

Canadian Astronomical Society Société Canadienne d'Astronomie

Meeting of the Board of Directors via videoconference

Minutes for April 8, 2020

Present:

Rob Thacker (President/Chair)
Sara Ellison (Vice President)
Judith Irwin (Secretary)
Lewis Knee (Treasurer)
Suresh Sivanandam (Director)
Ivana Damjanov (Director)
Etienne Artigau (Director)
René Doyon (Director)
Bob Abraham (Past President)

Absent:

1. Adoption of Agenda

Passed.

2. Approval of Minutes from last board meeting

Moved by René and seconded by Etienne, minutes were passed.

3. Coalition Update

This is a quiet period for the TMT since internal Hawaii discussions are now taking place.

SKA is pushing ahead with the expectation the the signing of treaties is coming up. There will be significant pressure on us to go back to Parliament Hill garner support for our participation in SKA.

A serious concern, however, is the effect of COVID-19 and what it will mean for future projects. Timing will be very important, but if there is a government stimulus package which includes more than just health-care-related science, then we should be ready for that.

There is a lot of uncertainty right now. Other countries, of course, are also feeling stressed for the same reason. It is unlikely that we will meet with anyone on Parliament Hill over the summer. But we need to be ready for the fall.

4. LRP

There already exists over one hundred pages in the LRP report but prioritization is still an issue and needs to be worked out. The US Decadal plan *could* influence our LRP, but we are actually ahead of them in terms of readiness. There could be advantages in waiting, but there are also advantages in staying the course.

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Several LRP telecons have gone ahead recently and there will be two more next week. Already discussed in some depth was infrastructure, e.g. computing. This also relates to SKA because we want to push ahead with setting up a regional data center. The second was on recommendations as to what the community really needs. These have been good productive discussions. The LRP is meant to be discussed at the CASCA meeting at the end of May.

5. ACURA AACS

In the past, we have had difficulty finding a chair for the AACS (ACURA Advisory Council on the SKA). To alleviate this problem, Rob Thacker will now step in as chair and act as a conduit to the various committees, relating the information back to ACURA. We expect that there will be an ACURA meeting at the end of May, so the AACS plans to have several video conferences in advance to ensure that the ACURA board accesses clear information as to what is needed by the Canadian community and is fully in the loop about SKA. A 4-5 page report should be prepared. Canada's role still needs to be worked out, but a correlator will likely be part of it, involving MDA.

6. Online AGM Progress

The online organization committee for CASCA has met. After much discussion, the dates of an online CASCA were kept the same as the dates for the original face-to-face meeting which has now been cancelled because of the COVID pandemic.

Given time differences in various parts of the country, the meeting would have to be scaled down to about 4 hours each day. Prize lectures will have to be pre-recorded. Standard parallel sessions will not be possible. However, various 'meetings' of people who share similar interests can go ahead by zoom, community updates, etc. Hosting *webinars* by zoom costs \$140/month and we would want 2 months so that extensive testing can be carried out in advance.

There was some discussion about presenting i-posters because of the cost. The benefit is that posters can be 'presented' which have, for example, embedded videos, so an individual can describe his/her poster as it is being viewed by others.

There was some discussion about charging a conference fee. It was decided that a cap of \$50 should be placed on a conference fee so as not to put too much of a barrier on potential participants. CASCA would cover the remainder, if necessary.

The AGM will have to be electronic as well, but just how this will go ahead is yet to be decided.

7. AOB

Update on nominations: The nominating committee has returned with the following names of people who have agreed to be considered for CASCA positions:

Directors:

Julie Hlavacek-Larrondo (U. de Montréal)

Howard Yee (U. of Toronto)

Two directors are needed so these individuals will be on the Board by acclamation.

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Vice President:

Erik Rosolowsky (U. of Alberta)

Samar Safi-Harb (U. of Manitoba)

Only one VP is needed so there will be an election for this position. This will be done on-line.

8. Adjourn

The next casca board meeting should be Monday, May 25.