

**Canadian Astronomical Society
Société Canadienne d'astronomie**

**Minutes of the CASCA Board of Directors Videocon Meeting
Held Jan. 14, 2014, 0900 PST = 1200 EST**

Present: Laura Ferrarese	President
Christine Wilson	First Vice-president
Stéphane Courteau	Second Vice-President
Nicole St. Louis	Treasurer
James Di Francesco	Secretary
Samar Safi-Harb	Director
Pauline Barmby	Director
Lorne Nelson	Director
Gilles Joncas	Past President
Robert Thacker	LRP MTR Chair

1. Adoption of agenda

Motion (Courteau/Ferrarese): to adopt the agenda. Carried.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the October 2013 telecon [Di Francesco]

Motion (Safi-Harb/Courteau): to adopt the minutes of the October 2013 telecon. Carried.

3. Review of the Action Items List [Di Francesco]

The Action Items List was reviewed and updated.

4. New Business

4.1 President's Report [Ferrarese]

- IAU membership: should do more to encourage IAU membership? Secretary to e-mail membership before AGM and sort out present IAU membership
- CASCA website: it has been continually updated, particularly the "job register"
- Press releases: Talked to CASCA Press Officer Leslie Sage about getting press releases sent to us regularly (only UofT has been very good about it); Recent GPI press release situation was quite unfortunate with Canadian contributions to it being underrepresented
- Coalition News: Very little ongoing, following lots of previous work to prepare the MtC for TMT. ACURA and NRC have had meetings but NRC could not disclose if the MtC was actually sent to cabinet. The

window of opportunity for 2014 federal budget is now closed, and now we are all waiting for it to be announced (March?); Russ Taylor has left Canada for five years to take up a position in South Africa (still retains position at UC and some responsibility for SKA in Calgary), leaving a hole in SKA support in Canada. An new SKA standing committee has been struck to advise NRC and ACURA on SKA developments and this will meet via telecon on January 31.

4.2 Secretary's Report [Di Francesco]

- 350 members have paid their dues
- 117 members owe for this year
- 83 members are behind 2 years
- 7 resignations, 18 new members, 1 death, 2 transfers from PDF to ORD, and two transfers from STU to PDF since last report
- Susan will start sending out targeted e-mails to late payers soon

4.3 Treasurer's Report [St. Louis]

- General situation is favourable, value of investments increased by 4.5% from end of FY12 to end of November 2013
- Shocked that so few people have paid their membership dues, paymes have been mostly done by PayPal but a few still by cheque
- Five year membership dues payment plan to be still implemented, will contact Susan to get that started
- CASCATrust donations are holding steady at ~\$1200/yr
- No EI/ CPP/ tax deductions made to Susan's paycheques, Nicole working with Revenue Canada to set up the appropriate framework (Payload Account). Waiting to hear back from Revenue Canada. No penalties are expected. Our auditing firm, Wilkinson, could perhaps take care of these duties but cost unknown. Also, some previous thought about moving to a different auditing firm since Wilkinson is based in Kingston. Nicole will investigate.
- Financial Statements reviewed, no Westar expenses for the past two years (at least), investments seem reasonably balanced
- Investment committee met 9 December 2013, performance of investments should be linked to the economy, doing OK but two members are doing better with their personal investments (5-7%). Are we being too cautious? Investment Manager thinks it's OK given our target return.
- Board is unanimous about being careful. Proposal for suggested changes needed from Investment Committee including justifications, Nicole will relay the Board position to the Investment Committee.

4.4 MTR discussion (with Rob Thacker)

- Engagement: Most important thing is ensuring that every stakeholder is consulted for MTR; expressed a belief that waiting to release the report after the next federal election is best but this timing won't change the

content; sees the MTR day after AGM as a way to kick-off the process. Needed soon as Canada is currently in a huge state of flux (e.g., with CFHT).

