

CANADIAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY - SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE D'ASTRONOMIE

Minutes of the forty-eighth Annual General Meeting Thursday, June 1, 2017 3:15-4:45 pm MDT CCS L2-190, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB

Minutes

The Annual General Meeting of CASCA started at 3:15 pm with 59 members present.

1. Adoption of the agenda

- **Motion to adopt the following agenda (Crabtree/Haggard): Carried.**

- 1) Adoption of agenda / Adoption de l'ordre du jour (Secretary)
- 2) Adoption of the minutes of the 2016 AGM / Adoption du compte rendu de la réunion de 2016 (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
 - EPO Activities Report / Rapport sur les activités d'ÉSP (Bolduc-Duval)
 - Results of Cassiopeia Survey / Résultats de l'enquête Cassiopeia (Normandeau)
- 13) Adjournment / Levée de l'assemblée

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 2016 AGM

- **Motion to approve the minutes of the 2016 AGM (van Laerhoven/Bastien): Carried.**

3. Nominations to the Nominating Committee

- Craig Heinke and Martin Houde were nominated to the Committee and have accepted their nominations. No other nominations were proposed.
- **Motion to close the nominations (Rosolowsky/Kavelaars): Carried.**
- By acclamation, Heinke and Houde join the Nominating Committee.

4. President's Report [Abraham]

- *Coalition Activities:* Abraham reported to ACURA Governing Council on the activities of CASCA and the Coalition for Canadian Astronomy on LRP matters. Abraham discussed the topics of this report, including interactions with the Federal Government's Fundamental Science Review (FSR) panel, sending LRP Mid-Term Review summaries to all Members of Parliament, and meeting with various stakeholders in Ottawa. The latter included Genevieve Tanguay of NRC, to discuss ways the astronomy community could work more closely with NRC, John Burnett, the Director of Policy for the Minister of Science, about TMT, and Marilyn Gladu, the Conservative Party Science Critic, about aerospace and JWST. The FSR panel has recommended Canada institute a high-level committee for the evaluation of "large science infrastructure" projects.
- *TMT:* Abraham summarized the situation with the TMT over the past year, including the establishment of a CASCA-ACURA Alternative Site Selection Committee, the decision by the TMT Board to choose Observatorio del Roque de los Muchachos (ORM) as the alternative site for TMT, the formation of the CASCA-ACURA TMT Advisory Committee (CATAC) and its subsequent frequent interactions with the larger community and production of a detailed report. Abraham thanked the Committee members, Michael Balogh (Chair), Sarah Gallagher, Stefi Baum, Chris Wilson, David Lafrenière, and Harvey Richer for their service. Further discussion of Canadian involvement at TMT occurred at the Edmonton annual meeting. Abraham echoed the recommendation by CATAC that Canadians join the TMT Integrated Science Development Teams.
- *SKA:* The SKA project is undergoing an internal cost control exercise and this process has limited opportunities to advocate for the project with stakeholders. For further details, please see the Canadian Coalition for Astronomy's report to the ACURA Board.
- *JWST:* The launch of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is ~15 months away and Abraham urged the membership to be thankful for the efforts of the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) in this project. The CSA continues to need our help to advocate for the funding of science in space as no missions are budgeted beyond JWST at this time.
- *WESTAR Lectureship:* The Board has reinvigorated the WESTAR Lectureship series with a Lecture last November in Ayamdigut (Whitehorse), YT by Christa van Laerhoven and two graduate students (Jielai Zhang and Heidi White) from the Dunlap Institute. Julie Bolduc-Duval of the Discover the Universe (DU) program helped to coordinate the event. The CASCA EPO Committee has since approved twenty-two potential WESTAR Lecturers and now the challenge is to make communities aware of this opportunity.
- *CASCA Archive:* Following a suggestion by the CASCA Heritage Committee, CASCA will archive its historical papers at the RASC Headquarters in Toronto, ON. The President in particular thanked Randall Rosenfeld for serving as CASCA Archivist.

5. Secretary's Report [Di Francesco]

- *Election 2017:* This year Directors Sarah Gallagher and Stéphane Courteau are rotating off the Board and the Society thanks them for their service. An election is presently taking place for two replacement Directors, and those nominated are René Doyon (Montréal), Luc Simard (NRC), Jeroen Stil (Calgary), and Kim Venn (Victoria). The election results will be announced at the AGM.
- *Memberships:* The CASCA membership numbers are slightly down this year, from 524 to 497. The number of resignations and expulsions (60) were greater than the number of new members this year (33). Twelve members converted from one membership category to another.
- *Deceased Members:* This past year, CASCA lost three members, J. David Lacey, Elmar B. F. Brosterhus, and Romas Mitalas. This loss was noted at the AGM with a minute of silence.
- **Motion to accept the Secretary's Report (Sivakoff/Normandeau): Carried**

