

# Canadian Astronomical Society Société Canadienne d'Astronomie

## Meeting of the Board of Directors via videoconference

Minutes for June 15, 2020

**Present:**

Sara Ellison (President)  
Samar Safi-Harb (Vice President)  
Judith Irwin (Secretary)  
Lewis Knee (Treasurer)  
Laura Parker (Director)  
Etienne Artigau (Director)  
Julie Hlavacek-Larrondo (Director)  
Rob Thacker (Past President)

**Absent:** Ivana Damjanov (Director)

### 1. Adoption of Agenda

Passed by consensus.

### 2. Approval of Minutes from previous board meeting and the AGM Business Meeting

Acceptance of minutes of May board meeting. Moved by Lewis Knee and Seconded by Samar Safi-Harb. Passed.

Acceptance of minutes of AGM Business meeting. Moved by Laura Parker and Seconded by Juli Hlavacek-Larrondo. Passed. These minutes will be posted as a draft onto the CASCA website until passed by the general membership at the AGM next year.

### 3. President's Update

A warm welcome to Julie Hlavacek-Larrondo and Laura Parker, our two newly elected Directors. A warm welcome also to Samar Safi-Harb, our newly elected Vice President.

A) We need two new Board reps, one for the EIC committee, and one for the EPO Committee, to replace our outgoing Directors, Rene and Suresh.

Etienne volunteers for the EIC committee.  
Laura volunteers for the EPO committee.

B) Call for conference support: Deadline, application template, eligibility, CoC etc.

The requests for conference support have increased lately and it has become necessary to develop some guidelines so that we support meetings in a fiscally responsible way. The Board discussed how this might be done most efficiently and with a view to ensuring that our own goals and mission statement are adhered to.

It was decided that we could allocate a set amount of conference support and have an annual call for applications. The call would normally go out in May with a deadline on October 1, although this year the call will be later. We expect that about \$4K should be available this year. There will be one call for the first year, after which we will revisit this decision, should there be a need for a change to two calls per year. In the first year, it is possible that there could be more support on a discretionary basis at a later time if there are funds left. Priority will be given to Physics and Astronomy conferences supporting both undergraduate and graduate student participation.

Both undergraduate and graduate conferences could be supported. A CASCA member must be involved, either as a participant in the organization or as an optional 'sponsor'. Applicants will need to include and adhere to a 'code of conduct' (CASCA's version could be used) and should include a budget. We will re-address this issue in a year, should there be need for changes.

Rob will make up a draft 'call for proposals' to be reviewed by the Board.

C) EIC's request to endorse Indigenous astronomy course.

The request to endorse and Indigenous astronomy course was discussed.

The Board was happy to endorse this course, though the President would speak to the Chair of the EIC to offer some supportive feedback. For example, the format could be revisited so that more CASCA members could be involved. There are also 'training' as opposed to 'educational' aspects that could be focussed upon, since CASCA has not traditionally been involved with educational courses.

#### 4. Vice President's Update

The next AGM is to be hosted by DRAO Penticton. The presentation that was given by Roland Kothes at the end of the 2020 May AGM has been posted on the internal 'igloo' site.

An outstanding question is whether the meeting will be in person or online. Presently, it is intended to be in-person with expanded full science sessions as has been done in the past. However, technology should also be in place to allow online participation as well. Therefore, a hybrid meeting is recommended. [Editor's update: Roland was informed of this immediately after the Board meeting.]

An 'exit survey' was conducted at the end of the 2020 May AGM which will help to guide decisions about the online component. Rob will collate those responses.

Regarding an LRPIC-related email from John Hutchings who has indicated that the VP and the President are intended to be observers on this committee. The VP is checking on membership issues in the event that the President is meant to be a member rather than an observer.

[ADDENDUM] A follow-up board meeting was held on July 7, 2020, together with representatives of the Penticton Local Organizing Committee, Roland Kothes and Tim Robishaw. Dennis Crabtree was also present. After a further assessment of the evolving situation, we have now committed to a fully virtual meeting for 2021.

## 5. Secretary's Update

The IAU has accepted the names of all Junior Members and Regular Members that were nominated by the CASCA board with one exception. The exception might not have filled out the appropriate web-based form when requested. In total, there are now 2 new Canadian IAU regular members and 4 new Canadian IAU junior members.

## 6. Treasurer's Update

Lewis Knee gave a Treasurer's report and indicated that CASCA was financially in good shape. AGM expenses were lower this year than they normally are. A minor error related to the funds in CASCA-Trust had been made in the report that was given to the CASCA membership at the AGM Business Meeting. The error affected only a small redistribution of funds on the spreadsheet and does not affect the bottom line or any of the line items. This will be reported on at the next AGM Business meeting next year, but there is no need to re-vote.

Regarding awards, this is the first year that we've 'inflated' the values of the awards.

Our investment advisor has informed us that the market value of our portfolio is only 10% down from its value as of Dec. 31, 2019. Thus, there has been something of a rebound in the markets. They had previously bottomed out at 16% down due to COVID-19. Dividends, however, are remarkably stable, year to year, as they are this year as well.

We continue to shuffle funds, as needed, to take best advantage of the market, but in general, CASCA is a prudent investor.

The Treasurer has several issues that he is working on and will bring to the Board in due course:

- ethical investing: This is now called 'Environmental Social Governance'. Information has already been received about this.

- annual audit: This will occur later this month.

- extra websites: There are two EPO websites that cost us about \$37/year and they have not been used for anything. For now, these should remain. For example, if the proposal by Natalie Ouelette is successful, they might use this site.

## 7. Any Other Business

No other business. The summer schedule will be left open and Board meetings called if and when needed.

## 8. Adjournment

Moved by Samar Safi-Harb and Seconded by Lewis Knee. Passed.