- Town Halls: Expected to have three Town Halls, one on west coast, one on “east coast”, and one in Montreal. Should Town Halls be free-flowing discussion or presentations? Probably the latter to prevent domination of discussions by the agendas of individuals.
- Space Astronomy in MTR: Specific request from JCSA to have a space-based astronomy discussion; will have the same balance as before
- White Papers: Should aim to have guidelines for the white papers, e.g., not to re-open the discussions but have updates on highly-ranked projects in LRP2010 and some discussion of projects that have emerged since last time. How to go about this? Last time had specifically invited papers, and then it was opened to the community; process was successful (notable example of LSST lapse). White papers should be due late 2014/early 2015; OK to have it “late” so that they are current.
- Panel Membership: list of possible members sent to Laura, she will forward it to everyone. Committee size? LRP2010 had seven members, including external and non-voting member.
- Presentation givers: have chairs of CASCA committees give presentations? Or, people heavily involved with specific facilities or initiatives to give presentations (e.g., ngCFHT by D. Crampton or P. Cote). TMT/SKA need their own discussion for sure; not quite sure how we handle the tension between facilities vs. wavelength. Other projects? Data management and computation (Rob can cover that), TMT, CFHT, submillimetre (JCMT/ALMA/CCAT), SKA, space-based dark-energy mission (WFIRST has Canadian representation by M. Hudson / WISH), high-energy, etc.
- Length of report: Should be shorter than LRP2010, has more focused objective
- Demographic/funding Analysis. Probably skipped this time around, since funding agencies don’t care how great we are and they just want to see good projects. Have someone from a funding agency be involved in this? Probably not, since they don’t have interest in the discussion and may want to appear as independent as possible. At least make offer to send panel to talk to NSERC / CFI during panel deliberations.
- Budget: Laura to find out from Chris about where the money for LRP2010 came from (and how much). Big contribution from NSERC, in-kind contribution (e.g., for printing) from NRC (too far too long to get report published). What about CSA and CFI contributions?

4.5 1st VP Report [Wilson]

- Committee Reports
 - Joint Committee for Space Astronomy
 - Meeting organized at CSA in February, bringing together various groups, astronomers to contact their VP-R’s about

attending the summit. John Hutchings from NRC is also attending. Probably no new CSA projects until Federal Government balances the budget next year and maybe things will open up

- Emerson report recommended groups work together better, e.g., space vs. ground-based astronomy; CSA and NRC are both Industry Canada entities, so possible?
- Grant concerns; want to keep watch on CSA to have new grant opportunities like the SSEP for personnel to support space projects. Otherwise, NSERC grants get stretched.
- Done trying to get Canada into Euclid, other possibilities?
- CSA has been restructuring their internal committees but no fundamental changes are being made, again need to keep an eye on this since JCSA is a joint committee of CASCA and CSA
- Computation and Data
 - Committee has had a resignation (Jonathan Dursi to Compute Canada) so a replacement by Hugo Martel has been found. Better to have had some discussion (and possible alternatives evaluated). **Motion to appoint Hugo Martel to Computation and Data Committee (Wilson/Nelson), carried**
 - Compute Canada now has astronomy experience (thanks to Dursi moving there) with astro people also being consulted (e.g., Wadsley)
 - Cyber-infrastructure initiative for next year, but no HPC component of that. HPC has an image problem in Canada?
 - Compute Canada activity is somewhat disturbing, i.e., not clear if its executive has a lot of interest in HPC. Provincial initiatives (i.e., Ontario) are beginning to step in to fill in this gap. Messy?
 - HPC infrastructure is aging and becoming uncompetitive. Situation needs redress.
 - ALMA/EVLA data have large storage requirements, need Compute Canada resources
- Ground-based Astronomy Committee
 - JCMT: Christine circulated a letter sent to Greg Fahlman on behalf of several members of the community expressing their concern about the upcoming withdrawal of funding for JCMT. Doors for alternatives to NRC funding appear to be closing on interested parties very rapidly. For example, the CFI program announced in December for funding research facilities explicitly excludes astronomical ones because of NRC mandate. SCUBA-2 can't be funded under this new program since it's not a facility. This situation is a very

