

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

**Minutes of the 65th meeting of the Board of Directors
June 8, 2014 9h00 – 16h30 EDT
Salle du Jardin, Chateau Laurier,
Quebec City, QC**

Present: Laura Ferrarese President
 Christine Wilson First Vice-President
 Stéphane Courteau Second Vice-President
 Nicole St-Louis Treasurer
 James Di Francesco Secretary
 Lorne Nelson Director
 Pauline Barmby Director
 Gilles Joncas Past President

Absent: Samar Safi-Harb Director

Minutes

1) Adoption of agenda [Ferrarese]

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

2) Adoption of the minutes of the Board telecon of April 4, 2014 [Di Francesco]

Motion to adopt the minutes (Ferrarese/St-Louis): Carried

3) Actions List Review [Di Francesco]

The Action Items List was reviewed and updated. Of note, in particular:

- *NSERC Review Panels:* a list of 15 individuals was sent to NSERC for their consideration for inclusion in 2014 review panels
- *WESTAR Funds:* with a sizeable balance in available funds, a new dialogue is needed to use these funds effectively for EPO, etc. Will engage RASC and Press Officer for ideas
- *Translation of CASCA websites:* Continuing work done by Board members. Significant improvement in one year thanks to Safi-Harb, Courteau, Wilson. Efforts will continue but By-laws will remain in English so only one “definitive” version exists.
- *IAU membership:* There are 42 CASCA members on tenure/tenure-track levels who are not IAU members. These will be targeted in the fall to increase our IAU membership levels.

- *Spectrum Management*: Wilson to approach Greg Fahlman about having someone assigned to take on this important role.

4) **Business taken care of by e-mail**

- Discussion was made of possible confusion in LRP priorities stemming from grassroots efforts to keep Canada involved in JCMT during the present push by the Coalition to secure funding for TMT. Ferrarese composed and sent letters clarifying the issue to the Hon. Ed Holder, the Secretary of State, Science and Technology, and Dr. Ted Hsu, a Liberal MP.
- Membership of the 2015 LRP Mid-term Review Panel was decided. The Panel now consists of Rob Thacker (Chair; St. Mary's), Michael Balogh (Waterloo), David Crampton (NRC Herzberg), Matt Dobbs (McGill), Kristine Spekkens (RMC), Michael Strauss (external; Princeton), Marten van Kerkwijk (Toronto), Kim Venn (Victoria), and Christine Wilson (McMaster).
- Brian McNamara has been named the new Chair of the CASCA/CSA Joint Committee for Space Astronomy.
- After consultation with the community, a list of names was compiled by Ferrarese and sent to NSERC for consideration as possible Canadian reviewers of astronomy grant proposals for the upcoming cycle.

5) **New business**

a) **President's report [Ferrarese]**

- *CASCA Funding of the MTR*: \$10K has been allocated from CASCA to the MTR without specific use. Funds could be used, e.g., for covering panel member travel expenses. To raise further funds, Rob Thacker has prepared a letter to NSERC, CFI, and CSA about the MTR, and has talked to Greg Fahlman of NRC.
- *Role and continuation of LRPIC beyond the MTR*: Though communication has occurred between the LRPIC and the community (e.g., via E-Cass reports), improvement is needed. There is broad consensus that the LRPIC should continue, and proper placement of members on committees should be ensured to help with communication. Wilson to send letter to all committees expressing the need to communicate. The LRPIC is currently led by John Hutchings, and he appears willing to continue serving in this role.
- *Replacement Editor for E-Cassiopeia*: Though Ferrarese suggested at last Board telecon that the Past President could take on being Editor of E-Cass (given his or her experience maintaining the CASCA webpages), it was agreed that a longer Editor term was needed and the two-year term of the Past President was too short. Brian Martin will be asked if he knows anyone who may be willing to take on the Editorship, and the Board and Nominating Committee also will consider possibilities themselves.
- *Nominating Committee*: Michael Balogh and Allison Sills have consented to be nominated to this Committee. Little work is expected from this Committee in the coming year, however, since no one is rotating off the board. (Note that they could help find a replacement editor for E-Cass.)

