

**CANADIAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY/  
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE D'ASTRONOMIE**

**Minutes of the thirty-ninth Annual General Meeting  
Victoria Conference Center theater  
Thursday May 22, 2008, starting at 15:45**

The meeting started at 16h with about 60 members present.

**1. Adoption of the agenda / Adoption de l'ordre du jour [Martin]**

**Motion (D. Johnstone/G. Sanders): to adopt the following agenda. Carried.**

1. Adoption of the agenda / Adoption de l'ordre du jour (President)
2. Selection of scrutineers / Sélection des surveillants d'élection
3. Adoption of the minutes of the 2007 AGM / Adoption du compte rendu de la réunion de 2007
4. Nominations to the Nominating committee / Nominations du comité de nomination
5. Business arising from the minutes / Affaires découlant du compte rendu
6. President's report / Rapport du Président
  - a) status of new awards
  - b) status of Coalition activities
7. Secretary's report / Rapport du Secrétaire
  - a) Membership report
  - b) By-laws Revisions
  - c) Results of elections to the Board of Directors
8. Treasurer's report / Rapport du Trésorier
  - a) Financial statements
  - b) Dues increase
  - c) New investment strategy
9. Election of Auditor / Élection du vérificateur
10. Information Items/Autres informations
  - a) International Year of Astronomy Report
11. Committee reports / Rapports des comités
12. Future CASCA meetings / Prochaines réunions de la CASCA
  - a) 2009 Toronto
  - b) 2010 ?
13. Other business / Divers
14. Adjournment / Levée de l'assemblée

**2. Selection of the scrutineers / Sélection des surveillants d'élection**

B. Harris and A.-N. Chené were approved by consensus as scrutineers.

**3. Adoption of the minutes of the 2007 AGM / Adoption du compte rendu de la réunion de 2007**

**Motion (C. Wilson/D. Hanes): to adopt the minutes. Carried.**

**4. Nominations to the Nominating committee / Nominations du comité de nomination**

D. Hanes proposes D. Bohlender; J. Hesser seconds.

G. Harris proposes T. Webb; J. Hesser seconds.

**Motion (Hesser/Racine): that the nominations cease. Carried.**

**5. Business arising from the minutes / Affaires découlant du compte rendu**

There were none.

**6. President's report / Rapport du Président [Martin]**

P. Martin reported that our Society is very busy, and very active. Astronomy in Canada needs more funding, and the Society is pleased to see that NSERC is providing funds. IYA2009 promises to be very exciting, and the CASCA Board concentrates part of its efforts toward IYA activities.

P. Martin thanked J. Rice and D. Hanes, past secretary and past treasurer respectively, for staying one more year on the Board to help the new secretary and treasurer with their functions. P. Martin thanked C. Robert and D. Naylor who are at the end of their term as Directors. P. Martin thanked J. Hesser for staying on the Board as past president, and also for his efforts towards the IYA2009 activities.

**a) status of new awards**

Three new awards are proposed: a Mid-career award, a Service to the Society award, and an Instrumentation award. There has been no progress toward endowment for these new awards. A subcommittee has been formed and will work on endowing the new awards.

Peter Martin announced that he will endow the Mid-career award.

**b) status of Coalition activities**

P. Martin presented the Coalition activities. An Agency Committee for Canadian Astronomy has been formed. The Coalition provides communications pro-actively and on demand. The Coalition is an important aspect of our Society.

**Motion (N. Manset/D. Johnstone): to approve the President's Report. Carried.**

**7. Secretary's report / Rapport du Secrétaire [Manset]**

**a) Membership report**

See attached report.

Joncas and Hesser pointed out that membership to the IAU is free to CASCA members; the funds are provided by NSERC. This year, the Board had to spend a lot of time and effort to fill in an elaborate questionnaire, which was evaluated favourably, thus ensuring that IAU membership stays free to members.

Racine commented on the small number of student members. Hickson pointed out that first year graduate students will get their first membership year for free.

**Motion (N. Manset/M. Houde): to approve the Secretary's Report. Carried.**

J. di Francesco wondered about resignations. D. Hanes explained that members who resign are mostly students that leave astronomy or move to another country.

G. Wade explained that members have a 2-year grace period to pay their dues; after that, they become lapsed.

D. Crabtree would like to see in the Table presented the number of members in arrears.

**b) By-laws Revisions**

The Revised By-Laws were submitted to the Federal Government and accepted.

**c) Results of elections to the Board of Directors**

Deferred until the scrutineers come back.

**8. Treasurer's report / Rapport du Trésorier [Wade]**

**a) Financial statements**

See attached report.

The Treasurer will try to implement an option to automatically deduct annual dues from members' account of choice.

R. Racine gave some explanation on CASCA's contribution to the Coalition. The total cost of 100k\$ goes toward consulting (lobbying) firm in Ottawa. CASCA represents about 1/3 of the Coalition, but only pays 1/10 of the cost.

G. Wade emphasized that there is no margin in the budget; CASCA needs more income.

**Motion (G. Wade/D. Hanes): to accept the financial statement. Carried.**

Wade presented the auditor's report.

