

CANADIAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY - SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE D'ASTRONOMIE

Minutes of the forty-seventh Annual General Meeting Thursday, June 2, 2016 11:00-12:30 CDT Provencher Room, Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, MB

Minutes

The Annual General Meeting of CASCA started at 11:00 with 93 members present.

1. Adoption of the agenda

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

1. Adoption of Agenda / Adoption de l'ordre du jour [President]
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2014 AGM / Adoption du compte rendu de la réunion de 2014 [Secretary]
3. Nominations to the Nominating Committee / Nominations due comité de nomination
4. President's Report / Rapport du Président
5. Secretary's Report / Rapport du Secrétaire
6. Treasurer's Report / Rapport du Trésorier
7. Election of Auditor / Élection du vérificateur
8. Selection of scrutineers / Sélection des surveillants d'élection
9. Results of the elections / Résultats des election (Secretary)
10. Committee Reports / Rapports des comités
11. Future CASCA Meetings / Prochaines reunions de la CASCA
12. Other Business / Divers
13. Adjournment / Levée de l'assemblée

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 2015 AGM

- **Motion to approve the minutes of the 2015 AGM (Rosolowsky/Nelson): Carried.**

3. Nominations to the Nominating Committee

- Jason Fiege and Chris Pritchett were nominated to the Committee and have accepted their nominations. No other nominations were proposed.
- **Motion to close the nominations (Gallagher/Rosolowsky): Carried.**
- By acclamation, Fiege and Pritchett join the Nominating Committee.

4. President's Report [Wilson]

- *LRP MTR Report*: This past year marked the completion of the Mid-Term Review of the Long Range Plan. The Report is available on the CASCA website, and a summary document for outreach (politicians, university administrators, etc.) will soon be available. The former document is currently being translated into French and the latter may also be translated. A big thanks to Rob Thacker and the members of the MTR Review panel for their hard work!
- *Diversity and Inclusivity Committee*: The CASCA Board established a new Committee to oversee issues of diversity and inclusivity in the field. Brenda Matthews (NRC) is the inaugural Chair of the Committee. It produced the Code of Conduct governing the Winnipeg annual meeting, as seen in the conference programme. It also facilitated a session on diversity and inclusivity during the meeting, highlighting harassment scenarios. Next, it will pursue a 'climate survey' and a demographics survey, hopefully on an annual basis.
- *Outreach to Government*: The Canadian Coalition for Astronomy has already visited the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, the new Minister of Science. In addition, the Coalition has sent letters to both Minister Duncan, and the Honourable Navdeep Bains, the new Minister for Innovation, Science, and Economic Development. Finally, the Coalition is preparing to mail the two-page MTR summary document described above to all sitting MPs later this year.
- *WESTAR Lecture Series*: The EPO Committee and the Board have worked hard this past year to revitalize the WESTAR Lecture Series that was created to promote astronomy in communities without direct access to astronomers. The goal is to have the first new WESTAR Lectures in Whitehorse, YT this September. Information about becoming a WESTAR Lecturer will be soon posted to the CASCA website, and the President urges all to consider volunteering for this experience.
- *Participation Encouragement*: Participation in various Society activities is important. The President urged members to consider volunteering for CASCA Committees or nominating others for CASCA awards. Furthermore, participation in IAU Committees, Divisions, or Commissions is strongly encouraged, especially at the executive level. (Please also consider applying to host an IAU Symposium in Canada in the near future.) Finally, the President urged members to use the new reporting form created by the EPO Committee to capture as many EPO activities of its members as possible.
- *Thanks*: The President thanked the Board and CASCA Committee members for their service. In addition, she thanked the administrative assistant Susan Di Francesco for her excellent work.

5. Secretary's Report [Di Francesco]

- *Elections*: CASCA is currently undergoing an election to replace members of its Board who are rotating off it this year. By acclamation, Roberto Abraham will become the next CASCA President, and James Di Francesco and Nicole St-Louis will continue to serve as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. By vote, two candidates agreed to stand for the position of Vice-President, Rob Thacker and Michael Balogh. In addition, four candidates agreed to stand for two Director

- positions, Erik Rosolowsky, Kristine Spekkens, Ingrid Stairs, and Jon Willis. The Society thanks those who agreed to stand for election. The results of the election will be released later in this meeting.
- *Memberships:* CASCA currently has 524 members, including 440 members in good standing (MIGS) and 84 who are one year in arrears in their dues payments. Twenty-two members were two years in arrears and are now expelled. CASCA gained 43 new members, including 21 first-year students, this past year. Membership levels rose by ~4% since last year, reversing a trend of slight decline over the past few years. A member asked if there was a tally of all astronomers in Canada but the Secretary at the time did not know of such a list. (Perhaps such information was captured by one of the recent studies of the field, e.g., the HAL report.) Another member asked why there had been a drop in Corporate Members between 2012 and 2013. The Secretary could not answer that as the drop occurred prior to him becoming Secretary.
 - *Deaths:* The Society mourns the passing of CASCA member Dr. Daniel E. Harris, formerly of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. A moment of silence was held on his behalf.
 - **Motion to accept the Secretary's Report (Crabtree/Hesser): Carried.**