- deep concern within the community given uniqueness of JCMT. The reduced operations model for JCMT is only \$700K/yr.
- CFHT: there was a recent report from its SAC on website detailing the priorities for new instrumentation and the establishment of ngCFHT Project Office
 - NRAO: still working to divest itself of VLBA and GBT (not complete withdrawal); Canadian access to these is likely to be curtailed given access by open skies policies. More access possible if Canada is part of a consortium to take on these facilities.
 - Spectrum management: no one is currently representing astronomy for spectrum management since elimination of Russell Redman from NRC. This issue is of critical importance to mm-radio astronomers, and someday soon optical/IR astronomers. Need to have the Board send a letter to Greg highlighting the need for an astronomer involved in spectrum management.
 - Gemini: Canada to continue in Gemini for next five years, any consultation with community? Pauline, as GAC chair and Gemini User's Committee member, will inquire what's going on with that
- Long-Range Plan Implementation
 - Needs better rotation of membership for continuity. Board will need to work on this when committee memberships are reviewed at June Board meeting
 - This committee is waiting on results about TMT and CFHT progress
 - Education and Public Outreach
 - Summary of self-reported outreach activities over the last year
 - Promote the need for this committee have greater focus on shared EPO initiatives
 - Dennis Crabtree will step down as Chair in 2014-15; Mike Reid to take it up afterwards; Joanne Rosvick to continue role as Vice-Chair
 - Lorne reports work on joint education website with RASC, will organize videocon of EPO committee to discuss ways of improving its effectiveness
 - Graduate Students
 - Starting to work already on graduate student workshop at June AGM, theme will be "astronomy facilities"
 - Heritage

- No issues of note. Richard Jarrell, its longest-serving member, died suddenly on 28 December 2013, so a new appointment will be needed in June
- Awards
 - New Chair should be appointed at June AGM
 - Executive Award to be awarded this year
- Nominating
 - What about new CASCA Vice-President? New by-laws for executive structure passed at Vancouver AGM, so one name is needed for VP for two-year term.
 - Will discuss changes in consultation practices, e.g., elicit suggestions of nominations from the Board
 - Will need nominations for a new Director in June as Samar is stepping down in June

4.6 2nd VP Report

- AGM Reports
 - Québec 2014
 - Draft Schedule currently has no spots for Prize lectures. Organizers say there is very little room now for all these presentations (Plaskett, Dunlap, Qilak, and Beals). Full hour not needed for all these, and something like 30-45 minutes is probably OK. (All three prize talks last year in Vancouver were 30 minutes each.) Qilak can kick-off the EPO session? It was a plenary session last year. Plaskett given in the evening last year, maybe could be done again this year? Qilak too? Acceptable to put Beals meeting right before MTR kick-off on the last day? Probably not, as lots of people will leave. Don't want to rush the award winners. Maybe stack prize talks against other sessions. Stéphane will write Laurent to have slots specifically identified.
 - There will be non-Hogg public lecture given by René Doyon in French. Can an CASCA contribute to the public lecture? Should come from the registration fees. Use Westar funds for this purpose? Probably... Need to find out from Nicole first how much Westar money is available.
 - Organizers want a mission statement to convince people to stay for the extra LRP MTR day
 - Who pays for Board lunch and LRP MTR lunch? They won't be responsible. Expect both will cost ~\$1200.
 - Four invited speakers at AGM and they're all male. We really need to have female invited speakers at AGMs. Invited speakers can't be uninvited but number of women giving other talks probably should be increased. Also, gender representation

at AGMs should be added to the AGM guidelines, if it isn't already there.

- Hamilton 2015
 - Everything seemingly under control.

5. Date of Next Telecon [all]

- Target date last week of March / first week of April
- James to send out Doodle poll soon

6. Other Business [all]

- No other business.

7. Adjournment [Di Francesco]

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

Canadian National Committee of the IAU Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus

2. Approval of the Minutes of the May 27, 2013 meeting in Vancouver [Di Francesco]
Motion to approve the minutes made by (Di Francesco/Wilson). **Carried.**

3. Business arising

- IAU contacted Secretary in December for updated e-mail contact information on ~20 Canadian IAU members; this was successfully crowdsourced via the Exploder and relevant information sent back to the IAU
- Above experience suggests an accurate accounting of Canadian IAU membership is needed. Secretary to undertake this role before AGM, possibly with help from Susan.

4. Applications for Canadian IAU membership [Di Francesco]

- A drive for new IAU members should take place soon, especially with the 2015 GA coming up in 18 months or so. Secretary to send out message via the Exploder once IAU membership eligibility requirements are determined.

5. Annual Performance Review (APR) questionnaire [Ferrarese]

- APR completed for 2013 by Ferrarese and Di Francesco. Feedback not expected until September.
- Not much information about IAU activities given by membership, and a more specific request for input will be needed next year. At present it is hard to go through online all the various IAU committees for membership. Also, it appears there is no way to select all Canadian members on the IAU, so this process is annoyingly laborious.

6. Other business

No other business raised.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by (Di Francesco/Ferrarese). Carried