

**Canadian Astronomical Society  
Société Canadienne d'Astronomie  
67th meeting of the Board of Directors  
05 December 2014 10h00 - 16h00 PST  
Conducted by Videoconference**

**Minutes**

<i>Present:</i>	Christine Wilson	President
	Robert Abraham	Vice-President
	Nicole St-Louis	Treasurer
	James Di Francesco	Secretary
	Lorne Nelson	Director
	Pauline Barmby	Director
	Stéphane Courteau	Director
	Sarah Gallagher	Director
	Laura Ferrarese	Past President

**1. Adoption of agenda [Wilson]**

- **Motion to adopt the agenda (Wilson/Abraham): Carried.**

**2. Approval of the minutes of the 66<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting [Di Francesco]**

- **Motion to adopt the minutes (Nelson/Gallagher): Carried.**

**3. Matters Conducted by E-mail [all]**

- *Conference Support:* The CASCA Board considered and approved requests to support the Canadian Undergraduate Physics Conference and the Canadian Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics for \$1000 per year to each.
- *ACURA Advisory Committee for the SKA (AACCS):* In response to a query, CASCA suggests Matt Dobbs (McGill) be the new member to the AACCS
- *“Nuclei in the Cosmos” meeting:* CASCA endorsed the bid by Montreal to host the upcoming meeting in 2016
- *International Council of Science (ICSU) General Assembly:* CASCA did not express a strong preference for any of the candidates participating in the election of Officers to the ICSU Executive Board. Also, CASCA did not plan to send a representative to the ICSU GA in New Zealand in late August.
- *E-Cassiopeia:* Magdalen Normendeau and Joanne Rosvick have become the co-Editors of Cassiopeia, replacing Brian Martin.
- *Salary for CASCA Administrator:* The CASCA Board approved the increase to the salary of Susan Di Francesco by \$475/year, as suggested previously.

- *Discover the Universe*: CASCA has endorsed the NSERC PromoScience application by Julie Bolduc-Duval for the continuation of “Discover the Universe,” (DU) a national online education and outreach activity. CASCA will also use some of the outstanding WESTAR funds to support DU at the \$20K/year for three years.
- *EPO Committee*: CASCA approved invitations to Sara Ellison (UVic), Rob Cockcroft (McMaster), Phil Langill (Calgary), and David Lafrenière (Montreal) to join the Committee.
- *Investments*: the CASCA Board approved the following strategy on CASCA’s investments:
  - Reduce our cash holdings to \$35K
  - Do not buy new GICs as existing ones mature
  - Keep the preferred shares at around 28% of the portfolio and put cash from the above into purchases of additional common shares
  - In addition, in line with the above, the Board approved a strategy to purchase \$80K of preferred shares as follows:
    - 200 more shares of George Weston
    - 200 more shares of Partners Value
    - 200 more shares of Brookfield Asset
    - 600 more shares of Enbridge
    - 300 more shares of Manulife
    - 600 shares of BMO Pr T (new)
    - 1000 shares of Intact Financial (new)

(Though approved, there remains some disagreement with the Investment Committee about how to proceed; see Treasurer’s Report below.)

- *Reduced Dues*: The Board approved a change in the membership due structure to allow members going on parental leave to pay the Ordinary Membership rate for retirees for one year.
- *Coalition travel costs*: The Board approved that travel expenses incurred by the President on behalf of the Coalition for Canadian Astronomy should be reimbursed by the Society.
- *JCSA Committee Members*: the Board approved a list of new possible members proposed by Brian McNamara (Waterloo) for the JCSA
- *Ethics Statement*: In response to matters occurring during coverage of the ESA Rosetta mission, the CASCA Board reminded the membership via the Exploder of its Ethics Statement regarding conduct towards others. Wilson also co-signed a letter to ESA written by AAS President Meg Urry about the issue.

#### **4. Review of the Actions Items List [all]**

- *astronomy.ca/astronomie.ca domains*: Nelson reports that astronomy.ca was renewed this month and astronomie.ca will be renewed in May 2015 but the respective owners would be willing to lease them to us. (The latter is for sale at \$700.) Nelson to discuss alternatives with EPO Committee, including ideas for their own branding, or currently unused sites like “astrocanada.ca” or “astronomycanada.ca.”

