

South African Association for Food Science and Technology

SAAFoST BIENNIAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the SAAFoST 2023 Biennial General Meeting held in the Auditorium 2, CTICC at the SAAFoST Congress on Tuesday, 29th August 2023 at 16h30.

APOLOGIES

Christine Stott	Andrew McKenzie	Aubrey Parsons	Delene Boshoff
Marena Manley	Ron Timm	Peter Bush	Dennis Wright
Cobus Brink			

No	Item	
1	WELCOME	
	The President, Prof Elna Buys, welcomed all present to the 2023 SAAFoST BGM.	
2	APOLOGIES	
	Apologies were noted as per the list above.	
3	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BGM – 20th September 2021	
	The minutes of the BGM held on the 20 th September 2021 via Zoom were distributed electronically by the Secretariat to all members prior to Congress.	
4	ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES BGM – 20th September:	
	Proposer: Susan Featherstone Seconded: Brian Lanton None against	
5	MATTERS ARISING	
	No matters arising	
6	MOTIONS	
	No motions	
7.	PRESIDENTS REPORT	
7.1	The President's Report was circulated electronically to all members by the Secretariat and was taken as read.	
7.2	The President, Professor Elna Buys highlighted the following points from her report:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the past two years she had seen the challenges of a Non-Profit Organisation and how as SAAFoST these challenges were met. This was due to the commitment of Council and Exco members. • In the past two years it was decided to re-visit the SAAFoST Value Proposition statement and Professor Gunnar Sigge put a team together to work on these. These would be released to the members soon. • In terms of management, Ingrid Woodrow agreed to be the new CEO and has done invaluable work and made a significant impact on the day-to-day management of the Association. • Professor Arno Hugo was co-opted from the Free State onto Council, and he had initiated several webinars and meetings in the Free State, which we were grateful for. • SAAFoST made a submission with the help of several of our members to Food Control, NdoH, on the Draft Labelling Regulations, this was both significant and important that SAAFoST did so. • An expert workshop series was initiated, and three successful workshops were presented during the past two years. This did not only contribute to SAAFoST's value proposition but also had a positive financial benefit to SAAFoST. • The webinar program continues which is led by Irene Burke assisted by Tsetse Baloyi. • To increase the visibility of the FST magazine it was decided to provide access to all, not just members as was the case previously. • MySAAFoST has grown from strength to strength, and this was done under the leadership of Dr Nwabisa Mehloakulu and with the support of Miss Shanece Ramkisson. They have also had successful events during the past two days at the congress for students and young professionals. <p>The President, Professor Elna Buys thanked the Council for their support during her term of office and acknowledged that the last two years have been challenging, but the involvement from all was greatly appreciated. She wished the new Council great success and especially the new President, Professor Riëtte de Kock and wished her all the best.</p>	
8	BRANCH REPORTS	
8.1	<p>Branch reports were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.</p> <p><u>Question regarding the Cape Branch</u></p> <p>Mrs Rosie Maguire enquired as to who would be on the Cape Branch committee.</p> <p>Vusi Mshayisa responded, a list of the new Cape Branch committee members was presented at the Cape Branch BGM. Most of the current committee would be returning with the addition of three new members, Karina Uys, S'Thombe Msomi and Helena Otto, the chair is Petri Horn and vice chair, Melvi Todd.</p>	