6. Treasurer's Report [Wilson, on behalf of St-Louis]

- *Society Finances:* CASCA is doing very well financially. The operating balance is very high at \$74K and more than the projected \$39K due in part to \$15K contributed for the new Richer Medal. Dues of \$62K were higher than the \$52K expected, in part because ACURA contribution was not requested this year but also \$2K for the CUPC was not cashed. Our investments gained 10.8% this year, up a lot from the 4% decrease last year. This increase translates to \$27.6K in income, offset by \$8.71K in management fees. A total of \$15K was withdrawn from investments last year for Discover the Universe (DU) activities; next year will be our last contribution to DU (\$20K). A total of \$12K per year has been allocated to the WESTAR Lectureship program.
- *Dues:* Based on the Bank of Canada's inflation rate of 1.64% for last year, the membership dues will increase slightly this year. Dues for next year will be set during the upcoming membership renewal drive to:
 - Ordinary: \$160
 - Student/retired: \$65
 - Postdoc/Associate: \$117
 - Joint CAP+CASCA: \$112

After October 31, 2017 the dues will increase over those posted above by 25%.

- *CASCATrust:* Members generously donated \$1279 to CASCATrust over the past year. These funds continue to be used for student/PDF travel to the annual meeting, the Plaskett Medal award and travel to the annual meeting, and prizes for best student presentations at the annual meeting.
- *Projections:* With \$74K at the start of the FY, projected income of \$105K is expected from dues payments, donations, and WESTAR funds. A total of \$131K of expenses is also expected, including the \$15K transfer of funds donated for the Richer Medals and \$40K for our DU contribution. The expected balance at the end of the FY is \$48K.
- *CASCA Prizes:* St-Louis has performed an analysis of the various investments by CASCA and found that all prizes are fully endowed.

- *Further information:* Please see the detailed Treasurer's Report posted on the CASCA website.
- *Members' Queries:* A member asked if CASCA has an "ethical" investment policy. Wilson responded that CASCA has no such policy at the moment and was advised against it by our funds manager given our investment profile. It may be worth a relook at this policy in the near future. A member inquired about the nature of the expenses made by the President to Ottawa, and these were explained. The President only claimed half of the four trips he made to Ottawa on behalf of the Society. A member asked if our investment performance was considered to be too low. Wilson responded that Scotia-Macleod is now directly in charge of our investments and operates within a fairly conservative profile given our obligation to retain the capital of our endowments. This direction leads to relative underperformance in the market despite the recent marked gains. CASCA had an Investment Committee in recent years but it was disbanded since its advice conflicted with the ability of our funds manager to operate within CASCA's conservative investment profile.
- **Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report (Wilson/Spencer): Carried.**

7. Election of Auditor

- **Motion to reappoint Wilkinson & Sons as the auditor (Wilson/Abraham): Carried.**

8. Committee Reports [Di Francesco, on behalf of Thacker]

- 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.
- *Thanks:* On behalf of the Society, Thacker thanked the Chairs of the Education and Public Outreach (Mike Reid) and the Ground-based Astronomy (Craig Heinke) committees, and the Joint Committee for Space Astronomy (Marcin Sawicki) for their service.
- *Awards:* The Committee included the inaugural Richer Medal into their deliberations this year. The load on that Committee is notably growing.
- *Equity & Inclusivity:* The Equity & Inclusivity Community is developing a "climate survey," to gauge the levels of sexism, harassment, etc. in the community. In addition, it is preparing a set of guidelines to departments on equitable faculty hiring practices.
- *Computing:* The issue with NRC being involved with proposals to Compute Canada appears to have been solved, and a Letter of Intent for CANFAR funding was recently accepted.

9. Selection of Scrutineers

- Christa van Laerhoven (Washington) and Pauline Barmby (Western) kindly volunteered to serve as scrutineers to oversee the results of the 2017 CASCA election.

10. Results of the Elections

- For the positions of Directors of the CASCA Board, **René Doyon** (Montreal) and **Kim Venn** (Victoria) are elected.
- The Board looks forward to working with its new members, and thanks the Directors rotating off the Board this year (Stéphane Courteau and Sarah Gallagher) for their service.

11. Future CASCA Meetings

- CASCA 2018 will be held in Victoria, BC in 22-26 May 2018. It will be a special four-day meeting to celebrate 100 years of Canadian astrophysics. David Bohlender (NRC) addressed the AGM to encourage everyone to attend.

12. Other Business

- *EPO Activities*: Julie Bolduc-Duval (DU) and Phil Langill (Calgary) provided a short summary of Education and Public Outreach (EPO) activities done by the Society over the past year. Members engaging the public are reminded to fill out the EPO reporting form on the CASCA website.
- *E-Cassiopeia*: Magdalen Normandeau (New Brunswick) presented the results of her recent survey of the membership about the utility of the quarterly newsletter. About 125 members responded to the invitation to take the survey. A summary will also appear in the June issue of e-Cassiopeia. The Board will consider the results of the survey to help guide the future of the newsletter.

13. Adjournment

- **Motion to adjourn the AGM (Abraham/Rosolowsky): Carried.**