- *French translation of CASCA webpages*: Wilson has tidied up extraneous pages, Courteau has translated recently posted Ethics Statement reminder, and Abraham has taken of Committee pages. Courteau to translate full Ethics Statement and remain on call for urgently needed translations.
- *Membership drive issues*: Di Francesco sent out membership drive messages and numerous reminders. These reminders seemed to have a positive effect but many members remain one year in arrears (e.g., they paid for this year forgetting they hadn't paid for the year previous). Will start campaign to get members in arrears to pay their back dues early next year (February). Further reminder to occur when annual meeting registrations open next February. St-Louis and S. Di Francesco to look into auto renewals of PayPal payments.
- *IAU memberships*: 60 people invited to join the IAU, and 41 have responded favourably. (See IAU-CNC Meeting Minutes below for more details.)
- *ABB anti-trust language in By-laws*: The matter of the anti-trust language requested by Corporate Member ABB to be added to the Society By-laws was considered. Ultimately, the Board decided no change to existing By-laws was necessary though this may mean ABB will cease being a CASCA member next year.

## 5. New business

### 5.1. President's report [Wilson]

- *Status of Coalition Activities*: The profile of TMT is now higher than it has been since 2009-10 when the push for construction began. Numerous actions have taken place over the past few months. First, the three Coalition co-Chairs (Brooks, Wilson, Guy Nelson) met on 20 October in Ottawa with staff members of the Privy Council office, Minister of Industry Moore's office, and Minister of Finance Oliver's office. No one they talked to was overtly negative to TMT and indeed everyone was quite engaged by the project. The Coalition co-Chairs were repeatedly told the TMT pitch needs to come from the offices of the Minister of Industry or Minister of Science and Technology (Holder). The Coalition has yet to have a meeting with Minister Holder, but they are still trying to set one up. Second, Guy Nelson went on the recent official trade mission to China, during which there was a possibility of an announcement of a TMT MoU between Canada and China. Unfortunately, that announcement wasn't selected in favour of more specific trade agreements, but that shouldn't be taken as a negative for TMT. Third, a Coalition meeting in the PMO is scheduled for 16 December, with possibly other meetings also scheduled that day. Wilson had previously written a letter to the PM himself about TMT, and Guy Nelson has sent TMT promotional materials to the PMO in advance of the meeting. Fourth, the government has been pushing for Canadian universities to apply for TMT funds through the Canada First Research Excellence (CFRE) fund. Coincidentally, an announcement about this fund was made yesterday, with the first proposals due in March and results expected in July. There will be \$350M available for the first round. For TMT, the Presidents of Toronto and McMaster are both

highly engaged. Nevertheless, the CFRE may not be itself sufficient for TMT construction funding, especially as astronomy doesn't appear to fit its announced priorities and TMT would take up all available funds from the first round. A better chance is perhaps the Federal Budget, due in late February or early March 2015. The Budget will likely be written in January, though items may be placed in or taken out up until the last minute. Stay positive!

- *LRP Mid-term Review (MTR)*: Wilson is on the MTR panel itself. The main focus recently has been the getting White Papers ready for the upcoming discussions. Several of these have already been posted on the CASCA LRP MTR website, with more due next week. There will be Town Hall MTR Meetings in Montreal on 24 March 2015, Toronto on 25 March 2015, and Victoria on 26 March 2015, with actual venues TBD. Next, an MTR discussion session is expected to take place the day after the upcoming annual CASCA meeting in Hamilton (29 May 2015). Finally, MTR Chair Thacker is looking into meetings of the panel itself in advance of writing the discussion section of the report. The MTR finances are OK.
- *Collaborations with the RASC*: Wilson was recently contacted by James Edgar, the new RASC President, and Randy Attwood, the new RASC Executive Officer, about looking into joint initiatives and ways for the organizations to help each other. These discussions date back to 1999 when Attwood himself was RASC President and had talked previously to CASCA President Michael de Robertis. RASC has proposed taking over responsibility for CASCA office activities, media contacts, and history groups. At the moment, RASC has 4700 members, has a small office of 3 paid staff to handle memberships, and has a reasonably decent website. Back in 1999, CASCA didn't run as smoothly on the admin side as it does now. Wilson feels now there is no urgent need for RASC to take over these things. Nevertheless, perhaps there are ways of collaborating with the RASC. Wilson looks for a Board volunteer to take on RASC liaisons as a "portfolio." Abraham volunteers given his 15-year history of working with the Toronto chapter, etc.
- *IAU GA 2021*: Wilson recently contacted out of the blue from someone from Toronto Convention Centre about hosting IAU GA in 2021. She made an executive decision to say no. Usually these things have initiatives within communities. Also, Montreal is already bidding for the 2021 GA.

## **5.2. Vice-President's report [Abraham]**

- *Committees*: In lieu of reports from Committees, many referred to MTR White Papers they prepared as summaries of their respective activities. Abraham also reports on his conversations with several Committee Chairs:
  - *Awards*: Kristine Spekkens, Awards Chair, has questions. First, she wants confirmation that upcoming awards are Petrie, Martin, Qilak, and Plaskett. (Yes.) Also, she requests the Petrie deadline of 15 January be changed to 19 January to be synchronous with the other deadlines. (Yes.) Also, what should the Committee use for its deliberations? (It's free to use the secure Twiki at NRC previously used by the former Awards Chair.)

