

Canadian Astronomical Society
Société Canadienne d'Astronomie

Meeting of the Board of Directors via videoconference

Minutes for Tuesday 7th March 2023, 11:30-12:40 EST

Present:

Chris Wilson (Acting President)
Adam Muzzin (Vice President)
Laura Parker (Director)
Karun Thanjavur (Director)
Julie Hlavacek-Larrondo (Director)
Lewis Knee (Treasurer)
Rob Cockcroft (Secretary)

Regrets: Rob Thacker (Past President), Renée Hložek (Director)

1. Adoption of agenda
 - a. Items 3 and 4 switched to order below
 - b. Moved by Laura; seconded by Karun; adopted
2. Approval of minutes from January meeting
 - a. Moved by Lewis; seconded by Adam; approved
3. Review CASCA Board functions
 - a. Ivana Damjanov (past CASCA Board director; current EIC chair) joined the call to discuss the situation that culminated in the resignation of two female executives in 2021 – first forwarded to the Board in September 2022
 - b. The EIC is requesting to initiate an external review of CASCA governance, have a professional with HR experience to help handle some of these situations in the future, and seek clarification on how the EIC can proceed.
 - c. Discussion:
 - i. Board member knowledge of the events of 2021 should not be disclosed to the EIC for confidentiality reasons.
 - ii. Request for external review was from few members of community, not from a broad ask, but possibly because there was a sense of unease from the general membership and concern for young- and mid-career women.
 - iii. Because CASCA has grown, the current governance model should be reconsidered. The Board has limited person power (e.g., action item list grows faster than items can be completed). The CASCA President is also the CEO and chairs the Board but these roles are separated in other Boards. For CASCA, it is therefore more precarious to lose the President especially when you also lose your VP.
 - iv. If an external review is to proceed, we should wait until after the next AGM, when we have an elected President, and we are clear on what the Board and the EIC want from such an external review.
 - v. Clarification that the review would not be a review of the 2021 situation but a review of Board functioning and communication policies with committees (including terms of reference, confidentiality, code of

conduct, structures, document archiving, procedures). The Board and EIC agree on this point.

- vi. The code of conduct could be expanded to beyond just for meetings. For example, having HR does not seem warranted given that CASCA has a small number of part-time staff; complaints would be from one member to another.
- vii. Laura is currently reviewing CASCA bylaws (started after January meeting and **action item** for Rob will be to put this on the agenda for the next meeting). The Board should compare them to those of the AUI, TRIUMF, PIMS, AAS, and CAP. TRIUMF and PIMS have undergone a review because of their growth; Stephie Baum a possible contact.
- viii. Cost and timeline of an external review should be considered.

d. **Action item**: Chris will make a statement (not a written report) to the general membership at the AGM to say that we are working on this situation and we have been intentional that a review, if one goes ahead, will not happen until after the AGM.

e. Ivana Damjanov leaves the call

4. Discussion on the proposed Westar / National Outreach Coordinator (NOC) position

- a. The Westar subcommittee and EPO committee together suggested various options for a Westar coordinator and/or national outreach coordinator.
- b. Funding for a pilot program would come from unspent funds from the Westar program (that were unused to the amount of ~\$10,000/year for three years because of COVID), while still leaving the “normal” operating budget of ~\$10,000/year for actual visits
- c. Pilot is unsustainable; but could help leverage support for more funding
- d. Doing it is a risk; not doing it is a bigger risk – we want to be supportive
- e. The position should include fundraising
- f. NOC is unfeasible without increase in dues or cost-sharing program with individual universities and although the Board wishes to support the creation of an NOC, it is not possible with our current budget
- g. The Westar committee/coordinator could liaise with Indigenous Education Committee (yet to be formed)
- h. Motion: We support a pilot outreach Westar coordinator at part time level for up to 3 years with financials to be approved in the next Board meeting. Moved by Rob C.; seconded by Karun; approved.

5. President's report

- a. 2024 location for AGM - is York interested? Micheal de Robertis (who lead the efforts in 2021) has retired. **Action item**: Adam will ask Michael/York.
- b. **Action item**: Chris to discuss nominations with Rob Thacker.
- c. Update on OIR committee
 - i. Julie Hlavacek-Larrondo, Michael Balogh, Sarah Gallagher, Pauline Barmby, Adam Muzzin met to come up with a long list of candidates.
 - ii. The OIR will happen before the midterm review and will take a lot of work.
 - iii. Three specific names suggested to chair the OIR review committee
 - iv. Propose a co-chair (this would be up to the OIR chair to decide if and who)

- v. For financial/admin support for chair and/or co-chair (e.g., to buy co-chairs out of teaching), we could approach CSA and/or Luc Simard through NRC. Rob Thacker may also know about this.
 - vi. Order of action items: First identify chair, send message through the CASCA exploder, after that decide the members and terms of reference
 - vii. **Action item:** Chris/Laura will talk to top-ranked candidate
 - viii. **Action item:** Julie will send around the message
- 6. VP's report
 - a. Jeremy Hyle has accepted to be the CASCA rep to ACURA. U of T and McGill already have reps on the Board. They will search for new ACURA executive director
- 7. AOB
 - a. CASCA website
 - i. Has been updated to align with Tri-Agency code of conduct
 - ii. Membership list has been disabled
 - iii. Update to website architecture is needed as current software is almost unsupported. Don has started to think about this and will make suggestions.
 - b. Remove action item for arrears list (and thanks to everyone who helped send out reminders)
- 8. Adjourn
 - a. Moved by Karun; seconded by Laura.