9	MEMBERSHIP MAGAZINE: SA FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (FST) EDITORS REPORT	
9.1	Mrs Tricia Fitchet, the Editor of FST's report was circulated prior to the meeting and no discussion took place on this Agenda item.	
10.	FINANCIAL / TREASURER'S REPORT	
10.1	<p>The Treasurer's report was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Professor Lucia Anelich, in her capacity as Treasurer, advised that Mr Ian Losinsky, the Financial Director of Turners, was on the zoom call with her. She would request that Ian discuss certain issues with members around the audits so that they could be updated on the latest information related to the SAAFoST audit situation.</p> <p>Professor Lucia Anelich mentioned that the audits that have been conducted were the 2018 and 2019 which was almost finalised. Unfortunately, there were no 2020, 2021 and 2022 audited financials. What she would be presenting was information based on the management accounts that she had received. Professor Anelich presented a comparison between 2021, 22 and the year to date for 2023.</p> <p>Professor Lucia Anelich addressed the following two points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, the loss in 2021 was more than the budgeted R657,000.00 as the traditional R1.5 to R1.7 million surplus was not realized at the 2021 congress. The last time a congress realized a surplus was SAAFoST 2019 held in Johannesburg, chaired by David Watson. This congress made a surplus of R1.7 million. Without these surpluses, SAAFoST could not carry all of its expenses. <p>Professor Anelich expressed concern that if SAAFoST2023 did not make a surplus a further withdrawal would have to be made from the associations investment portfolio. If another withdrawal was made in 2023 then the investment portfolio value was predicted to reduce to R2.5 million. This meant from a few years ago SAAFoST had gone from R5 million on their investment portfolio to R2.5 million. This would not last for another two to three years if the investment portfolio was not built significantly within the next two to three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The second point that she wanted to make was with regards to the audits. They had been chasing audits with Turners and uncovered two weeks previously that the outstanding audits would not be provided by the 31st of July 2023. The 2019, 2020 and 2021 audits were promised and expected before the start of the congress. After consulting with the Auditors she was advised that they only received instruction from Turners to start the 2019 audit on the 5th of June. Professor Anelich further reported that the last two weeks had been frantic and Ian Losinsky, the Turner Group Financial Director had come on board to take over the audits and resolve the situation. Professor Lucia Anelich handed over to Mr Ian Losinsky so he could explain what had transpired and how the situation would be handled going forward. 	

Mr Ian Losinsky thanked the SAAFoST members for the opportunity to address them and added that as an Organisation, Turners takes full responsibility for the situation. He however assured SAAFoST members that the SAAFoST Audits were a priority and that Turners are giving them their full attention.

Mr Ian Losinsky gave an update on the audits as follows:

- The 2019 draft financials have been sent through and should be signed on Friday, 01 September 2023.
- The 2020 and 2021 information is with Williams, and they will start the audits on Monday, 04 September 2023 and take approximately a week to a week and a half each to complete.
- Before the 2021 audit was finished the 2022 information would be with Williams.
- They were hoping that the 2020, 2021 and 2022 audits would all be finalized by the end of October 2023.

Mr Losinsky added that the following steps have been taken:

- Liezl Erasmus has been removed from the account with immediate effect and replaced by Delia Watterson.
- An internal SOP has been drawn up outlining the responsibilities within Turners, which would also have deadlines for reporting tasks.
- A checklist would be put in place signed off monthly by Gill Slaughter and himself.
- A monthly management pack would be distributed to the Treasurer and CEO, this would include the management accounts, trial balance and debtors age analysis. The process would also ensure that the bank statements are reconciled correctly. A reporting format had been discussed with Professor Anelich and was accepted.
- He had taken it upon himself to be a lot more hands-on, to ensure that the commitment that was made remained in place.
- Turner's Secretariat would also be employing an additional staff member. Interviews had already started taking place and this person would ensure continuity if Delia was on leave or sick.

Mr Losinsky concluded that he would like to apologize and give Turners firm commitment that the situation had their full attention, they had reacted incredibly quickly, and he was confident that everything was under control once again. He would be giving regular updates in the next few days. Friday, 01 September 2023 was an important milestone as it was where the final sign-off accounts for 2019 and the progress of 2020, 2021 and 2022 would also be updated.

Questions / Comments

Mrs Rosie Maguire thanked Professor Lucia Anelich for the work that she had done regarding the financials, but that presentation of audited financials to the BGM is a

constitutional requirement and that these financials had not been provided at the previous BGM, Mrs Maguire and Mr Nick Starke had expressed their concerns at that time to Professor Anelich and Professor Buys.

Mrs Rosie Maguire proposed that the current financial report was not accepted by the current forum as audited accounts were outstanding for 2020, 2021 and 2022. She was relieved to hear that Mr Losinsky stated that the issue was addressed timeously. Mr Nick Starke and herself believed that once the audited accounts had been finalised an extraordinary general meeting be called to revisit the financials and the auditors for 2023 and 2024 should be appointed at that meeting.

Mr Mathew Van Den Honert commented that it was a gross neglect of financial duty and as an organisation SAAFoST had to understand the root cause of the problem and could not allow this to happen again. Turners could take responsibility for this, but SAAFoST should think of their roles within the association in the future.