- *Gruber Cosmology Prize*: An announcement will be made on June 10 that Sidney van den Bergh, Brent Tully, and Ken Freeman, will share the prestigious Gruber Cosmology Prize. Ferrarese will make an announcement about the award during the meeting that morning.
- *TMT activities*: As noted above, Ferrarese has recently sent letters to MPs reaffirming that TMT is the top priority for a large Canadian ground-based astronomy project. Ferrarese also received support for these efforts from James Edgar, the RASC Secretary (now President), and Dan Wayner, the NRC Vice President who oversees NRC Herzberg. Proper communication is needed for Canada's bid for TMT to succeed, and key players in the Coalition should strive to keep the community informed of their efforts. Ferrarese tapped several individuals to write pro-TMT letters to their MPs to raise awareness of the project. With the newly announced Canada First Research Excellence Fund established in the 2014 Federal Budget, it is possible that universities may be able to make the case for TMT funding. First submissions for this new Fund are expected in November, with awards in March. Nevertheless, the Fund will only start with \$50M in its first year, a figure that won't be enough for the enclosure, a key Canadian deliverable to TMT. Furthermore, the project will also need to be very high on the priorities of key universities for access to this funding. (Universities also direct donations to their top priorities, so finding donations to universities specific to TMT may not be so easy either.) A Memorandum to Cabinet for further TMT funding is being prepared for submission this fall. Ferrarese will provide a written report to ACURA about CASCA activities.

b) Secretary's report [Di Francesco]

- *Membership update*: As of the AGM, the total number of CASCA members in good standing (including those that have paid their dues or are one year in arrears) is 515. This number includes 18 first-year students who joined this year. Given the difficulties last year in ascertaining which members were two years in arrears, the number of people who are being expelled this year for non-payment of dues is 72.
- *Request by ABB to add anti-trust language to By-laws*: CASCA Corporate Member ABB, Inc. contacted the Secretary earlier this year to request that specific language be added to the Society By-laws that clarify its stance on anti-trust practices. Though ABB provided example language about such statements upon request, it remains unclear what the consequences would be if some member doesn't comply. Other professional societies, e.g., CAP, don't have such language in their By-laws but they also don't have any corporate members. Wilson will look into this issue and will seek legal advice about how to proceed.
- **Motion to accept the Secretary's Report (Ferrarese/Wilson): Carried**

c) Treasurer's report [St-Louis]

- The Society is in good financial shape. Its investments are doing well, having increased 8% this year alone. The recent Dunlap Award endowment will be added soon.
- The Treasurer estimates that there will be \$61K in operating costs in the forthcoming year, with incoming revenue lower by \$23K due in part to decreased numbers of members in good standing.
- Sergey Marchenko will be rotating off Investment Committee this year. A replacement will be sought at the AGM.
- CASCA has begun funding some conferences using WESTAR funds, such as the Canadian Undergraduate Physics Conference (CUPC) and the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWP). So far this year, CUPC has not approached Ferrarese for new financial assistance, but a request will be sent to Wilson.
- **Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report [Ferrarese/Wilson]: Carried.**

d) Coalition Activity report [Ferrarese/Joncas]

- nothing more to add from President's Report

e) CITA elections [Ferrarese]

- Andrew Cummings requests that the CASCA Board appoint two members to CITA Council. A list of possible candidates voted on by CITA members was forwarded to the Board.
- Based on this document, **motion to appoint to CITA Council Julio Navarro for four years and Jason Fiege for two years (Courteau/St-Louis): Carried.**

f) Reports of committees [Wilson]

