

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

**Meeting of the Board of Directors via videoconference**

Minutes for Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 15:00-16:00 Eastern

– including special meeting on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 15:00-16:00 Eastern (further below)

Present:

Sarah Gallagher (President)  
Adam Muzzin (Vice President)  
Chris Wilson (Past 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
  - a. Moved by Renee; seconded by Maria; adopted.
2. Approval of minutes from February meeting
  - a. Moved by Matt; seconded by Maria; approved.
3. President's report
  - a. Ahead of the meeting, the Board reviewed a draft of the Terms of Reference for the SKA Advisory Committee
    - i. “Coordinate participation among Canadian universities and NRC in the SKAO” seems overreaching for volunteer committee with no power. Should cut this.
    - ii. Items 4.2 and 4.3: Voting of 50% of quorum seems a low bar. Should be 50% of voting members, not just those present in a particular meeting.
    - iii. Vote to approve the terms of reference (pending the above two changes): moved by Renée, seconded by Maria, approved.
  - b. Greg Sivakoff has agreed to serve as Chair
    - i. Vote to approve Greg as chair: motion by Renee, seconded by Maria, approved.
    - ii. ACURA will also vote on this.
  - c. Stefi Baum has agreed to serve as Chair of CATAC for one year
    - i. Vote to approve Stefi as chair: motion by Matt, seconded by Lewis, approved.
4. Action items' update
  - a. CASCA AGM proposed schedule for board approval

- i. Summary of schedule considerations: There were a lot of requests for science sessions and town halls. The poster sessions will provide lots of chance to interact.
    - ii. Not finalized yet – but good first draft. Vote for approve this first draft: motion by Maria, seconded by Lewis; approved.
    - iii. Grad student talks should be scheduled separately (as the Board has to mark these); perhaps we can deputize the student talk marking
  - b. Sharon Morsink joins the meeting (3:20-3:40 pm) to discuss the proposed CASCA Mission and Values Statements
    - i. Mission statement: First paragraph is what CASCA is; second para is what is more traditionally a mission statement. CASCA's mission statement should make it explicitly distinct from other Canadian astronomy groups (e.g., RASC). This version cuts down on previous mission statement.
    - ii. Wordsmithing suggestions made to Sharon by board
    - iii. **Action item:** Sarah will do the wordsmithing in the near term via a Google doc shared with the Board, then LCRIC, and then the Board will vote on this electronically.
  - c. Suggestion for change in process: Given the large number of documents that need to be reviewed in some Board meetings, we should set-up folders that are editable by all to put documents in. Each agenda item referencing a document should link to that document (responsibility of the person adding the agenda item). **Action item:** Rob to create a folder (one for each Board meeting?). Documents should be shared 24 hours+ in advance of meeting (the longer the document, the more notice needs to be provided). UPDATE: action item complete.
- 5. Guidebook for AGMS
  - a. There are currently two documents:
    - i. One older document on the CASCA website, updated by S. Safi-Harb in response to problems arising from 2021 meeting
    - ii. One newer "living" document created by Adam (and others) in a Google document shared with the Board
  - b. Action item: Adam needs to take off the guidebook from the website.
  - c. Action item: Return to these documents after the 2024 AGM. Related: How should SOC be composed? Traditionally, it has been local. If we want to change it, we need to discuss best practices and possibly change the policy.
- 6. VP's report
  - a. All committees have members and are doing their work (as detailed above and below)
- 7. AOB
  - a. Discussion of EIC request to fund demographic survey ([proposal from EIC](#))
    - i. Hiring Dr Lindsay Belyea (PhD in physics education)
    - ii. Ready to go for General Research Ethics Board approval
    - iii. Timeline: so that the survey can be released at the CASCA AGM
    - iv. Lewis says the Board can cover \$6600 for this process. It's expensive, but it is planned to repeat the survey over several years (every 3-5 years). We also need to have someone who is independent and who is a professional/expert in the field do it.

- v. Board should see the survey questions, as we need to approve first
  - vi. Motion: Approve the funds for survey to go ahead, contingent on Board reviewing the questions (before next Board meeting)
    - 1. Moved by Maria, seconded by Karun, approved.
  - vii. **Action item:** Renee to communicate with Ivana
  - b. Summary of virtual AGM report from the Sustainability Committee, and request for Board feedback
    - i. Need a special Board meeting just for this – likely next week. **Action item:** Karun to arrange.
    - ii. Did consider 1 in 3 idea but discarded it.
    - iii. Need to send out report to the CASCA community well ahead of the AGM.
    - iv. GSC chose to recuse themselves from the report because of internal-to-GSC different opinions
    - v.
  - c. Upcoming Board positions (VP)
    - i. 60 days notice in advance of AGM to CASCA membership for board positions needed – which means CASCA exploder message no later than April 5th
    - ii. **Action item:** Chris, Sarah, and Rob
    - iii. There are two candidates will to stand for VP
    - iv. VP position will be a two-year position at the moment (but might change to president after one year)
8. Adjourn
- a. Moved by Renee; seconded by Adam; approved.

