

**Minutes of  
SAAB AGM 39th Annual Congress  
Venue: the Chapel  
Wednesday 23th January, 15h30  
ATKV Drakensville Resort  
KZN**

**1. Welcome**

The president welcomed the delegates to the meeting at 15h45

**2. Apologies and Attendance**

Present: L Erasmus, M Potgieter, H Papenfus, D Naidoo, A Ndhlala, A Okem, M Light, PW Mokwala, MP Tshisikhawe, R Bhat, H Ghebrehiwot, A Aremu, M Ligavha-Mbelengwa, B Daru, M du Plessis, A Moll, D Bellstedt, S van Wyk, S Stanton, J van Staden, K Balkwill, O Fajinmi, MJ Koetle, R Beckett, S Johnson, F Tshabuse, S Boatwright, A Magee, G Goodman-Cron, P Hills, N Makunga, D Thompson, G Prinsloo, J Farrant, C de Waal, P Rousseau, R Kotze, A Vermeulen, P Pillay, R Kabongo, A Ruiters

Apologies: K Esler, J Vorster, G Smith, M Muasya, A Viljoen, BE van Wyk

**3. Additions to the agenda**

3.1. Prof K Eloff proposed that the SAAB constitution be altered so that the Editor-in-Chief of SAJB be an ex-officio member of the SAAB council. The proposal was seconded by LJ Shai. The proposal was placed as item 11.1 on the agenda

**4. Minutes of the 38th AGM**

K Eloff proposed that the minutes as posted on the SAAB noticeboard be accepted. The motion was seconded by K Balkwill.

**5. Matters arising from previous minutes**

There were no matters arising.

**6. President's Report**

6.1. President Nox Makunga posted her full written report on the Conference noticeboard

6.2. She gave highlights of her report verbally

6.3. She asked for a special vote of thanks to Prof van Staden for his continued good work with the SAJB and to Quenton Kritzinger for his continued good work with SAABNet

**7. Treasurer's Report**

7.1. The treasurer, Paul Hills, presented his report for the financial year 1 December 2011-30 November 2012 with the Financial Statements compiled by Liz Williamson of C.A.T.S (Computerised Accounting & Training Services), a balance sheet, bank account information, income and expenditure statement (with notes where required) as well as projected scenarios. The full report can be viewed on the Conference noticeboard as well as on the SAAB website.

7.2. He announced that for the first time, SAAB's savings has surpassed R1,000,000. In order to earn more interest income, excess money in the cheque account was transferred into the

money market accounts. Income from membership fees was down but this was probably because student income from the previous conference was not included in the calculation.

- 7.3. He emphasized in his projected scenario that if Elsevier stopped publishing the SA Journal of Botany, SAAB would only have enough money to operate for 10 more years.
- 7.4. A proposal was made to increase the salary of the permanent secretary and the editor-in chief of the SAJB ( this proposal was placed on the agenda as item 11.2)

## **8. Report from the South African Journal of Botany editor-in-chief**

- 8.1. The editor-in-chief, Prof Hannes van Staden, said that the impact factor was climbing steadily and now stood at 1.659; the SAJB ranking had risen 19 points in the plant science group of 190 journals and now stood at 75th; 683 articles were received; 107 articles were accepted (82% rejected); 59 papers by South African authors were accepted; 120 000 articles were downloaded.
- 8.2. He said that the biggest problem in producing the journal is in getting good reviewers. There are pros and cons to open access but he said he does not support this movement. Recent articles can be accessed for free on Google Scholar. Only the SAAB logo is copyrighted, not the words.
- 8.3. He said that Elsevier is now publishing 6 volumes per year (single issue volumes) with no page limits. Papers are published online within days after submission.
- 8.4. He thanked Marnie Light for compiling most of the report and the editorial board for their good work. He also thanked the members at the AGM for their support.
- 8.5. He said that the proposed salary increase would be most welcome and that he would pass this on to his secretary if and when it is approved by Council.

## **9. Student Council Report**

- 9.1. Sarah Stanton, the outgoing student council president, said that their Facebook Group will be changed to a regular Facebook page; a SAAB logo that is colorful and bright had been created by Anina Heystek; their T-shirt still needs some work but will be available next year to raise funds.
- 9.2. She said that a fund raiser held in April at the Plant Sciences building in Pretoria earned R670.40. It was envisaged that this money could be used to assist with travel costs for under privileged students from places like Venda to travel to meetings. As there was no treasurer, she turned this money over to the SAAB secretary.
- 9.3. She recommended that the process of electing officers to the student council be improved; that newsletter and webpage liaisons with SAAB be appointed; communication between universities be improved, the student council constitution needs to be revised and that bursaries for students to attend local and international would be welcomed.
- 9.4. She said that new office bearers had been elected during the conference and then introduced Ashton Ruiters the newly elected president. She hopes that the new student council will create more interest in SAAB and that there will be a closer collaboration between the two councils. She said that the recent job offer from the SAAB council for a student webpage editor would contribute to this.

9.5. The meeting thanked her for her good work.

## 10. Future SAAB Conferences

10.1. It was decided after extensive consultation to co-host the 2014 conference with AETFAT (The Association for the Study of the Taxonomy of African Tropical Plants) in Stellenbosch from 12-17 January. Prof Dirk Bellstedt said that biotech and plant physiology normally don't fall under the umbrella of AETFAT but with some effort could be brought in to the programme. Registration will be online from February.

10.2. The 2015 conference will be postponed to Venda. Unofficial acceptance and contact with the key players at the University of Venda has already been made.

## 11. General

11.1. Prof JN Eloff proposed that the SAAB constitution be altered so that the Editor-in-Chief of the SAJB should become an *ex officio* member of the SAAB council. His proposal was seconded by LJ Shai and posted on the SAAB conference noticeboard 48h before the AGM. Prof Eloff gave some background about how the current *ex-officio* member (SANBI) came about. In order to avoid possible conflict with SANBI, the meeting decided to break the proposal in to two parts: addition of the SAJB EiC to SAAB council and determining the future of the existing *ex-officio* member (SANBI representative)

11.1.1. The meeting voted unanimously (with 5 abstentions) to have the constitution amended to allow the EiC of the SAJB to have an *ex-officio* seat (11<sup>th</sup> member) on the SAAB council. The effective date of this decision will be determined at the next meeting of Council meeting.

11.1.2. The meeting voted unanimously to invite a representative of SANBI to the next meeting of council to discuss their future role with SAAB in particular and their *ex-officio* seat (10 member) on the SAAB council in particular. The future of the Compton prize should also be addressed. The proceedings of this meeting will be made available to all members who will have a chance to vote on the issue at the next AGM.

11.2. It was proposed and seconded that the permanent secretary and the EiC of SAJB be given a pay increase the amount of which to be determined at the next council meeting.

## 12. Closure

The meeting was closed at 17h30

Minutes written and submitted by Myke Scott