- *Awards*: after the election, the new V-P will to find a new Chair and three new Committee members as Pat Côté, Samar Safi-Harb, and Ian Short are rotating off this Committee. It is preferable to have a Chair for several years. A suggestion was made to ask Kristine Spekkens to be Chair, and it was noted that one of the two new Directors will need to be made liaison to/member of Committee. Ideas for a third person, however, are needed. The new Chair will be tasked to ask remaining Committee (and Pat Côté, former Chair) for input on the new member. From the Committee itself, they ask that Plaskett Medal information be properly highlighted on the CASCA website, with some emphasis on nominators declaring how much a nominee actually did in cases of dissertations being a series of multi-author papers.
- *Computation and Data*: JJ Kavelaars' term is ending this year and he will be approached to have his term extended for three years. A Call for Proposals for new cyber infrastructure has been put out by Compute Canada. CASCA should contribute a white paper to the Compute Canada renewal process, but the Computation and Data Committee should do this, not the Board. An action item is needed to ask Committee to provide ideas of how concrete support can be given.

- *E-Cass*: As described earlier, the membership will be approached at the AGM for input on selecting a new Editor
- *Education and Public Outreach*: Mike Reid has agreed to take over as Chair of this Committee, taking over from Dennis Crabtree (who extended his Chairmanship for one year with out thanks). Six other people are also scheduled to rotate off this Committee, however. Some consultation is needed with the incoming Chair about the composition of the Committee before extending anybody further. From the Committee itself, they note that 2015 has been designated as the International Year of Light. They are looking into ways to promote spectroscopy (e.g., cheap glasses during Canada Day 2015). Though cheap per unit, a substantial amount of money (tens of thousands \$) may be needed, requiring a formal request for funding by the Board. Also, the IAU is rejuvenating its commission structure and someone is needed to represent Canada in the new IAU commission about EPO. Otherwise, the EPO Committee has been otherwise dormant lately, and hopefully the new leadership will re-energize it. More discussion is needed about a possible lecture series with outreach at K-12 levels.
- *Graduate students*: The students have a workshop set up for this year but Board hasn't been asked for any feedback. The Board reiterates that the Committee should come to us if there are any problems. The new V-P should follow-up with the Graduate Student Committee about possibilities for recognizing graduate student achievement (e.g., scholarships).
- *Ground-based Astronomy Committee*: Three members are set to rotate off this Committee this year. John Hutchings is one but as noted above, he should stay on as LRPIC Chair. So two others, one optical and one radio, are needed. Suggestions include Jon Willis or Pat Hall (optical) and Gilles Joncas (radio). See report for details on activities at JCMT, CFHT, Gemini, ALMA, the DAO telescopes, NRAO telescopes, and CHIME. Regarding MSE, with no big upgrade to MegaCam happening, timescales of converting CFHT to MSE are likely more harmonious than previously thought (though SPIRou remains an open question) and 2022 is a possible date of conversion. Regarding Gemini, some concern has been expressed about limited Canadian input into the observatory after it has become so dominated by the U.S.
- *Heritage*: David Turner and Ian Shelton are rotating off this committee but John Percy and David Pantalone are joining it. David Turner will be approached to stay. The Committee invites input from the Board on how to support the ongoing effort to digitize photographic and spectroscopic plates at DAO. Di Francesco to talk to Elizabeth about possibility of getting volunteer work from BC high school co-op programs for this work.
- *Investment*: The activities of this Committee were discussed mostly in Treasurer's Report.
- *Joint committee for Space Astronomy*: No report was provided for the meeting since they met before our last meeting in January. As their next meeting is at end of the upcoming CASCA annual meeting, a report will be provided soon. Membership changes can be left for the moment.

- *Nominating*: The activities of the Nominating Committee have already been reported.
- *Long Range Plan Implementation Committee*: At present, TMT is obviously dominating the focus of the Committee. They have begun to include the MTR Chair, Rob Thacker, in their communications. It is hoped that the MTR will better unify the community to stand behind the LRP priorities but it was acknowledged that better communication with the community is needed to stave off problems. Various Committee members are rotating off. The Board will ask that John Hutchings, Brian McNamara, and Ingrid Stairs stay on, that Pauline be made a GAC person on the committee (replacing Michael Balogh), and that Christine as CASCA President be made an ex-officio member.