Next meeting: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 3-4 pm Eastern

Action item log

#	Assigned	Working with	Description	Updates
175	Sarah		Sarah will do the wordsmithing on the CASCA Mission and Values Statements in the near term via a Google doc shared with the Board, then LCRIC, and then the Board will vote on this electronically	
176	Rob		Rob to create a folder - one for each Board meeting – for all documents relevant to that particular Board meeting	Complete
177	Renée		Renée to communicate with Ivana that the “Motion: Approve the funds for survey to go ahead, contingent on Board reviewing the questions (before next Board meeting)” was approved	
178	Karun		Karun to arrange a special Board meeting specifically to discuss vAGM	Complete - meeting set for 20 <sup>th</sup> March
179	Rob	Chris, Sarah	Collect VP candidates’ photos / statements and post	

## Special meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 3-4 pm Eastern

### Present:

Sarah Gallagher (President)  
Adam Muzzin (Vice President)  
Karun Thanjavur (Director)  
Maria Drout (Director)  
Renée Hložek (Director)  
Lewis Knee (Treasurer)

### Regrets

Chris Wilson (Past President)  
Matt Taylor (Director)  
Rob Cockcroft (Secretary)

Minutes below taken by Sarah and Renée in Rob's absence

1. Adoption of agenda
2. Discussion of the Proposed Code of Conduct
  - a. Issue with by-laws (per Chris' message) - need to amend by-laws to allow Code of Conduct violation to result in expulsion. By-laws currently require 75% vote to expel, which is not reasonable given that many incidents that might conceivably result in expulsion may have confidentiality restrictions.
  - b. Another potential issue is in the details around the enforcement component of the Code of Conduct. "Fire-break" function - ombuds role, to deal with issues that don't rise to the level of formal complaints, but can be quite helpful resolve conflicts effectively and confidentially. This is a very useful function to have, but there is more than one way to accomplish this. We would like to separate out the specifics of the enforcement from the Code of Conduct (which might be contentious and should not be rushed), but include a set process and timeline to develop the policy that will be presented with the Code of Conduct. Also, if the Code of Conduct does not get passed, then we don't want lots of effort to go into developing a policy.
  - c. **Action Item:** Post suggested by-law amendments, batched by type (votes will be for a batch, e.g., EDI language, allowing electronic voting, etc.). Assigned Renée; Deadline: Mar 12
  - d. **Action Item:** Edit Code of Conduct to separate out the process for adjudicating complaints from the Code Of Conduct. The process will be a policy document that will be generated independently upon acceptance of the Code of Conduct. Then share revised Code of Conduct with EIC + LCRIC. Assigned: Renée; Deadline: Mar 12
  - e. **Action Item:** Timeline of process for setting up the implementation needs to be clearly demarcated as well as who will be on the committee (likely members of EIC and LCRIC). Propose to have it ready for vote (hopefully electronic) by Fall 2024 with plenty of time for consultation. Assigned: Maria; Deadline: Mar 12

- f. Another concern - need to run this by a lawyer. **Action Item:** Ask for recommendations for lawyers who can advise non-profits. Assigned: Renée (YMCA friend), Lewis (Rob Thacker), Sarah (Bill Whelan); Deadline: Mar 12
3. AOB:
- a. Sarah met with heads of other professional societies in the physical sciences. Goals were to see if there are areas where we can collaborate and/or share resources. The principal topics of discussion were (1) Advocacy and (2) EDI. One item that was discussed was that many of these societies have undertaken demographic surveys. Given the cost of these as well as the likelihood that there is some duplication of effort, we might be able to partner to more efficiently obtain the data we need. CAP, in particular, does one regularly and pays for analysis, and astronomy and cosmology are already broken out as subfields of physics within existing data.
  - b. CAP Demographic Report:
    - i. <https://cap.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/CAP-Departmental-Survey-Report-20231.pdf>
    - ii. **Action Item:** Ask Bill Whelan: what is the cost of the CAP demographic survey and analysis? Assigned: Sarah; Deadline Mar 12 Update: message sent - waiting for response.
    - iii. **Action Item:** Send to EIC to see if info that we want might already be collected here. Assigned: Renée; Deadline: Mar 12 Update: EIC had already done this, and the CAP survey does not meet their needs (they have climate questions that are not addressed in the CAP survey, and CAP was not willing to give them raw data to analyze).
4. Adjourn