



MINUTES OF THE 45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PHYSIOLOGY SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, HOSTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PHYSIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, 28th SEPTEMBER, 5.00 PM, 2017

Members present: MF Essop, B Sishi, B Loos, AM Engelbrecht, AM Joubert, E Pretorius, A Phulukdaree, SS du Plessis, V Thaver, M Du Toit, S van Zyl, A Lochner, A Millen, KH Myburgh, E Nortje, S Tatchum, TV Mqoco, AC Schwulst, NG Clemson, JK Robinson, JJ Le Roux, JM Nel, JP Chamunonorwa, G Dealtry, K Erlwanger, T Nyakudya, W Daniels, P Du Toit, O Olumuyiwa, D Joseph, AD Chris, MJ Kleynhans, J Janse van Nieuwenhuizen,

(33 members).

1. Welcome by Faadiel Essop (MFE)

2. Apologies received: Prof van der Horst

3. Confirmation of the Agenda

The agenda was confirmed. KHM raised the question about how many students will be allowed to enter the Wyndham competition, which was added to the agenda.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting (The Riverside Club, Cape Town, 29 September 2016). The AGM accepted the minutes.

5. Matters arising not elsewhere on the Agenda. No further points were raised.

6. Presidents report

6.1. Vision, statistics, membership – feedback (MFE)

MFE presented a report, providing feedback on the activities that took place throughout the year. MFE attended the AAPS council meeting in RIO, Brazil during the IUPS meeting in 2017. The organisation is stable with financial support growing. A part time secretary will be appointed. An intention of a sponsorship of \$6000 from

ADI instruments for students from the African continent interested in studying in RSA. KHM questioned who will receive the funds and what will they be used for (e.g. short course, degree, part of post graduate studies). The next AAPS congress will be held in 2020 and the host currently will be Sudan. Should Sudan not be able to host, a few suggestions were made: the AAPS congress could be held in RSA with Sudan being the hosts or WITS could host jointly with the PSSA.

Women in Physiology (post graduates, early career and established researchers) featured strongly as part of discussions and whether an initiative should be implemented to increase the numbers of women in the field. KHM indicated a strong women leadership in the past within the society and the PSSA has a very good representation of women.

MFE highlighted the important aspects originating from the latest published IUPS report on the global status of the discipline of Physiology. The key aspects from the IUPS report for 2017 recommended increased and continued funding for basic research, networking opportunities and working groups, outreach programmes for public interaction and increased teaching and learning initiatives. KHM indicated that it may not be easy to implement all the recommendations but suggested that a member of the council (as part of their portfolio) can promote and drive the teaching and learning aspect in order to maintain momentum. Prof Daniels, AME and Prof du Toit suggested more teaching and learning events at PSSA as has been done in the past; however, this will depend on the host institution and the PSSA programme. Furthermore, Prof Daniels indicated that we could look at activities from other societies to bring and learn from each other's ideas.

MFE presented to the AGM an initiative to expand the PSSA's footprint by working with other societies. He indicated a new collaboration between the PSSA and SANS to host **(a)** workshop for postgraduate students on mentoring and **(b)** a planned symposium on the connection between the heart and the brain (mid-2018).

MFE also put forward an invitation to join CoBNeST along with other societies (APSSA, SAALAS, SASBCP, SANS and TOXSA) to jointly host the first Conference of Biomedical and Natural Sciences and Therapeutics in Stellenbosch and this was accepted by members. Prof Daniels and BL supported the initiative as a way to bridge the gap between societies and an opportunity to network across societies.

The number of student orals for the Wyndham competition was raised by KHM. The numbers appear to increase every year and while this indicated the strength of the society, 36 orals in one day was thought to be overwhelming. Suggestions were made to have parallel sessions with a separate judging panel where the top three students from each session are selected to repeat the orals followed by more in depth questions. Prof Erlwanger suggested sorting abstracts/ presentations by degree. SS du Plessis indicated that this works well for the SU academic day at Medical Physiology.

7. Secretary/Treasurer's report

BS provided feedback on the financials. Audits have been initiated. The current ABSA account has a positive balance of R 62 966. Expenditure was allocated to the website design, newsletter, PSSA prizes and travel support, as well as the auditors. BS also provided feedback on the SANLAM investment account (R197 440). Membership fees have not been changed, i.e. R100 for students and R400 for academic/technical staff. However, a Postdoc fee of R200 was newly introduced accepted by members. Membership number of 255 delegates was noted. The AGM accepted the financial report.

The meeting was also informed that a database of equipment and expertise from different institutions was established. However, other institutions were also encouraged to submit their lists so that the database can be more comprehensive.

8. Arranging PSSA 2017 and feedback LOC 2017

P du Toit provided feedback on the PSSA 2017 and the UP Neuroscience day. The LOC as well as the PSSA was thanked for their support during the organisation of the congress. The use of LONDOCOR event's management company was an excellent choice and assisted the LOC greatly. The presence of the UP undergraduate students to their first congress was also appreciated. Overall, the general feeling from delegates of how the congress was organised was outstanding.

9. PSSA council election

Vacancies were indicated for two council members.

Nominations: V. Thaver (MRC), T. Nyakudya (UJ), A. Millen (WITS), G. Mukhari (Botswana) and J Chamunorwa (UP). T. Nyakudya (UJ), A. Millen (WITS) were elected, seconded and welcomed by the president. MFE also thanked outgoing council members – Prof Willie Daniels - for their excellent service to the council and PSSA.

10. PSSA conferences 2018-2020

Stellenbosch University (SU) as part of CoBNeST indicated to host 2018 congress. Walter Sisulu University (WSU) indicated interest in hosting the 2019 PSSA meeting, while WITS will consider acting as host in 2020 jointly with the AAPS. Botswana University also indicated a strong interest to host the PSSA in 2021 and it was agreed this will start a new chapter to promote Physiology in Botswana and the southern

African region. However, a few concerns were raised about the date, venue, and the number of delegates from Botswana that attend the congress annually.

There being no further business the AGM was ended.