

**Canadian Astronomical Society
Société Canadienne d'Astronomie
75th meeting of the Board of Directors
December 14, 2016 09h00 – 13h00 PST
Via videoconference**

Minutes

<i>Present:</i>	Roberto Abraham	President
	Rob Thacker	Vice-President
	Nicole St-Louis	Treasurer
	James Di Francesco	Secretary
	Stéphane Courteau	Director
	Sarah Gallagher	Director
	Kristine Spekkens	Director
	Christine Wilson	Past President
<i>Absent:</i>	Erik Rosolowsky	Director

1. Adoption of agenda [Di Francesco]

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

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 74th Board of Directors meeting [Di Francesco]

- **Motion to adopt the minutes (Spekkens/Abraham): Carried.**

3. Business Conducted Electronically [all]

- *Fundamental Science Review*: On behalf of the Canadian professional astronomy community, the CASCA Board contributed feedback to the questionnaire on Canadian science put forth by the federal Fundamental Science Review panel. Abraham met with the panel in person on 29 September.
- *Financial Audit*: (22 September) **Motion to accept the audit and statements of financial position for CASCA, CASCATrust, and WESTAR as of 31 March 2016 prepared by the accounting firm Wilkinson & Company LLP (St-Louis/Courteau): Carried.**
- *Alternative TMT Site Panel*: Following the action of the TMT International Observatory (TIO) to choose an alternative site for the TMT should construction on Maunakea not be possible, CASCA through the LRPIC and GAC struck an “alternative site panel” to consider which of the two sites was considered most in future Canadian interest. After community consultation and discussion, the panel recommended via a report that TMT consider the

Cerro Honar site in Chile. The TIO ultimately chose the Observatorio Roque de los Muchachos (ORM) site in the Canary Islands, Spain, as its preferred alternative site.

- *Westar Invitation*: A letter of invitation to members of the community to become Westar Lecturers was drafted by the EPO Committee and placed on the CASCA website and the Exploder e-mail list.
- *Richer Medal*: A new CASCA prize award was finally announced to the membership, the Richer Medal for early career achievement in astronomy. The new award was endowed by CASCA member Harvey Richer (UBC), with a donation consisting of ten minted gold medals to be awarded biannually and cash to invest for future medal costs. The Board has formally thanked Harvey Richer for his generosity to the Society. Di Francesco took possession of the ten minted medals and these have been placed in a safety deposit box in Victoria, BC.
- *Nominations for the ACURA Advisory Council for the SKA*: Following normal membership turnover, Spekkens has been appointed to this committee.
- *IAU Vice-President nomination*: Following an international call for nominations, former CASCA President Laura Ferrarese has been nominated for a position of Vice-President of the IAU. Selection will occur by the next General Assembly in 2018.
- *Special Board meeting to discuss TMT issues*: Following events related to the TMT in late November, the Board convened a special meeting by telecon on December 5. A quorum was reached but due to other commitments the Treasurer and Secretary were unable to attend.

4. Review of the Actions Items List [Di Francesco]

- *NSERC Gender Bias Review*: The Board discussed the NSERC review on gender bias in its Discovery Grant competitions. Apparently, only data on success rate by gender are available. NSERC Director of Math & Physics Elizabeth Boston to be contacted about getting more granular information about funding levels and applicant numbers by gender.
- *CAP issues*: The Canadian Association of Physicists (CAP) has decided to include a member on their NSERC liaison committee someone to represent astronomy and astrophysics. The person needs to be a CAP member and follow the normal CAP selection rules for committee appointment. CASCA will put forward joint CAP-CASCA member Gallagher as first pick and we are awaiting news from CAP regarding when position is available.
- *Kingston Safety Deposit Box*: After much effort, RBC has finally realized our safety deposit box in Kingston, ON was closed and will be reimbursing CASCA for associated costs since its closure.

5. New business

5.1. President's report [Abraham]

- *TMT*: There has been continuing turmoil within the community regarding the TMT, most recently leading to the removal of Ray Carlberg from the TMT Board. Abraham's research into Board mechanics suggests this action was

appropriate as members have a fiduciary responsibility toward the success of their organization. For this reason, and since he is also President of CASCA, Abraham has declined an offer to replace Carlberg on the TMT Board. In the meantime, LRPIC has been keeping a close-eye on the situation. It appears necessary that Canada institute a TMT advisory committee with members appointed from the community to serve as a conduit of information between the project and the community. All major astronomy projects in Canada have such committees, and indeed the Fundamental Science Review panel has recommended such committees exist for all major science projects. Hence, we will institute one following the lead of the ACURA Committee for the SKA, but with more CASCA involvement. Formal Terms of Reference for this new committee are being drafted and chairpersonship and membership are being considered. Committee to advise on TMT not VLOT as TMT is the favoured option from the Long Range Plan and its Mid-Term Review. As a member of the Coalition for Canadian Astronomy, CASCA can provide some communication faster than other partners. To with, Abraham will provide some further communication to the community through his next President's message in the December e-Cassiopeia.

