

**GSSA Annual General Meeting
Minutes
28 July 2003 at the ICC in Durban**

1. Welcome

The President of the GSSA, Prof Klaus Kellner, welcomed all present.

Prof Kellner introduced Mr Bob Budd, President of the Society of Range Management in the USA. Mr Budd gave a presentation on the importance of range management and his experiences from the USA as a landowner and also his experiences on the pre-congress tour.

2. Present

K Kirkman, JCO du Toit, AS de Beer, E Sabiiti, J Morrison, DCW Goodenough, E Goldschagg, D Hattas, WM Goqwana, GM Peddie, CB Buntting, M Galpin, M Glaum, A Barac, L van den Berg, A Brönn, I Zimmermann, M Peel, N Zambatis, H Eckhardt, N Rethman, R Grant, H Biggs, P Zacharias, M Wolfson, CR Hurt, N Allsopp, B Kersh, JM van Heerden, AR Palmer, T Everson, G Kerley, JW Lloyd, HA Snyman, GN Smit, NP Mgxashe, KR Mbatha, D Swanepoel, N Findlay, S Kassier, K Kellner, L Simons, V Naiken, R Finn, A Short, AJ Aucamp, JG Coetzee, B Forbes, WSW Trollope, D Swart, BR Page, D Grossmann

Apologies

FP Jordaan, D Seolwane, E Mokuwa, N Gabriels, SW Haschke, PE Bartholomew, R Reynolds, CH Lambrechts, M Friedle, J Clayton, ES Wilson, EA van Zyl

3. Additions to and acceptance of the agenda

There were no additions made to the agenda.

4. Approval of the minutes of 15 May 2002

The minutes of 15 May 2002 were accepted without alterations.

Proposer: N Rethman

Seconder: WSW Trollope

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

6. Treasurer's report

**Grassland Society of Southern Africa
Treasurer's Annual Report 2002/03**

This year has been very disruptive for the administration of the GSSA. Our administrator "Stuart Communications" had to resign due to ill health. We would like to thank Stuart Communications for all their input, particularly for doubling our income from subscriptions. The sudden closure of Stuart Communications resulted in numerous problems in continuity of the database. We have appointed Ms Freyni Killer as the new administrator and wish her a long and rewarding association with the GSSA. F Killer is currently consolidating the database and we appeal to members to assist her in providing updated information for the records.

The disruption with the administration has impacted on the preparation of the audited statements. Stuart Communications' auditors were no longer prepared to audit our books so we have appointed Mitchell's accounting as our new auditors. They are currently doing the audit, which was unfortunately not ready for the AGM. They have suggested that the GSSA register as a Public Benefit Organisation.

The 2001/02 budget reflected a small profit of R17. This would have been a loss would it not have been for Annelie de Beer and her team who generously donated the R42 000 profit from the 2002

GSSA Aventura Christiana congress. This donation was greatly appreciated and we would like to extend a special thanks to the team.

The 2002/03 budget reflects a loss of R36 000. One of the main reasons for this is that this year we have **not** reflected membership fees in arrears as "income" as we feel this reflects a more realistic value of our finances. In additions, the out-sourcing of the journal as resulted in major financial expenditure. We are currently paying for 398 members of which at least 100 have not paid subscriptions. Consolidation of the database id therefore being given top priority to reduce financial loss.

As we did not hold our annual congress in January this year, many members will only be paying their subscriptions now when they register for the IRC. This has necessitated the GSSA taking a loan from Trust of R65 000 to meet its financial commitments.

Other options the council is looking at to increase our financial viability include the use of advertisements in the journal, increasing member institutes, increasing fees and canvassing new members.

TM Everson
Hon. Treasurer

K Kellner thanked T Everson for all the work as treasurer in difficult financial circumstances.

7. Editor's reports

7.1 Scientific editor

African Journal of Range and Forage Science Scientific Editor's Report for 2002

Manuscripts

Twenty-nine manuscripts were received during the year. Five were rejected, four are with authors for revision, four are in press (Vol. 20 part 3), and one is awaiting referees' comments. The main topics covered by the papers received were pastures (6), livestock (3) and rangelands (18). Authors were from South Africa (30), Algeria (1), Ethiopia (8), Jordan (1), Kenya (5), Mozambique (2), Zimbabwe (4) and the USA (4).

Editors

The editorial board during 2002 comprised Tony Palmer (Scientific editor), Nicky Allsopp, Mark Hardy, Timm Hoffman and Sue Milton. Tony resigned as scientific editor in December 2002 to devote time to organising the 7th IRC. I assisted Tony during the last three months of 2002, and officially took over from him in January 2003. I Thank the members of the editorial board for their time.

Referees

Forty-five referees were involved in reviewing the manuscripts. They were: A Ainslie, H Bezuidenhout, J Brand, G Bredenkamp, J Briggs, J Cox, A de Beer, M de Brizuela, J du Toit, P du Toit, D Engle, T Everson, H Fouche, D Furstenburg, C Grant, E Grings, M hardy, T Hoffmann, R Judd, J Karn, S Kassier, T Kepe, A Knapp, D le Maitre, P Malam, D Marais, R Meeske, C Morris, T O'Connor, P O'Reagain, A Osman, N Pammenter, S Porches, N Rethman, B Ripley, M Robertson, P Scogings, H Snyman, J van Heerden, A Waters-Bayer, S Wilson, P Zeeman, P Holst, P Desmet, P Zacharias. I thank the referees for their time and attention to maintaining a high standard for the journal.