Professor Anelich responded that a meeting took place with Turners in November 2021, the new council was concerned about what Mrs Rosie Maguire had mentioned. The 2018, 2019 and 2020 had not been done. We had a meeting at Turner's office, and we were reassured that these audits would be done in time. As time went on, after several meetings, and many emails, they realised that these were not coming out of the system, and we were in a crisis. Hence, as Mr Losinsky advised getting the audits finalised is a priority for SAAFoST and Turners. Everyone understood how serious the situation was and that Turner's service would be evaluated on an annual basis going forward.

Professor Elna Buys added that it was not due to a lack of meetings and emails with Turners that SAAFoST had found themselves in this position. She did, however, agree that internally within the council a discussion should take place so that it does not happen again, and actions are taken quicker. The issue was that SAAFoST trusted the service provider to provide the services required.

Mr Nick Starke seconded Mrs Rosie Maguire's proposal.

The Treasurer has presented the financial position of the Association and Mr Starke did not believe there was anything askew, but that the formal audited financial reports needed to be tabled and that the only way to do so would be to call the extraordinary general meeting (EGM) in person and online.

Professor Elna Buys accepted the proposal and agreed that as soon as the audited financials were received an EGM would be called. At that time, the auditors will then be appointed.

	Professor Gunnar Sigge commented that Mr Nick Starke had added to Mrs Rosie Maquire's proposal. Prof Sigge seconded Mr Nick Starke's adjusted proposal and all members with a show of hand agreed.		
11	MEMBERSHIP FEE INCREASES: 2024 - 2025		
11.1	There was no increase in membership fees in 2022 and a 6.5% increase for 2023. The SAAFoST Council proposed an increase of 6% for 2024 and 2025 respectively for members and a 4% increase for Students and Post Graduate members.		
	2024	2025	
	Custodians Members	R18,150	R19,240
	Institution Members	R 4,765	R 5,050
	Professional Members and Members	R 835	R 885
	Post Graduate Members	R 298	R 310
	International	R 1,028	R 1,090
	Students	R 250	R 260
	Consultants	R 1,135	R 1,205
11.2	The new membership fees were proposed by Prof Lucia Anelich and seconded by Mr James McLean. No members were against the increase.		
12.	SAAFoST Foundation Report		
	Mr Janusz Luterek presented the Foundation report as follows: The Foundation has been running for 11 years, was founded in 2012 by SAAFoST and was now fully independent. It was registered with SARS as a PBO. There were 86 students who graduated in food science and technology over the 11 years. The Foundation grants bursaries to applicants from previously disadvantaged backgrounds that meet the academic criteria. Only one recipient had dropped out in 11 years and a few had failed a few subjects. In 2022 and 2023 no bursaries were awarded except the Koeppen award in 2022. Mr Luterek further advised that the Trust was registered in the Western Cape master's office, and they were two years behind in their administration, so the change to the trustees had been delayed. Mr Luterek reported on the Foundation finances and thanked industry and SAAFoST for their ongoing donations. As mentioned earlier no undergraduate bursaries were awarded in 2023. In 2024 the hope is to start awarding undergraduate bursaries again. There were several students who would be graduating. Once the current 11 students graduate, a total of 97 students would have been supported by the Foundation over the years. Mr Luterek thanked the Trustees for their support over the last two years with special thanks to Professor Anelich as Treasurer who was not officially a Trustee but had		

	<p>nonetheless performed the function of Treasurer without complaint and had been of great assistance. He also thanked Mrs Irene Burke for all of her hard work.</p> <p><u>Question/Comments</u></p> <p>Prof Gunnar Sigge thanked Mr Luterek and the Trustees and suggested that once the 100th student graduated, a celebration should be planned. He inquired as to how many Trustees had to be present to reach a quorum.</p> <p>Mr Janusz Luterek responded that there had to be three registered Trustees at a meeting to have a quorum, which was not always possible. It was important to have active Trustees to have a quorum in order to make decisions.</p>	
13	ELECTION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT AND VICE-PRESIDENT for 2024 - 2025: Outcome	
13.1	<p>The results were as follows as no other nominations were received:</p> <p><u>President Elect</u>: Ms Monique Visser</p> <p><u>Vice President</u>: Mr Cobus Brink</p> <p>SAAFoST President Prof Elna Buys congratulated the nominees on their appointments.</p>	
14	GENERAL	
	Mr Nigel Sunley requested that the incoming Council 'get out there' and defend the profession as the profession was under 'attack' from sometimes ignorant people and there was an opportunity for more outreach than has been done in the past.	
15	CLOSURE	
	The meeting closed at 18h00	