**Motion (G. Wade/D. Hanes): to accept the auditor's report. Carried.**

D. Crabtree commented that the auditor's work is expensive. Wade pointed out that it is wiser to retain a professional, and also that this expense includes the tax return preparation. Crabtree asked if quotes had been obtained from other firms. D. Hanes replied that after consulting with others, this firm proved to be reliable and reasonable.

**Motion (G. Wade/D. Hanes): to re-engage Wilkinson for next year. Carried.**

**b) Dues increase**

G. Wade showed that the majority of the general account income is used for administrative expenses, awards (including travel), and our contribution to the Coalition.

The dues review proposal includes (a) an immediate increase by 6% to account for inflation since 2005, and an automatic annual dues increase (starting in 2009) according to the Bank of Canada Consumer Price Index, (b) an additional dues increase of 2% to begin building an investment (a "nest egg") to fund costs associated with the Plaskett, the Hogg, and new awards, and to provide a baseline to cover unpredictable IYA 2009 expenses, as well as future opportunities and obligations, (c) an increase of the late payment penalty to 25% of the membership fee.

**Motion (G. Wade/R. Thacker): to accept the dues increase proposal.**

The motion is discussed. A few members expressed a preference for round numbers. Racine proposed to change the dues only when they change by 10% or more. He also noted that the Society needs to increase the number of members, not just the dues. R. Plume would prefer to have a bigger increase for ordinary members, and dues that stay low for student members. Another member proposed to keep the student dues at one half of the ordinary member dues.

D. Monin asked how much increase in dues is really needed. G. Wade replied that with the 6% increase, the budget stays in the black, otherwise we end up in the red.

B. Matthews sees that an annual increase can easily be recognized as due to inflation. She also sees that a first free year for student members is helpful.

S. Beaulieu worries that the PDF rate becomes too high and the Society might lose a few PDF members.

A suggestion was made to limit the increase to 15% in case of a catastrophic inflation.

A student pointed out that, looking at the registration fee for members and non-members (a difference of 100\$), it's still cheaper to just pay the higher registration fee and not become a member.

V. Petit asked supervisors to tell their students what are the advantages to becoming a CASCA member, to encourage them to join.

**The motion was accepted by a majority.**

D. Crabtree sees the need to raise 20-30k\$ for IYA events.

**Motion (D. Crabtree/R. Lamontagne): to increase the ordinary member dues (excluding PDF) by 50\$, once. With 13 members in favor, 25 opposed, and 2 abstentions, the motion was repelled.**

**Motion (G. Wade/D. Hanes): to renew H. Theijmeijer's contract, including a raise to cover for inflation. Carried.**

**c) New investment strategy**

Wade presented a portfolio recommended by Scotia-McLeod, which is more diversified, still has low risk, but higher return (about double). The Board is going ahead with this proposed new investment strategy. There is an appeal for volunteers who would form a standing advisory committee to the Board.

D. Hanes points out that other avenues have been explored and were not suitable. P. Martin points out that the RASC has explored the services of various firms and approves of this one.

Members expressed concerns over currency fluctuations.

**Back to 7c) Results of elections to the Board of Directors**

**Paul Hickson is elected by acclamation as the President.**

**Gilles Joncas is elected by acclamation as the First Vice-president.**

**Doug Welch is elected by acclamation as the Second Vice-President.**

**The ballots results are that Sarah Ellison and James di Francesco are elected as Directors.**

**Motion (D. Hanes/C. Wilson): that the ballots be destroyed. Carried.**

**10. Information Items/Autres informations**

**a) International Year of Astronomy Report**

John Percy thanks Jim Hesser for his hard work towards IYA2009.

**Motion (G. Harris/J. Percy): that the Board be directed by the Society to initiate as soon as possible fundraising. Carried.**

**11. Committee reports / Rapports des comités**

The reports will be available on the web.

**12. Future CASCA meetings / Prochaines réunions de la CASCA**

**a) CASCA 2009**

The 2009 meeting will be held at the Victoria College in Toronto, hosted by UofT and CITA. The website should be up soon.

**b) CASCA 2010**

St Mary's has put a proposal to hold the 2010 meeting. Rob Thacker is co-chair.

**13. Other business / Divers**

J. Hesser pointed out that Peter Stetson has received the 2008 George Van Biesbroeck Award from the AAS in "recognition for his life-long efforts to enable, counsel and help others do effective research with the tools he has developed, specifically the DAOPHOT family of reduction programs for the analysis of astronomical images."

John Hutchings received the 2008 National Research Council of Canada Outstanding Achievement Award for his efforts in space astronomy and particularly his leadership of the FUSE team over an extended period.

Sidney van den Bergh received the Astronomical Society of the Pacific 2008 Bruce Medal.

B. Harris also pointed out that Peter Martin was elected to the Royal Society of Canada.

P. Hickson thanks Peter Martin for his efforts while he was on the Board, and also for endowing the mid-career award.

**14. Adjournment / Levée de l'assemblée**

**Motion (Johnstone/Joncas): to adjourn the meeting. Carried.**