PF Scogings, PhD
Scientific Editor: African Journal of Range & Forage Science
24 July 2003

P Scogings reported that the journal was only sent out to paid-up members. Two numbers of the present volume have been sent out and there is sufficient copy for the third number.

7.1.1 *Proposed new international rangeland journal*

P Scogings had attended the discussion on behalf of the GSSA and reported that a proposal will be drawn up and sent out to all interested parties. The Society for Range Management has made this proposal as they have concerns about the future of their journal and have thus proposed a new journal. The publishers will be reporting back regarding costs and the possible impact of a new journal. The new proposal may or may not include local journals.

P Zacharias mentioned that it would be important to have a debate about the journal and what happens to it at an AGM.

K Kellner mentioned that it must be borne in mind that NISC, the current publisher of the African Journal for Range and Forage Science (AJRFS) has invested a considerable amount of money into the AJRFS.

7.2 Bulletin editor: Grassroots

G Peddie gave the following report:

- 1) Grassroots is appearing regularly every quarter.
- 2) Thanks to those who have been sending in contributions. There is always space for more. Please keep the articles flowing.
- 3) Regional representatives are needed for Northern Cape, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.
- 4) Thanks to F Killer for her hard work in the production and postage of Grassroots.

8. **Website report**

D Hattas reported that the website has grown in volume and is now database driven and relayed to the administrator. Members were requested to update their contact details and other member information.

The regional activities and news page have also grown and everyone is urged to send information for these pages.

There have been problems with placing Grassroots on the website. These will have to be addressed.

K Kellner mentioned that both D Hattas and G Barnes have put a lot of work into the website and thanked D Hattas for the good work.

9. **PRO report**

J du Toit reported that as the PRO he would like to create links with other groups and organisations. Through various efforts the membership has been increased.

J du Toit reported that a company in Canada has donated a software accounting package to the GSSA.

K Kellner thanked J du Toit and F Killer for all the inputs, for the excellent GSSA stand at the IRC, which looks very professional.

10. **PAC report**

R Hurt reported that the database of professional members has been sent out to members. Updated information was received back from one third of the members. Two new applications have been received in the week before congress.

K Kellner mentioned that more professional members should be obtained and their inputs used within the GSSA. K Kellner thanked R Hurt for his work in the PAC.

11. **Trust**

K Kirkman reported on the activities of the Trust for the period 1 October 2001 to 30 September 2002.

The current value of the Trust is approximately R244 000. No trust money was disbursed in the last two financial years except for IRC 2003. Five GSSA members were subsidised to attend IRC.

The GSSA in the past had an investment account, which was closed and the funds were transferred to the Trust.

The Trust gave the GSSA a loan to buy items, which are for sale at the GSSA stand at IRC.

The term as chairman of K Kirkman comes to an end with this AGM. The term of AR Palmer ends while K Kirkman will serve for one more year. N Rethman will be replacing AR Palmer. Other members of the Trust are WSW Trollope and H Snyman.

K Kellner thanked K Kirkman.

12. Election of office bearers

Vice president

A nomination was received for N Allsopp.

N Allsopp accepted. There were no other nominations.

Additional members

A Swanepoel was re-elected. The council at the next meeting will appoint a second additional member.

13. General

13.1 Congress 39 (2004)

Congress 39 will be a joint GSSA/SASAS congress and will be held at Goudini Spa in the Western Cape from 28 June to 1 July 2004.

13.2 Regional reps

Regional reps are still required for Northern Cape, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The system has worked well for some regions but not for all. M Peel the regional rep for Mpumalanga reported that he sent in items but they were not published. G Peddie apologised and asked for the articles to be submitted again.

A member from Uganda asked whether they could also be part of the GSSA structure and it was confirmed that they certainly could.

13.3 Congress 40 (2005)

K Kellner reported that no official bid has as yet been received for the hosting of congress 40. D Goodenough reminded the meeting that Namibia had previously put in a bid for 2004 but were not in a position to host a joint congress. It was decided to leave the decision to council as whether to offer Namibia the hosting of congress 40.

14. Presidential address (summary)

K Kellner gave a summary of his presidential address, as there was no opportunity to give the address at the final dinner of the IRC.

15. Date of next meeting

The next GSSA AGM will be held at Goudini Spa on 28 June 2004.

16. Closure

Before closing the meeting K Kellner thanked D Goodenough, immediate past president, for his contribution over the past years to the GSSA council and all the inputs he made and the support he gave.

K Kellner also thanked S Kassier and F Killer for their work.

A Special thank you was also expressed to AR Palmer and K Kirkman from the IRC organising committee for providing the GSSA with free exhibit space and the prominence the GSSA was given during IRC.

Finally A de Beer thanked K Kellner for his term as president of the GSSA and the leadership he showed through very difficult times especially in terms of finances and administration.