5.2. Vice-President's report [Thacker]

- **Committee Reports** (Full reports are available online)
 - *Awards*: This committee experienced huge turnover recently, with Renée Hložek, Catherine Lovekin, and Christian Marois recently joining it. A seventh member, however, is still needed. Thacker to assist in finding this member. The Richer Medal has been instituted and first nominations have been requested. Other prize nominations are due on December 21, and so far there have been six Plaskett, four Qilak, four Martin, and five Petrie nominations. The Board thanks current chair Luc Simard for his work leading the Committee through a disruptive turnover situation.
 - *Equity & Inclusivity Committee*: The Committee has been renamed "Equity and Inclusivity Committee." They expressed concern about sexualized language in science, and they recommend meeting Codes of Conduct are the appropriate means to handle such situations. Member Barmby has also written an article for e-Cassiopeia about how acronyms can seem clever but can be harmful to others. Work is proceeding on the EIC climate survey, and Thacker to work with Board and committee to determine scope. Work is also proceeding on the new Demographics survey and an expansion of the online Members' database. Committee is also hoping to examine the results of the CANTAC gender bias survey commissioned by NRC.
 - *Education and Public Outreach*: Three new members have been added: Paul Delaney, Sharon Morsink, and Magdalen Normandeau. The EPO committee has requested the Board authorize remuneration to Jennifer West to provide updates on EPO on the CASCA website but the Board felt more details were needed. The position of Vice-Chair for this committee was depreciated. The WESTAR Lectureship in Whitehorse was deemed a

success with bridges built to First Nations people. Discover the Universe (DU) has launched its first two English/French curriculum modules with more to come. The Teacher's Workshop at the Manitoba AGM was also considered a success, with participation by Nobel laureate Art McDonald greatly appreciated.

- *Graduate Students*: With no report, concern was expressed about the viability of this committee. Wider representation and greater activity are needed. Thacker to consult with executive about ways forward.
- *Heritage*: Work on the monograph about the history of Canadian astronomy is going forward and the team of authors has collected over 30 audio tapes from various figures. A few \$K are needed to reimburse the team for research regarding the book and the Board has directed the team to consider a special donation drive via the CASCA exploder. Randall Rosenfeld has been working on the CASCA archive. **Motion to waive the CASCA membership dues for Randall Rosenfeld as long as he continues to curate our archive (Thacker/Spekkens): Carried.** The committee is also considering organization of a meeting in Canada about the management of plates and materials.
- *Nominating*: No activity from this committee and hence no report. Activity is expected in early 2017 as there will be an election for two Director positions.
- *Ground-based Astronomy Committee*: The GAC reiterated that it is happy to assist with any TMT consultation along side the LRPIC and ACURA. A massive report was provided to the Board, including latest news on SKA, LSST, MSE, CCAT, ngVLA, ALMA, Gemini, CFHT, Arecibo, GBO, and DRAO. SKA appears to have budgetary challenges that may lead to a fresh round of re-baselining. LSST has some Canadian involvement through Dunlap institute but there appears to be no appetite for further engagement. MSE has a new 300-page science book and new management and science advisory groups but progress is affected by the evolving situation of astronomy on Maunakea. CCAT has been rescoped to a 6-m "experiment" class facility called CCAT-prime and Canadian participation in a future CCAT needs to be examined. ALMA is continuing its Early Science with significant usage by Canadians, perhaps more as co-Is than PIs. JCMT engagement by Canadians as PIs may continue if recent NSERC proposals for specific equipment are successful, but participation in large projects seems secure for now. Gemini has had nice successes with GPI and GRACES with GHOST will go on Gemini South in 2018. Gemini procurement issues, however, have complicated Canadian participation in future instrument development. CFHT is operating normally with CFIS project expected to allow Canada access to Euclid and Spirou expected on telescope in 2018 earliest. CHIME's instrument installation is moving along with perhaps some slight slippage. JVLA has attracted Canadian interest in the 2-4 GHz full-pol VLA Sky Survey and a \$2M proposal has been submitted for processing and archiving VLASS data. Arecibo continues to be under threat and NSF is

undergoing an Environmental Impact Study about its divestment from the facility. GBO is under similar threat, lagging behind Arecibo by ~6 months. (Canadians are users of both facilities, in part due to the NANOgrav consortium.) DRAO remains operational though usage statistics are unknown.