6. Treasurer's Report [St-Louis]

- *Society Finances:* CASCA's overall finances remain in good condition. The main operating account balance was \$28.9K on 31 March 2016, higher than the \$14.1K initially projected, thanks to lower-than-expected expenditures. On the other hand, our investments are down by 4.6% over last year, much better than the fall of the TSX by ~15% over the same period. A total of \$25K was withdrawn from the investment account for CASCA's support of 'Discover the Universe' and a further \$15K will be withdrawn to cover the amount pledged in previous years. Furthermore, \$8K will be withdrawn to support the WESTAR lectureship program. The balance of the general account at the end of FY2016 is expected to be \$39K.
- *Dues:* Based on the Bank of Canada's inflation rate of 1.66% for last year, the membership dues will increase this year. Dues for next year will be set during the upcoming membership renewal drive to:
 - Ordinary: \$158
 - Student/retired: \$64
 - Postdoc/Associate: \$115
 - Joint CAP+CASCA: \$110After October 31, 2016 the dues will increase over those posted above by 25%.
- *CASCATrust:* Members generously donated \$2381 to CASCATrust over the past year. In FY2015, CASCATrust was used to fund student and postdoc travel to the annual meeting (\$10.65K), the Plaskett Award and associated travel (\$0.75K), and the student best oral and poster presentation awards (\$0.4K).
- *Further information:* Please see the detailed Treasurer's Report posted on the CASCA website.
- **Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report (Sivakoff/Dougherty): Carried.**

7. Election of Auditor

- **Motion to reappoint Wilkinson & Sons as the auditor (St-Louis/Barmby): Carried.**

8. Committee Reports [Abraham]

- Reports on activities by CASCA's many committees can be found on the CASCA web site. Each committee is performing important work for the Society, and members are encouraged to read these reports and contact the committee Chairs as needed.
- *EPO Committee:* As stated earlier, the WESTAR Lectureship is being revitalized. The Board agrees that teacher training is an important focus, and approves the Committee's recommendation that teacher workshops be included at future annual meetings (as done in Hamilton and Winnipeg). The workshops are organized by 'Discover the Universe' (DU), a teacher-training initiative partially funded by CASCA and the Dunlap Institute. DU also provides teacher training via webinars and regional workshops. This partnership should provide DU with sustainable footing for the next few years.
- *Computation and Data Committee:* The Committee reports concerns that the governance of Compute Canada, which plays a critical role in national computing infrastructure, is in flux. Furthermore, the Committee reports complications with CFI, which funds both hardware and research. Namely, neither astronomy related proposal to CFI was successful in the most recent round, and the second hardware round had its funding moved to the first round *after* decisions were made. The Board is hoping to assist in resolving these extant issues.
- *Ground-based Astronomy Committee and Joint Committee on Space Astronomy:* The GAC reports that a consortium of Canadian astronomers will participate in the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST) project, as facilitated by the Dunlap Institute. A summary of the situations of the TMT, SKA, etc. can be found in the GAC report. The JCSA reports that funding for space-based science is still a source of concern, e.g., the CASTOR project still awaits funding for Phase 0 studies despite a strong MTR recommendation. In addition, a possible RFP for selecting a Phase 0 team for a possible Canadian hardware contribution to WFIRST remains in the evaluation stage.

9. Selection of Scrutineers

- Daniel Devost (CFHT) and Jayanne English (Manitoba) kindly volunteered to serve as scrutineers to oversee the results of the 2016 CASCA election.

10. Results of the Elections

- For the positions of Directors of the CASCA Board, **Erik Rosolowsky** (Alberta) and **Kristine Spekkens** (RMC) are elected.
- For the position of Vice-President of CASCA, **Rob Thacker** (SMU) is elected.
- The Board looks forward to working with its new members, and thanks the members rotating off the Board this year (Directors Pauline Barmby and Lorne Nelson; Past President Laura Ferrarese) for their service.

11.Future CASCA Meetings

- CASCA 2017 will be held in Edmonton, AB in May/June 2017. Greg Sivakoff (Alberta) addressed the AGM to encourage everyone to attend.

12. Other Business

- *Sesquicentennial Celebrations:* A member asks if CASCA has any plans for to mark Canada's 150th birthday in 2017. Wilson responded that no plans exist as yet but the EPO Committee will investigate.

13. Adjournment

- **Motion to adjourn the AGM (Johnstone/Kavelaars).**