- *Education and Public Outreach*: Mike Reid is working on a White Paper and suggests we read it when we're done. There doesn't seem to be a lot of activity in Canada about the International Year of Light at this time.
- *Graduate Students*: Very little information out of the GSC, but Courteau will speak personally to the Chair about communication.
- *Heritage*: Chair Elizabeth Griffin is concerned that the Committee is composed of "a bunch of oldies" whose activities are not interesting to anyone else but was reassured that this is not the case. Hardware is a pressing issue. For example, there are only two PDS machines they have access too for scanning. Abraham says that Lee Robbins in Toronto with PDS access could be of assistance, and perhaps also should join CASCA. Next, there is the matter of Richard Jarrell's effects. He was in the midst of writing a book about the history of Canadian radio astronomy and has two boxes of oral history tapes. The RASC will duplicate these tapes but they should be stored somewhere for safekeeping. Other items should also likely be scanned and stored. Perhaps physical items could be sent to the Museum of Science and Technology in Ottawa, while other material may be accessible online. Ferrarese reports that the scanning of past Cassiopeia issues is ongoing, but slow. Barmby suggests talking to Lee Robbins herself about archive issues.
- *Nominating*: As nobody will be rotating off the CASCA Board next year, there is no need for any election next spring. Hence, no Nominating Committee activities are needed.
- *Ground-based Astronomy Committee*: see their MTR White Paper for their report.
- *Joint Committee for Space Astronomy*: see their MTR White Paper for their report.
- *Solar System and Planetary Science*: This Committee had become rather moribund of late. Abraham will approach former members about whether or not it is still useful.
- *Theory and Computation*: see their MTR White Paper for their report. In addition, they have been working on upcoming CFI cyber-structure opportunities. It is likely that David Schade of CADC should be involved in these discussions. Also, since "information technology" is one thing possibly connected with CFRE priorities, discussions should be had about whether or not that fund can be used to help. Abraham to talk to David Schade about this possibility.
- *E-Cassiopeia*: No Committee per se but someone on the Board needs to interact with the new co-Editors, so it's included here. Everything seems fine with E-Cassiopeia so far.
- *Status of upcoming Annual Meetings*
  - *Hamilton 2015*: Preparations are progressing well. The organizers have a Hogg Lecturer lined up (Abraham), and want to get website up by 01 February 2015. Registration is expected to open soon thereafter

on 15 February. The grad student day will likely focus on computation. A half-day or daylong session on the MTR will occur the day after the regular meeting ends. Lunch bookings will likely be to occur when page goes live. Abraham to contact Allison Sills to remind her about lunch bookings.

- *Manitoba 2016*: Stefi Baum, new Dean of Science at Manitoba, is quite enthusiastic about hosting CASCA in 2016 but she's only been in the job for six weeks and it's very early. Abraham to e-mail her, Samar Safi-Harb, and Jayanne English offering assistance as needed.
- *General Annual Meeting stuff*: We should endeavour to have CASCA abstracts show up in ADS, as this is apparently not hard to implement. Abraham to e-mail Allison Sills about how this can happen. Also, it is reasonable to add the conduct towards others wording of the CASCA Ethics statement to the Meeting Planning Booklet and the Abstract Book. In addition, someone to report harassment incidences should be identified. Abraham to contact Allison Sills about that as well.

### **5.3. Treasurer's report [St-Louis]**

- *Financial Summary*: CASCA's financial situation continues to be good. Funds from dues from one year go (on 31 October) are down but note that the membership renewal drive was shifted by one month this year. Expenditures this year have been much higher than last year, mainly due to transfer of Dunlap award endowment to investments account. For further details, see the Treasurer's Report document.
- *Investment Policy*: Discussions are not going very smoothly between the Investment Committee and Scotia-Macleod with a stark difference occurring between them about how to direct funds. We do wish to have an investment manager, and don't want to have the investment committee take on that role. Also, want to have the input to the investment discussions, not have the manager do all the work for us (as has been suggested). If our manager at Scotia-Macleod doesn't want to do this, then he should pass us on to another manager who will. St-Louis to organize a meeting between Scotia-Macleod and the Investment Committee to discuss CASCA's investment risk profile, but the Board is feeling very conservative and doesn't want to mess with the base money for the awards, etc. A volunteer among the Board may be sought to provide a second "pair of ears" for the meeting when the date is set.

