give an update at the AGM.</p>
10	Closure	<p>Daniel thanked attendees for their contribution and closed the meeting 17 :55</p> <p>Next Council meetings will be confirmed after the AGM.</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 230701
- In support of Item 4.1.1 SGAS Delivery Mechanisms CS
- In support of Item 9 : International Astronomical Union IAU

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