

**Canadian Astronomical Society
Société Canadienne d'Astronomie**

Meeting of the Board of Directors via videoconference

Minutes for Monday 21st August 2023, 15:00-16:00 EDT

Present:

Sarah Gallagher (President)
Chris Wilson (Past President)
Adam Muzzin (Vice President)
Karun Thanjavur (Director)
Maria Drout (Director)
Matt Taylor (Director)
Renée Hložek (Director)
Rob Cockcroft (Secretary)
Lewis Knee (Treasurer)

Regrets:

None

1. Adoption of agenda (noting to move to EDI discussion no later than 3:30pm)
 - a. Moved by Renée; seconded by Karun; adopted.
2. Approval of minutes from July's meeting
 - a. Moved by Karun; seconded by Renée; approved.
3. Comments on *draft* AGM business meeting minutes (to be posted as a draft copy on the CASCA website; to be approved at the 2024 AGM business meeting)?
 - a. No comments
 - b. **Action item: Rob** to post to the website.
4. President's report
 - a. Re: "Community Discussion: Canadian Access to Very Large Optical Telescopes this Decade and Beyond" (hosted by Université de Montréal on 1st September 2023; a 90-minute discussion on the Canadian access to E-ELT given the TMT delay). This caused concerns from CATAC and ACURA, including short notice and moderator being a postdoc for a high-level topic (as TMT has government-level commitments, contracts, and treaties). The discussion will be postponed until later in the fall.
 - b. Re: Submission to UN about TMT. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) oversees a lengthy process that happens behind closed doors. Global Affairs Canada is aware of this situation; CASCA doesn't need to be involved (as we're not signatories on anything); NRC/ACURA are more appropriate (and the ACURA statement has been sent out via the CASCA exploder).
 - i. Whether or not to defer to ACURA in general will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
5. VP's report
 - a. GAC chair candidate has been identified and invited to the position.

- b. Committee membership approvals:
 - i. EPO committee (Viraja Khatu, Daryl Janzen), EIC (Helen Kirk)
 - ii. Moved by Adam; seconded by Sarah; unanimously approved.
- c. Postdoc committee.
 - i. Before Chris was president, a postdoc committee was approved as a standing committee.
 - ii. Postdoc committee is more like GSC in that membership is self-determined; Tyrone Woods was previous postdoc committee chair; Deborah Lokhorst is now chair.
 - iii. Concerns that this committee might incur a large overhead for the Board; however, if the Board can suggest direction to this committee and what the Board would like to see from them, it could be productive. **Action item: Adam** to get in touch with Deborah.
- d. Postdoc award: Can have this *at* the CASCA 2024 meeting, rather than an endowed award. **Action item: Adam/Renée** as LOC can choose to do this.
 - i. There was concern raised that this kind of award risks “making the rich richer” as some postdoc positions are better supported than others.

6. AOB

- a. EIC award procedures
 - i. The EIC request an update on the recommendation for award procedures (some of these are marked as in progress). The recommendations are as follows:
 - 1. Remove requirement for two CASCA members in good standing; replace with anyone
 - 2. Allow self-nomination
 - 3. Anonymize applications for review
 - ii. Discussion:
 - 1. The awards might have stipulated in their original agreements about how they would be evaluated. However, AAS has moved to self-nominations. **Action item: Renée** will look into award agreements.
 - 2. Awards committee feedback should be solicited. **Action item: Renée** will contact the awards committee.
 - 3. Recommendation 3 (anonymization) does not seem feasible.
 - iii. Motion to approve recommendation 1 (anyone can support nomination) and 2 (allow self-nomination) above
 - 1. Moved by Sarah; seconded by Matt; all approved.
- b. EIC ombuds person
 - i. The EIC has a request about a CASCA ombuds that is not currently reflected in our action items spreadsheet. The EIC is going to revise the suggested document. **Action item: Rob** to add EIC request for ombuds to action item list.
 - 1. Concern about whether this comes as a result of an isolated incident. Previously the guidelines were improved following the event; to include transparency etc.
 - 2. Several changes to the bylaws were identified by the Board to make so these should be identified (they were not highlighted

per se by the board in the June meeting). **Action item: Renée** to review Laura's list with the EIC.

3. Motivation needs to be made for complete review/overhaul of the governance, the board requests further information on specific reasons for governance structure review.

4. Regarding the ombuds, there was some scepticism about initiating an ombuds structure without a formal CASCA code of conduct in place. The Board suggested that the EIC come back with a specific implementation plan that is also linked to the development of a CASCA code of conduct (**action item: Renée**)

- a. We don't yet have a CASCA code of conduct; could we adopt something similar to the IAU one (after amending it)?
- b. Do other similar organizations have them (e.g., AAS).
- c. Suggestion: CASCA members could be funded to get training. CASCA would then have a list of people who volunteer as ombuds person. The ombuds person(s) would then provide suggestions for a mediated discussion and potential options.

- c. IAU Code of Conduct modification and CASCA response

- i. We don't yet have a CASCA code of conduct (see notes above)

- d. EIC and Board communications

- i. The Board acknowledges that it needs to review the bylaws (several changes to the bylaws were identified by the Board but this is still a work in progress) and has provided more guidelines for committees. The Board agreed to keep talking on the above issues but apologizes to the EIC for lack of communication. **Action item: Renée** to convey this to the EIC.

- e. Policy for donations (potential donation to Lahaina community organization)?

- i. Prompted by AAS Newsletter
- ii. The Board has never made a contribution for humanitarian reasons (only donations for workshops and conferences); however, there was broad support for making such a donation.
- iii. **Action item: Lewis** needs to check with auditor if this kind of donation is possible, and what amount is permitted. An order of \$1000-\$5000, possibly with matching donations from individual CASCA members.
- iv. **Action item: Karun** will come up with a recommendation for which organization.
- v. **Action item: All board members**: When the above information is obtained from Lewis and Karun, a vote will be held online.

- f. In camera discussion

- i. Approximately 16:00-16:05
- ii. **Action item: Rob** to update the CASCA website.

7. Adjourn

- a. Moved by Sarah; seconded by Lewis