

CASCA 51th Annual General Meeting
May 27, 2020, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. EDT
ONLINE Business Meeting
Minutes

Notes:

“Poll: xx% yes or no” means that an online poll was carried out with the results indicated by the percentage value. Only the majority vote is recorded in these minutes. Any item that is moved and seconded will be recorded as [name of mover/name of seconder].
At 12:40 p.m. EDT, 134 participants were online at this meeting.

1) Adoption of agenda [Thacker]

Thacker reminds everyone that only members in good standing may vote.
[Thacker/no seconder] that the agenda be adopted. Poll: 100% yes.

2) Special Resolution to amend Bylaw 4.7 [Thacker]

From:

“Meetings of members may not be held entirely by telephonic, an electronic or other communication facility.”

To:

“Meetings of members may only be held entirely by electronic means when exceptional circumstances, such as travel restrictions or limitations on gatherings, prevent an in-person gathering.”

[Thacker/Irwin] Poll: 97% yes

3) Adoption of minutes of Previous meetings [Irwin]

a) Minutes of the 2018 AGM held in Victoria BC

<https://casca.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/DraftMinutes-2018AGM.pdf>

[Irwin/Di Francesco] Poll: 86% yes

b) Minutes of the 2019 AGM held in Montreal, PQ

<https://casca.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/DraftMinutes-2019AGM.pdf>

[Irwin/Lovekin] Poll: 84% yes

4) Nominations to the Nominating Committee [Thacker]

Nominated by Lewis Knee: Stéphanie Coté and Renée Hložek

There were no other nominations, so these two win by acclamation.

5) President’s Report [Thacker]

Some thoughts from the outgoing president:

- Our bylaws forbid having undergraduates as a class of member, but we encourage participation from undergraduates. The AAS also has an undergraduate class, so maybe it is time to modify our bylaws in this regard. Having a supportive supervisor would help. Perhaps the Board could look into this.
- The requirement that all members of the Board be professional astronomers may be limiting us. Experience being on other boards has shown that it can be very enriching to see other perspectives. For example, a lawyer, or other input. Again, this is a bylaw issue.

- Is there some way of increasing our funding level? It would be very useful to be able to afford a full time press officer, for example. Other charities, such as the RASC, raise funds very effectively. An example is to pay a staff member according to how much money he/she has raised. This is something we should think about.
- Because CASCA is a corporation, all decisions are made by the Board. This is different from, for example, a university that operates according to “Collegial governance”. If we wish to expand the capacity of CASCA, we may wish to change this.
- How can we effectively make changes in CASCA? The LRP is a plan for the ‘community’ but it’s not a plan for the ‘society’. CASCA needs a strategic plan. Having goals and a clear direction would help us make decisions.
- COVID-19 has made recent times very stressful. It has also meant that the Coalition has not been very active. Yet we need visibility for the LRP, especially SKA at this time.
- Many thanks to the people who have been so active and helpful throughout. The exoplanet competition went extremely well, [astronomy@home](#) and many other initiatives. Thanks to those who are leaving the Board at this time, and thank you to the York LOC and online organizers.

Discussion from the floor: Any bylaw changes should be considered actively and soon so as not to wait for the Business meeting next year. Perhaps ECRs (Early Career Researchers) should be on the Board.

6) Secretary’s Report [Irwin]

Both the Secretary’s and Treasurer’s reports were circulated yesterday on the CASCA exploder. Both reports will be posted on the CASCA website in their entirety. Please see those reports for details.

Many thanks to our administrator, Jessica Marsano, for her compilation of the membership statistics.

In brief summary, our membership has been quite stable for a number of years. There is some issue with members who are falling behind in paying their dues on time. The secretary would like to remedy this issue over the next year.

Motion to accept the Secretary’s report [Hani/Sivakoff] Poll: 98% yes

7) Treasurer’s Report [Knee]

Again, see the full report at the CASCA website. CASCA’s finances are, over all, healthy.

Motion to accept the Treasurer’s report [Sivakoff/Crabtree] Poll: 97% yes.

Discussion from the floor: Some concern was expressed about the costs of paypal (3%). Some question regarding whether CASCA has considered ethical investments. The Board might think about reviewing these investments. The draft LRP has an entry regarding ethical investments on page 91.

8) Motion to reappoint CASCA Auditor [Knee]

Current auditor is Wilkinson & Company LLC, 785 Midpark Drive, Suite 201, Kingston ON, K7M 7G3

[Knee/Hani] Poll: 89% yes.

9) Committee Reports [Ellison]

All committee reports will be posted on casca website by the end of the week. In brief, CASCA has a new ad hoc committee, the 'Sustainability Committee', for one year. This was in response to one of the LRP white papers. This committee turned out to be quite timely because of our immediate necessity of running the York meeting online.

10) Motion to waive annual fees for members of the Graduate Student's Committee so as to encourage broadest possible participation and engagement [Hani]

Some background from Maan Hani (outgoing chair of the GSC): Some student are not CASCA members because of the fees. This is hard on a certain demographic of graduate students.

Discussion: GSC members should be aware that NSERC grants can be used to pay CASCA fees. Actually the wording is somewhat vague but NSERC does not seem to be complaining. Some supervisors do pay the fees for their students but not all. This may not be the best way; perhaps universities or departments could contribute. However, this could be an organizational mess. We should be encouraging supervisors to pay their students' fees. Supervisors do pay for their students to attend the AGM. Rather than have the GSC participation ebb and flow over the years, this might help stabilize the GSC. Removing this barrier could be helpful. There are often other sources of funds for students at universities. The fiscal impact on CASCA is not that great.

[Hani/Chen] Poll: 68% yes. Passed.

11) Announcement of Results of Elections [Irwin]

We are please to announce that the next two Directors will be:

Julie Hlavacek-Larrondo and Laura Parker

The next Vice President will be:

Samar Safi-Harb

James Di Francesco (our scrutineer) verifies these results.

12) Future CASCA Meetings

Our next meeting (2021) will be in Penticton, B.C., hosted by DRAO in collaboration with UBC – Hopefully in person. Dates are Monday, May 10 (opening reception and Graduate Student workshop) to Thursday, May 13.

13) Other Business

From Bill Harris, re the IAU: For the past few years, he's been on the IAU membership committee. There is a new category called Junior Membership if you are within about 5 years of obtaining your PhD, e.g. postdocs or brand new faculty members. Also applications can be dealt with every year rather than every 3 years as has been done in the past. Canadians have not taken advantage of the IAU as well as they could. Let's take advantage of this new category.

Discussion: NRC pays for IAU dues and they check to see if we make good use of this connection. It's possible that they will stop if we don't make use of it.

From Harvey Richer: Dates for CASCA 2022 are important because the TMT science meeting was meant to be in 2021 in Vancouver, but now it will be in 2022. It's important to know the dates for the purposes of planning.

14) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. [Ellison/Thacker] Poll: 99% yes.