### **5.4. Secretary's Report [Di Francesco]**

- *Membership Drive*: As of 01 December 2014, there are 520 total members of CASCA across all categories. 361 of these are members in good standing (all paid up). 108 members owe for one year, and 51 owe for two years. These individuals will be reminded of their dues in early 2015. Since June 2014, 11 new members joined, somewhat offsetting the 15 members who resigned. Please see the Secretary's Report document for further details.
- *Member deaths*: The Secretary is saddened to report the passing of Richard Bochonko, formerly of the University of Manitoba.

### **5.5. Directors' reports [Nelson, Courteau, Barmby, Gallagher]**

- *EPO* [Nelson]: EPO activity tracking needs to be improved as the present system, a Google spreadsheet, is just too cumbersome. A website is needed and something more done to improve the reliability of reporting. CASCA has allocated a few thousand dollars for that project, and improving the CASCA Education site overall (see Matters Conducted by E-mail). For 2015 the International Year of Light, CASCA may assist in the purchase of 50K diffraction glasses at 10 cents each, or \$5K. The EPO Committee must discuss where the money should come from, and how these items will be distributed. E.g., approaching the RASC and FAAQ for assistance?
- *WESTAR lectureship* [Nelson]: The WESTAR funds must be used appropriately to increase understanding about astronomy throughout Canada. The funds have been underutilized of late, however. Nelson provides for discussion some options for using them in future. These include:
  1. sending astronomers to remote locations
  2. sending astronomers and a DU person to get local teachers involved
  3. offer online lectures to the general public (via DU)
  4. send astronomers to give on-site lectures and distribute them onlineNo decision was made, and we will return to it in 2015 especially after DU's grant situation has been clarified.
- *IAU Activities* [Courteau]: IAU is currently engaged in a reform of its Commissions and Divisions. A notice was sent out in early November asking IAU members to cast votes on how these are done. Also, the IAU General Assembly will be in Honolulu next August and its website has gone live. Di Francesco will send a reminder to the membership about these activities.
- *NSERC Activities* [Gallagher]: NSERC has added Sara Ellison (UVic) and Lihong Zhu (UNB, as panel chair) to the physics/astronomy panel this year. Need to keep on top of this for next year (supplying names of possible panelists to NSERC) to keep a Canadian perspective on the panel.
- *CAP Activities* [Nelson]: CAP relations with NSERC suggest unhappiness with current funding profile, in particular some divisions over others. CAP has created its own liaison committee with NSERC that perhaps a CASCA/CAP member could join to represent astronomy. Nelson will inquire with CAP about this possibility.

### **6. Date of Next Telecon [all]**

- The next telecon is tentatively set for **27 February 2015** at 10 am PST
- We will try a doodle poll early in the new year to verify

### **7. Other business [all]**

- No other business

### **8. Adjournment [Di Francesco]**

- **Motion to adjourn (Abraham/St-Louis): Carried.**

# Canadian National Committee of the IAU

## Draft Minutes

1. **Adoption of the Agenda [Di Francesco]**
  - **Motion to adopt the agenda (St-Louis/Abraham): Carried.**
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the June 8, 2014 meeting [Di Francesco]**
  - **Motion to approve the minutes (Barmby/Nelson): Carried.**
3. **Business arising**
  - *Applications for Canadian IAU membership* [Di Francesco]: Every three years, the IAU invites applications for new members through the respective National Committees for Astronomy. Wilson, Ferrarese, and Di Francesco identified 61 CASCA members who were engaged in long-term astronomy in Canada, and these individuals were invited by e-mail on 29 October 2014 to apply for membership via the IAU website with a deadline of 01 December 2014. Of these, 41 have applied for membership. Upon approval by the IAU-CNC, the Secretary will recommend these individuals for membership in the IAU. See the IAU-CNC Secretary's Report for details.
  - **Motion to approve the applications by the approached individuals for IAU membership (Di Francesco/Abraham): Carried.**
  - *NRC Annual Performance Review (APR) questionnaire* [Wilson]: Every year, NRC requests that the IAU Canadian National Committee fill out a detailed questionnaire highlighting Canadian involvement in the IAU to determine its overall relevance to Canadians. Continued payment of members' dues to the IAU by NRC is contingent on obtaining an acceptable score on this questionnaire. The e-mail from NRC requesting this year's questionnaire was received today (05 December 2014) and the completed document is due on **17 January 2015**. Wilson will start working on the questionnaire next week, with help by Greg Fahlman, GM of NRC Herzberg and Di Francesco. In addition, Di Francesco will send out a request to the membership about their IAU activities on 08 December 2014.
4. **Other business [all]**
  - No other business
5. **Adjournment [Di Francesco]**
  - **Motion to adjourn (Wilson/Ferrarese): Carried.**