6) Report from the Press Officer [Sage]

- The first press release for the CASCA meeting (regarding future of CFHT) went out on Friday morning, and a G&M freelancer has already made an expression of interest. Ivan Semeniuk of the G&M hopes to do a few stories on the meeting, in particular about the Gruber Cosmology Prize. The Gruber Prize press release going out to accredited journalist mailing list tomorrow, but the release itself is embargoed until Tuesday.
- Science coverage in NA remains fairly bleak. Some uptick of interest was seen with the debut of the new COSMOS series in the US, but has been dropping steadily
- Sage visited Queen's a few months ago, trying to think of ways to have more positive impact. Impact is hard since any EPO work is volunteered and hence "last on the list" of priorities. Sage himself has maintained an RASC column for last 18 years. Possibly cultivating interest from bloggers would be perhaps beneficial but they tend to thrive more on controversy to generate that impact.
- A couple of CASCA meeting attendees declared their work as worthy of having a press release. One, about Julie Bolvac-Duval and her EPO work, is going out tomorrow. Sage flagged about ten talks to provide press release info (in addition to prize talks). Access to abstracts was easier this year, but it was also harder this year to get the schedule, and that is needed well in advance to arrange contacts with journalists.
- Press release about the TMT mirror segment at the CASCA meeting going out tomorrow morning. Nothing is going on the CASCA website itself, however, since we need to be careful so it doesn't appear to endorse the science itself.
- Use of the WESTAR funds to promote EPO was discussed. Funds needed to have continued engagement, not so much "helicoptering in speakers." Courteau, Ferrarese, and Sage to discuss possibilities later in meeting.

7) Reports of the AGMs [Courteau]

- *2014 Quebec City*: Organization is done. A final budget report will be provided at the end of the meeting.
- *2015 McMaster*: Scheduled for 24-27 May 2015. Organization is in good hands, especially since the new President will be there and can work with new

V-P to monitor progress. There will be no conflict with the annual CAP meeting.

- *2016 Brandon/Manitoba?* The proponents of this location need to be contacted to see if they are still interested in hosting. If not, it is possible Alberta could host. Courteau is tasked to find out as an action item.
- *2018 Victoria:* The 2018 meeting has been secured unusually early to ensure that the meeting is held concurrently with the 100th anniversary of the DAO Plaskett Telescope.

8) Nominations to the Nominating Committee [Wilson]

- Business already discussed above

9) Board Student Awards (orals and posters) [all]

- The LOC is working to provide the Board with a list of student talks and posters
- Wilson, Di Francesco, and Courteau will judge student posters, and will meet at lunch on Wednesday to discuss candidates.
- Barmby, Nelson, and St-Louis will judge student talks, and will meet at 3:30 pm on Wednesday to discuss candidates.

10) Other business [all]

- Some discussion with the Treasurer about the difference between unaudited and audited trust. The auditor, Wilkinson & Sons, says that we don't need an audit for the funds, but a "review engagement" instead.

11) Adjournment

- **Motion to Adjourn meeting (Wilson/Courteau): Carried.**

Canadian National Committee of the IAU Draft Agenda

1) Adoption of the agenda

Motion to adopt agenda (Ferrarese/Courteau): Carried

2) Adoption of the minutes of the board telecon of January 14, 2014 meeting

Motion to adopt minutes from January (Ferrarese/Courteau): Carried

3) Business arising

- An accurate accounting of Canadian IAU membership is needed. Di Francesco is directed to obtain this list (see Action Items list)
- In advance of the 2015 IAU GA in Honolulu, an IAU membership drive will occur this fall. Di Francesco is directed to initiate this action this fall.

4) Annual Performance Review (APR) questionnaire

- NRC approved the 2013 APR and the IAU membership fees were paid this year. No feedback has yet been given to the CASCA Board/IAU CNC, however.
- a request for the next APR will likely come out in early December, Ferrarese will inform NRC of change in Presidentship to Wilson. Di Francesco will send out an announcement beforehand to the Exploder, looking for input on IAU activities

5) Other business

- No other business

6) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Nelson/St-Louis): Carried