

**Treasurer's Report**  
**Canadian Astronomical Society – Société Canadienne d'astronomie**  
**101<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting**  
**15 June 2020**  
**Online**

**General Overview**

CASCA's finances remain in good shape. As of 14 June 2020 our bank balance was \$42.3K (it started out the fiscal year at \$51.7K), plus roughly \$500 in the PayPal account. Income in the form of (late) membership renewals continued to flow in before the AGM, and AGM-related expenses were much lower than usual due to the meeting being online, thus saving substantial amounts on reimbursement of travel. The Westar program has also been dormant due to the pandemic. The market value of our investments are down by roughly 10% since the beginning of 2020, but they have recovered by about 7% from its nadir early this year. Income from the investments continues to hold up at about \$28K expected over the next 12 months.

**AGM Report**

The Treasurer's Report to the CASCA membership was delivered and approved at the AGM on 27 May 2020. Subsequent to the approval, it was discovered there was a small inaccuracy in the endowment amounts listed from CASCA Trust, stemming from an error in accounting for the increase in the endowment funds contributed by Peter Martin last year. This error has been corrected, and the corrections can be seen in the table below (these corrections have been communicated to Prof. Martin).

|                                  | <b>Beals</b> | <b>Dunlap</b> | <b>Executive</b> | <b>Hogg</b> | <b>Martin</b> | <b>Petrie</b> | <b>Plaskett</b> | <b>Richer</b> | <b>Westar</b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Endowment year</b>            | 2009         | 2015          | 2013             | 2013        | 2009          | 2009          | 2013            | 2017          | 2002          |
| <b>Capital invested</b>          | \$24.7K      | \$30.0K       | \$13.4K          | \$12.1K     | \$26.0K       | \$22.2K       | \$24.0K         | \$15.0K       | \$325.0K      |
| <b>Current value (incorrect)</b> | \$39.3K      | \$33.7K       | \$18.9K          | \$19.2K     | \$37.4K       | \$35.2K       | \$30.0K         | \$16.5K       | \$551.9K      |
| <b>Current value (correct)</b>   | \$39.3K      | \$33.7K       | \$20.3K          | \$19.2K     | \$39.8K       | \$35.2K       | \$30.0K         | \$16.5K       | \$551.8K      |

**Awards**

As authorized by the Board last year, CASCA Award amounts are now being indexed periodically - every four years award values are inflated by the cumulative consumer price index change

over the previous four years. This year awards were increased by 5.77%, rounding to the nearest \$5. The award winners are in the table below, and this information has been sent to the Awards Committee to initiate certificate and award delivery with the help of the CASCA Administrator. Expenditures on CASCA Awards for 2020 will be \$5.9K.

| Winner               | Affiliation | Award                          | Value  |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| Ms. Jessica Campbell | UofT/Dunlap | Best poster (GSC, tied)        | \$210  |
| Ms. Deborah Lokhorst | UofT/Dunlap | Best poster (GSC, tied)        | \$210  |
| Ms. Raelyn Sullivan  | UBC         | Best poster (Board)            | \$210  |
| Ms. Heidi White      | UofT/Dunlap | Best poster (Board, runner-up) | \$105  |
| Ms. Jessica Campbell | UofT/Dunlap | Best poster (Board, runner-up) | \$105  |
| Prof. Michael Balogh | Waterloo    | Executive                      | \$1060 |
| Dr. Simon Blouin     | LANL (USA)  | Plaskett                       | \$795  |
| Prof. Rene Doyon     | Montreal    | Dunlap                         | \$1585 |
| Prof. Howard Yee     | UofT        | Beals                          | \$1585 |

## Report on Investments

CASCA's investments are managed by Scott Miller, a professional investment manager at ScotiaMcLeod in Kingston, Ontario. I had a teleconference with the investment manager on 9 June 2020. The market value of the portfolio on 1 June 2020 was \$794.1K. This is 10.1% down from 31 December 2019 when market value was \$883.7K. The steep declines suffered during the early stages of the 2020 pandemic led to the market value bottoming out at \$739.9K, 16.3% below the end-of-2019 value. Since then there has been a rebound, and our portfolio value is currently up 7.3% from this year's nadir. This bounce has been lead by stock prices, which are a leading indicator of drops and recovery in the economy. Also contributing to the rebound is the infusion of large amounts of liquidity by central banks and governments. This is highly likely to result in a fiscal overhang in the future which will likely lead to lower growth rates and/or higher taxation (or governments will attempt to lower debt-to-GDP ratios through higher inflation). Consumer debt is relatively high in Canada and the risk of interest rate rises might depress consumer spending.

Although investment capital market value is volatile (particularly now) CASCA's dividend income has been very stable over the past five years. Dividend income rates for most securities are very stable in time, with most corporations and funds maintaining dividend rates over many years or even decades. A recent exception is that a few companies with large holdings in the fossil-fuel industry have cut dividends this year due to the downturn in their business. We are keeping an

eye on this and will move investment away from those sectors if income levels contain to perform worse than average. The current projection for our dividend income for the 12 months beginning 1 June 2020 is \$28.4K. The total market value of our cash and cash equivalents on-hand is \$59.5K, which should be more than enough to cover our CASCA Trust and Westar Trust related expenditures. A decision to withdraw funds from the portfolio to fund these activities will not be made until they are needed (I am expecting the need will be less than originally forecast). In concert with the investment advisor, I intend to continue to make some minor shuffle in our portfolio in order to permit a modestly larger ability to actively manage our funds to ensure we are get best value from our investments.

### **Ongoing and Upcoming Activities**

Following up on an inquiry from the AGM concerning ethical investing, I have received some information on ESG (Environmental-Social-Governance) investing from ScotiaMcLeod and will be reviewing it.

The membership approved the re-appointment of Wilkinson as our auditors, and the audit and tax return effort will begin later this month.

An inquiry has been sent to the EPO Committee and to DU concerning whether CASCA should continue to pay for the two unused EPO web sites. Awaiting a response.

Lewis B.G. Knee  
12<sup>th</sup> CASCA Treasurer