

# Canadian Astronomical Society Société Canadienne d'Astronomie

## Meeting of the Board of Directors via videoconference

Minutes for Mar. 22, 2021

**Present:**

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

**Absent:** Regrets from Nicole St-Louis (Director)

**Also present:** Kim Venn

### 1. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Laura and seconded by Ivana. Passed

### 2. Approval of minutes of the Feb. Board meeting

Moved by Samar and seconded by Laura. Passed.

### 3. ACURA communications team [Kim Venn]

Kim Venn (Professor, UVIC) has been on the ACURA Board for about 5 years and has been on the TMT Board for the last 3 years. She is now leading the 'TMT-Canada Strategic Communications Planning' team.

ACURA recognizes that there has been very little communication on the Thirty Metre Telescope (TMT) project within the Canadian astronomy community. Don Brooks, Executive Director of ACURA, has agreed to hire professional people to help improve communications. The result is the hiring of Jim Rutkowski and David Bieber, both of which have over 25 years of political and communications experience.

ACURA is pursuing a messaging narrative that states our values and position. CASCA also intends to play a supporting role in this process and in conversations going forward in Hawaii, in a fashion that is consistent with our Long Range Plan (LRP) recommendations. The team is also planning to communicate with and/or advise the LCRIC (LRP Community Recommendation Implementation Committee).

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Towards these goals, we are consulting with our Indigenous colleagues on our ACURA-CASCA-TMT messaging narrative. We will communicate our effort with the CASCA community at the Annual General Meeting.

[Kim Venn left the meeting at this point.]

#### **4. President's Update [Sara]**

##### *Long Range Plan*

The final English e-version of the LRP is ready and could be posted now on the CASCA website. However, the French version is not ready yet. There was a discussion as to whether we should post the English version now along with a message on the CASCA email exploder, indicating that French will come later, or whether we should wait until the French version is ready and do them both together.

The decision was made to wait and post both English and French together along with an email message.

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*Canadian Association of Physicists (CAP) graduate student acceptance deadline*

The CAP is on board to accept the same unified deadline for accepting graduate students as has been adopted by CASCA (Feb. 28). CAP will be sending around the deadline proposal to all Heads of physics departments in Canada.

*Canadian Space Agency (CSA) submission*

The Joint Committee on Space Astronomy (JCSA) has asked Aaron Boley and Samantha Lawler to draft a submission to the CSA (deadline, March 31, 2021) about the impact of constellation satellites. This is not an official JCSA or CASCA document, although something more formal with CASCA could come later.

*Coalition for Canadian Astronomy ('Coalition'):*

Lobbying efforts have been focussing on the SKA. At present, there are no plans for future meetings. Ottawa is busy preparing for a budget and possible elections.

**5. Vice President's update [Samar]**

*Next Ground-Based Astronomy Committee (GAC) Chair*

The current chair, Stefi Baum, will complete her term soon, so a new chair is required. Suggestions from the Board are requested.

*JCSA Terms of Reference (ToR) (for vote)*

Samar circulated in advance, by email, the updated ToR prior to this Board meeting. Adjustments from the previous version are:

1. More active involvement by the CASCA Board regarding membership.
2. Clarification on 'ex-officio' members and 'observers'
3. The Coalition for Canadian Astronomy – The CSA cannot have a formal lobby group associated with them.

Moved by Sara that the amended ToR be accepted. Seconded by Ivana. Passed.

Membership is moving forward. New members are currently being approached/added.

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### *Postdoc (PDF) and Sustainability Committees*

Both of these Committees are currently ad hoc committees that now want to transfer to standing committee status. Note that the ToR for the PDF Committee has not yet been voted on by the Board.

An ad hoc committee has short term goals that may have been met, or is a pilot project. In order to become a standing committee, we need to understand, not necessarily what they have achieved, but what they are hoping to do, going forward. A report is required that indicates why the community needs these two committees as standing committees, and how they might interface with the LCRIC (LRP Community Recommendation Implementation Committee). The report should be submitted with the regular reports of committees to be discussed and voted on at the May Board meeting.

### *Annual General Meeting Update*

There have been 149 abstracts submission for oral presentation, from which approximately 40 can be picked! The small number of slots available for orals is mainly because the virtual meeting has shorter days due to the different time zones, and also because there are many town halls, community sessions and invited speakers. Recall that last year there were only posters.

Oral presentations should be announced by April 1. The SOC is meeting on April 6, so the aim is to announce oral presentations by April 9. The poster deadline is April 9.

### *Next Year's AGM*

The proposed dates, so far, are May 16 -20, 2022, in Waterloo. This date must yet be confirmed pending checks to ensure that there are no conflicts, e.g. with other meetings. The plan, at this point, is to have a hybrid in-person/virtual meeting. Note that the CAP's meeting is scheduled to be June 6 - 10, 2022, and the AAS is scheduled for June 12 - 16, 2022.

### *Membership in the LCRIC*

Membership in the LCRIC has been finalized. Chris Wilson is the chair, Brenda Matthews is the LRP panel representative, Etienne Artigau is the CASCA Board representative, and other members are Shantanu Basu, Mike Reid, and Sharon Morsink.

## **6. Proposed bylaw change on undergraduate membership (wording for AGM vote)** **[Rob]**

Rob has thoroughly gone through the CASCA bylaws to see what changes would be required if we allow undergraduates to become members in CASCA. The only change would be to bylaw 2.1.4 which describes student members. This section needs to be divided into part a) and part b), where part a) would deal with graduate students and part b) would now include an additional clause for undergraduates.

A formal motion has not yet been prepared but it will be by the AGM for a vote. The idea is to admit undergraduates if they are currently involved in astronomical research. This would typically mean that they are either carrying out 4th year thesis projects or are summer students engaged in

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astronomical research.

**7. Lapsed membership [Judith]**

Thanks to everyone who helped to contact people who are 2 years in arrears in their dues payments. There were 76 people on this list.

As a result of our efforts, 17 people have now paid and are members in good standing, and ten have resigned. One is deceased. The remainder have not responded, so will lose their membership in CASCA due to lapsed payments. A final reminder will be sent to all of these people.

A reminder notice will also soon be sent to people who have not yet paid their 2020-21 dues.

**8. Any other Business/Adjourn**

No other business. Moved by Laura and seconded by Etienne, to adjourn. Passed.