

**Canadian Astronomical Society  
Soci t  Canadienne d'Astronomie**

**71st meeting of the Board of Directors  
November 27 and 30, 2015; 10h30 – 13h30 PST  
Conducted by Videoconference**

**Minutes**

- 1. Adoption of agenda [Wilson]**
  - **Motion to adopt the agenda (Wilson/Gallagher): Carried**
- 2. Adoption of the minutes of the 70<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting [Di Francesco]**
  - **Motion to adopt the minutes (Wilson/Gallagher): Carried**
- 3. Business Conducted Electronically [all]**
  - *Contributions to conferences:* CASCA provided \$1000 contributions each to the Canadian Undergraduate Physics Conference and the Canadian Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics this fall.
  - *Statement of Harassment:* The CASCA Board issued a statement on the CASCA webpage reaffirming that harassment has no place in the astronomy workforce.
- 4. Review of the Actions Items List – Part I [Di Francesco]**
  - *Older CASCA materials:* Plans are being made by Di Francesco for a new CASCA archive to be housed alongside the RASC archive in Toronto. Boxes of older CASCA materials from Victoria (NRC) and Kingston (RMC) will be sent there for safekeeping and examination. Seal of the Corporation to be sent to Di Francesco from Kingston. St-Louis to close out CASCA's safety deposit box with Royal Bank of Canada.
  - *Amendment to Ethics Statement:* Following a suggestion at the May 2015 AGM, the CASCA Ethics Statement has been updated to be inclusive of all genders. Several members lauded the President for issuing the statement, which was reposted on various social media sites.
- 5. New business – Part I**
  - 5.1. President's report [Wilson]**
    - *Status of LRP Mid-term Review Process:* Writing continues on various sections of the Report concurrent with brief telecons. Some sections have been signed off on as being essentially done. December 2 is a deadline for having drafts circulated on all sections. The report release is likely to slip into

January. Requests for special recommendations can be still accommodated though major ones will be substantially unchanged from those presented at the AGM in late May. The Report will be translated and published on CASCA website (English probably first), though a few copies may be printed. No concerns about MTR budget have been yet voiced.

- *Definition of 'astronomer'*: a member requested that CASCA designate a standard definition of 'astronomer' after individuals in their workplace described themselves as such without reasonable qualification (e.g., MSc degree at least). Given that the Society is small and amateurs also use the word 'astronomer' to describe themselves, the request was politely declined.
- *NRC Report about IAU GA*: The President sent NRC a full report about her activities as an official representative of Canada at the IAU General Assembly this past summer.
- *New Prize*: a CASCA member has offered to endow a new biennial CASCA prize to mark the contributions by an early career observational astronomer, i.e., a young faculty member some small number of years past his or her PhD. The prize will likely be a physical medal rather than a cash award. The prize to be first awarded hopefully by 2017.

## 5.2. Treasurer's report [St-Louis]

- *CASCA's Financial Status*: Account balance is up because of lots of dues payments over the last quarter. In addition, expenditures are slightly lower than this time last year. Notably, investments have gone down since the start of the FY (April 1), especially in August and September with some rebound in October. The decrease is 4.55%, excluding the expected \$25K transfer to the Discover the Universe (DU) program. Though only \$20K was needed by DU, the extra \$5K covers expenses paid out of the general account from years past. Also of note, three times more donations to CASCA Trust have been received this year, half of which were made via PayPal. Scotia McLeod hasn't yet sent their Financial Statement yet and the Treasurer will update her report when those numbers are received. For further details, please see the November 2015 Treasurer's Report document.
- *Investment Committee (IC)*: The IC hasn't yet met to discuss new strategies, as discussed last May. Once our obligation to protect the WESTAR funds has been clarified, the Treasurer will contact them about their role (see below).
- **Motion to accept Treasurer's report (Gallagher/Ferrarese): CARRIED**

## 5.3. Secretary's report [Di Francesco]

- *Membership Update*: As of November 27, there are in total 524 CASCA members, of which 366 are in good standing, 103 owe dues for this year, 49 owe dues for two years, and six who paid this year but still owe a fee or a previous year's dues. Since the AGM in May, five members have resigned but 19 new individuals have joined, 10 of which are first-year graduate students. For more details, please see the November 2015 Secretary's Report.
- **Motion to accept secretary's report (Nelson/St-Louis): CARRIED**