- *Joint Committee for Space Astronomy*: No report since its semi-annual meeting was only on December 9. The CSA hosted a productive Canadian Space Exploration Workshop in Montreal in November, and a long-term plan on space is expected in summer 2017. There is some optimism that CSA's finances will improve with \$30-40M per year assigned to space astronomy. The JCSA has recommended that CSA conduct a proper cost study for CASTOR so the Canadian community can have the info ready for the next LRP.
 - *Theory and Computation*: Compute Canada has experienced management problems in part due to enforcement of a top-down structure. A new Chair of the CC Board has been named. Some hardware is rolling out across the country but it remains nowhere near enough. Also, problems persist with funding CANFAR due to CFI/NRC issues. Hopefully, a revitalized Agency Committee on Canadian Astronomy (ACCA) can address this issue (as well as TMT).
- **Status of upcoming AGMs**
- *Alberta 2017*: Dates have been finalized as 29 May -2 June. LOC has sent budget that looks OK though a few internal funding sources need to be locked down. The banquet will be held at a local restaurant to minimize costs. The demographics of invited speakers need a re-look as there are only two women out of eight invitees. Meeting website preparation is in progress. Guide to running an AGM has been updated to include ideas from the EIC.
 - *Victoria 2018*: an NRC-UVic LOC has formed and planning activities have begun.

5.3. Treasurer's report [St-Louis] (see Treasurer's Report for full details)

- *CASCA's Financial Status*: We are doing quite well financially. A lot of people were paid over the last few months, \$73K vs. \$53K last year. Recent expenditures of \$20K have been not too high, but big stuff is coming up (DU, auditing, and insurance payments). AGM travellers spent only \$1.65K so far, meaning \$8K has yet to be claimed. Investments are picking up, thanks to "Trump bump.: Increase of 7.29% since beginning of the year. 5.9% since the beginning of FY. Dues are largely paid via PayPal, though many still pay by cheque. Only 50 members are in danger of expulsion. Donations for CASCATrust are presently up to \$1047, about half what we get normally, and it doesn't seem likely further donations will occur since most donate when paying their dues. We have a \$20K cushion between expected expenditures and our current balances. Scott Miller at Scotia Macleod is now investing CASCA's money independently and St-Louis now has meetings with him

twice a year. So far, investments have been “business as usual,” though we need to keep an eye on it since he can now make moves without our direct input. Overall, our investments are catching up with the previous historical trends.

- **Motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report (Abraham/Spekkens): Carried.**

5.4. Secretary's report [Di Francesco] (see Secretary’s Report for full details)

- *Membership Update:* As of today’s meeting, CASCA has 525 members in total. There are 384 members in good standing. Fifty members owe dues for two years and 69 owe dues for this year alone. Since the 2016 AGM, we’ve had 15 resignations but 14 new members plus three new first-year student members. Two members, Elmar Brosterhus and J. David Lacey, deceased.
- **Motion to accept the Secretary’s Report (Abraham/Thacker): Carried.**

5.5. Directors’ reports [Courteau, Gallagher, Rosolowsky, Spekkens]

- Directors’ report information was largely provided during earlier discussions of the Action Items List, etc.

6. Date of Next Telecon [all]

- Suggested date: Friday, March 3, 2017. Di Francesco to send out Doodle poll

7. Other business [all]

- No other business

8. Adjournment [Di Francesco]

- **Motion to adjourn the 75th Board of Directors meeting (Abraham/Thacker): Carried.**

**Canadian National Committee of the IAU
December 14, 2016 13h00 – 13h30 PST
Conducted by Videoconference**

Draft Agenda

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda [Di Francesco]**
 - **Motion to adopt the Agenda (Abraham/St-Louis): Carried.**

- 2. Approval of Minutes of the May 30, 2016 meeting in Winnipeg [Di Francesco]**
 - **Motion to adopt previous meeting minutes (Spekkens/Thacker): Carried.**

- 3. Business arising**
 - *Annual Performance Review (APR) questionnaire [Abraham]:* Each year NRC sends the CNC-IAU a request to complete a questionnaire regarding Canada's participation in the IAU. It is usually sent in late November or early December but has not been yet received.

- 4. Other business [all]**
 - *Canadian IAU V-P Nomination:* Responding to the international call for nominations to the IAU Executive Committee, former CASCA President Laura Ferrarese was nominated.
 - *Future IAU General Assembly in Canada:* Abraham was contacted by a representative of the Toronto Convention Centre about organizing a future General Assembly in Toronto. Montreal has made several attempts in recent years, as recently as 2015, and is likely interested in having another attempt. The CNC-IAU is enthusiastic to have Montreal proceed with a future bid.

- 5. Adjournment [Di Francesco]**

- **Motion to adjourn the CNC-IAU meeting (Thacker/Spekkens): Carried.**