- *Research Keyword Additions to Members' Database*: The new Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee suggests that keywords be added to the Members' Database indicating research interests. Links to professional webpages may be also added. Di Francesco and Gallagher to study how these suggestions can be easily implemented.
- *CASCA Archive at RASC*: Following a pitch from RASC archivist Randall Rosenfeld, the CASCA Board has agreed to have the CASCA archive housed alongside the RASC archive in Toronto. Arrangements will be made in early 2016 to have materials sent to Toronto from Kingston and Victoria. Di Francesco to ask for a summary of materials in the boxes and request that the most important documents be identified and scanned in case of damage to the originals.

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

- *Awards Committee* [Gallagher]: This year, the Awards Committee solicited nominations in the fall earlier than usual spring deadline. There were several nominations for the Plaskett and Qilak awards, one for the Beals but none for the Dunlap or Executive Awards. Following previous policy, nominations from previous years will be carried over rather than having the deadlines extended. (See below for more info about Awards Committee activities.)
- *NSERC* [Gallagher]: Currently there are three Canadians on the physics/astro panel, maybe one temporarily. Wilson to write NSERC earlier next year to suggest possible Canadian participants for 2016. Wilson described an interesting plot from November CAUT newsletter showing trends of basic discovery grants vs. targeted grants. Between 2008/9-2014/15, the former appears to be going down slowly while the latter is going up in constant 2010 dollars. The targeted grants are ones labeled "strategic" and are for research in sectors like automotive, energy, etc.
- *CAP* [Nelson]: Nelson has been in contact with CAP to get the dates of future CAP meetings to clashes between CAP and CASCA annual meetings. Nelson also has been in contact with B. Whelan, Chair of CAP's NSERC liaison committee, about CASCA participation. Further discussion with Whelan is planned for December 7.

#### **6. Review of the Actions Items List – Part II [Di Francesco]**

- *Committee Reports*: All committees will now follow a standard reporting format, highlighting issues of importance for Board consideration.
- *Awards*: the Board will review nominations for the Executive Award, and define a policy for carryovers from previous years' nominations.

#### **7. New business – Part II**

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

- *WESTAR* [Nelson]: The Board sought legal interpretation of the WESTAR agreement to determine our obligations and our flexibility in using associated funds. It appears that as long as we are reasonably prudent with the WESTAR

funds to protect the capital against inflation, we won't be open to difficulties. Relatedly, our oversight appears aligned with the responsibilities of trustees in Ontario. Nevertheless, investing WESTAR funds more aggressively than before is likely difficult. Our current conservative approach to investments is sufficient. For further protection, the Board will write a flexible compliance statement to state a duration over which the WESTAR capital will be protected (e.g., 1, 2, or 5 years). Of note, CASCA must resume the WESTAR lecture series, a major stipulation of using its funds (see related EPO strategy discussion below.)

- *Options for EPO:* [Nelson] There are two issues with restarting WESTAR lecture series: resources and continuity. For context, there has been no WESTAR-related activity since IYA2009. The Discover the Universe (DU) program could take over its management, though the Dunlap Institute (DI) has recently taken over “mentorship” of DU and would likely provide input. DU coordinator Julie Bolduc-Duval offered four proposals for how WESTAR lectures could be incorporated with DU efforts: i) on-site lectures with emphasis on remote locations; ii) on-site lectures and professional development with local teachers; iii) recorded lectures for online viewing; or iv) recorded lectures for the public. DU prefers option ii, with a base plan of having three talks per year, with costs of \$12K/year to support the travel of two people (Julie + speaker) to different locations. (For comparison, the AAS has an analogous “Harlow Shapley” lecture series with 10-15 volunteers per year and costs of US\$1.5K per lecturer. Lecturers spend 2-3 days at underserved regions and colleges, giving the lecture plus visits to local K-12 classes and interviews with media.) **The Board votes unanimously to adopt option ii**, with ~five volunteers to start. Expenses for this level should be easily accommodated by funds generated by the WESTAR endowment (e.g., typically 8% annual returns or \$40K / year), and DI may also match funds.
- *IAU* [Courteau]: No pressing issues (but see IAU-CNC minutes).

## 7.2. Vice-President's report [Abraham]

- *Committee Reports:* The following includes points of interest raised during the meeting. Please see individual Committee reports for full details of activities
  - Awards: i) to improve numbers, the Committee asked the Board to consider carryovers of nominations from previous years, or consider extensions of nomination deadline. The Board preferred carryovers (with limits) and Abraham to contact Committee Chair Kristine Spekkens to see if a strong slate of candidates exists. ii) Board opinion was sought from the Committee on ineligible or late nominations for awards. The Board decided to reject such nominations.
  - Diversity and Inclusiveness: The existence of new Committee to be announced during upcoming President's report.
  - Nominating: Ferrarese (Chair) contacted people to replace Directors Nelson and Barmby, and V-P Abraham. Both Treasurer St-Louis and Secretary Di Francesco have consented to keep their respective positions for another three-year term. At least two nominations are

needed for Directors and one for the V-P. Some candidates have already agreed to stand for election. One candidate, however, has concerns over child care costs for Board meetings if elected and inquired about CASCA assistance. Ferrarese to find out expected costs, which may be eligible as NSERC grant expenses.

- Ground-based Astronomy Committee: Chair Craig Heinke requests three new members and suggested six individuals to the Board.
- Joint Committee for Space Astronomy: This Committee did not provide a report as it is only meeting this very day.
- Solar System and Planetary Science: This Committee to be newly commissioned now that the new Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee is operational.
- LRPIC: Chair John Hutchings suggests it would be useful for the Board to have candid F2F presentations by the Chair at one of our Board meetings. He also suggests changing LRPIC to LRPAC, changing “Implementation” to “Awareness.”
- *Status of upcoming AGMs:*
  - Manitoba 2016: Meeting webpages have been updated and sport a beautiful logo. Reports from Chris O’Dea are already coming approximately every month though and things seem to be going fine.
  - Alberta 2017: The Board needs to confirm dates of this meeting. The organizers like May 29 - June 1 since there appear to be no unexpected surprises from hotels, no conflicts with AAS, CAP, or other meetings, and those dates also avoid Victoria Day. The organizers want to hold meeting in their Physics building, which can hold about 200 people.
  - Victoria 2018: Nothing to report.

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

- Suggested date of Friday, March 4, 2016 seems OK to those left on the telecom but Secretary will inquire about availability of all Board members before scheduling the date.

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

- No other business

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

- **Motion made to adjourn the meeting (Nelson/Abraham): CARRIED**

**Canadian National Committee of the IAU**  
**November 30, 2015 13h30 – 14h00 PST**  
**Conducted by Videoconference**

**Agenda**

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda [Di Francesco]**
  - **Motion made to adopt the Agenda (Nelson/Courteau): CARRIED**
  
- 2. Approval of the May 24, 2015 minutes of the meeting in Hamilton [Di Francesco]**
  - Tabled for later as minutes were not circulated prior to the meeting.
  
- 3. Business arising**
  - *Associate Memberships* [Di Francesco]: Following inquiries, Di Francesco has begun the process of obtaining Associate memberships in the IAU for three CASCA members who are otherwise ineligible to become IAU Individual Members as they do not have PhD degrees.
  - *Annual Performance Review (APR) questionnaire* [Wilson]: This year, Wilson received an e-mail from Nicole Arbour at NRC notifying us that due to circumstances beyond their control, re-establishing the APR committee has been delayed. Nevertheless, our IAU dues have been paid for this year. Instead of a full report this year, NRC asks us to provide an update for this year only and both years will be reviewed at once. Wilson did not know if what is being requested is one report for two years or a new report and there has been no response from NRC to her inquiries. The update report is due January 29.
  - *Issue from IAU 2015 GA* [Wilson]: There was an incidence of bullying between a speaker and session chair at the GA. Though a complaint was made to the IAU Executive, their response was unacceptable and appears to condone harassment. The session chair wants someone to talk to the IAU Executive on his or her behalf. Wilson to contact Diversity Committee about appropriate response. Also, Wilson to contact new IAU President Ewine van Dishoeck to find out if the new code of conduct the IAU is considering includes information about reporting harassment.
  
- 4. Other business [all]**
  - No other business.
  
- 5. Adjournment [Di Francesco]**
  - **Motion to adjourn (Wilson/Courteau): CARRIED.**