

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

**Meeting of the Board of Directors
In person at York University (Petrie Building Room 258)
Minutes for Monday 3rd June 2024, 10:00-16:00 Eastern**

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 Renée; seconded by Maria; adopted
2. Approval of minutes from April's meeting
 - a. Moved by Renée; seconded by Maria; all approved
3. President's report
 - a. Sarah participated in the CAP strategic planning exercise. Suggests having a CASCA member (new VP?) on their policy committee. CAP swaps executive every year. CAP values: excellence and professionalism (note the difference from CASCA values).
 - b. NSERC Discovery Grant – white paper on this is coming
 - c. Sarah is pushing for funding big science – which aligns with goals in LRP
 - d. Note: AAS President Kelsey Johnson is joining CASCA AGM
 - e. Sarah will give oral report – not a written report – at business meeting (Rob will take bulleted notes for minutes)
4. VP's report
 - a. LCRIC will continue for one more year
 - b. Motion for vAGM: we shouldn't decide long term on vAGM until we've had one test vAGM (and there is a motion for Thursday 6th at the business meeting to decide on whether 2025 will be in person or a vAGM)
 - c. **Motion:** Vote to switch "The CASCA Board wishes" to "the CASCA Board is giving the membership the opportunity..."; moved by Adam; seconded by Maria; approved.
 - d. CASCA TO is in deficit. The CASCA Board may be able to provide further support (\$10k-\$20k, in addition to the \$30k already promised), including the student travel grant.
 - e. A limited number of people (only ~20) signed up for virtual attendance. However, CASCA TO is special: it's the largest attendance ever (365 in-person attendees) so there aren't going to be too many people online anyway.
5. Secretary's report

- a. CASCA membership numbers are similar this year to last year (slight increase: 620 for 2024 versus 605 for 2023)
 - b. 110 members are one year in arrears
 - c. 67 members are two years in arrears
 - d. **Motion:** to accept Secretary's Report, and expel the 67 members who are two years in arrears: moved by Rob; seconded by Maria; all in favour.
 - e. Members who are two years in arrears and wish to rejoin within a month: we will waive the re-joining fee.
 - f. Reminder: CASCA student prize members should be CASCA members
 - g. **Action: Rob** to find out if we can automate receipts (note: PayPal receipts can be automated)
6. Treasurer's report
- a. Investment capital income exceeds inflation
 - b. \$90k of reserve for emergencies; \$30k will come out of that to provide for CASCA TO.
 - c. Dues have not increased since 2018. 2008 motion: so long as membership fees are increasing by inflation, we don't need to have a vote.
 - d. Proposed rates increase:
 - i. Increase in inflation since 2018 is 20.5%)
 - ii. **Motion:** Increase 20% for everyone, except for retired members and corporate members (who would have no increase), effective for the 2024-2025.
 - iii. Increase in money will support Westar, hybrid offerings for AGMs, and mid-term review
 - iv. Moved by Renee; seconded by Maria; approved.
 - e. **Action item: Lewis** to investigate Digital Research Alliance payment (\$500).
 - f. **Action item: Matt** to look into CADC membership renewal and latest report
7. Update from OIR committee (Doug Welch and Ivana Damjanov, co-chairs; joined Board meeting 12:15-12:45 Eastern via Zoom)
- a. OIR committee focused on Canadian ground-based non-VLOT researchers, especially early researchers
 - b. Main activities:
 - i. Conducted Fall 2023-Winter 2024 survey: circulated among ~300 university faculty and observatory staff. 44% response rate. Need to create long-term positions and data workshops – fuller response overview coming from OIR report, at the end of this month.
 - ii. Compared published plans of other non-Canadian astronomical institutes.
 - c. Two main options: (1) renewing Gemini at current level and continuing partnership with CFHT (acknowledging no new instruments); (2) renewing Gemini at current level, and seeking new partner for CFHT (so releasing funds so that we could join, e.g., Subaru, Keck, specific facilities in ESO). (2) seems to be favoured at the moment, but it's not clear which specific new facilities are favoured among the community. Note: MSE does not appear to have widespread support from our community.
 - d. CANFAR/CADC: lots of interest and support for it being a place where pipelines and data-ready access are supported.
 - e. Discussion: Subaru and Keck are not necessarily in queue mode (it depends on the instrument, and it could be something that Canada brings to the table as a partner)
 - f. OIR report goes to CASCA Board and will include recommendations (as above). This report will likely influence decisions at HAA.
8. Meeting with GSC
- a. Self-intros from the Board members followed by questions submitted in advance of the meeting and questions coming in live from the GSC:

- b. What does the Board do?
 - i. Look after CASCA, its members, finances, etc. Meet once a month, and each Board member is charged with action items. Every 10 years, we organize the Long-Range Plan (LRP) for CASCA.
- c. What's the relationship between CASCA and the government?
 - i. National Research Council is charged with looking after astronomy via an act. We also interact with Canadian Space Agency. NRC and CSA both fund the LRP. The Coalition for Canadian Astronomy (on which the CASCA President is a co-chair) is the organization that advocates to the government.
 - ii. Number one priority in the LRP for funding is CASTOR; CASCA advocates for it, sends out media communications for it.
- d. How much influence does CASCA have on international facilities/institutions – e.g., ESO?
 - i. We do have influence. We don't negotiate on behalf of Canada (that would be by the CSA or NRC). But we participate through being members on various committees. If we are entering into new partnerships, that would come through the LRP. The Optical-Infrared Review (OIR) committee is presenting their recommendations at Wednesday over lunch. Nothing is done lightly without significant consultation with CASCA members. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) keeps us on track for the LRP. One example, is the new SKA membership, announced this morning.
- e. We're losing Chandra soon, if we haven't already lost it. Is there another x-ray telescope in the pipeline?
 - i. It's beyond the scope of the CASCA Board to do this – we don't have any levers (e.g., CASCA is not a partner on Chandra). We can, as individuals, however, promote support for Chandra.
- f. Equity and Inclusion Committee; what are you on the committee working on?
 - i. Demographic survey
 - ii. EIC and LCRIC have drafted a community code of conduct
 - iii. How to provide training
 - iv. Westar – revamping the program
 - v. Indigenous Engagement Committee (IEC) – surveyed CASCA community about priorities, will have a booth to answer questions/discuss further, new website is available.
- g. The biggest activity of CASCA seems to be the AGM. Are you starting from scratch every time with the AGM?
 - i. There is a guide to hosting the AGM, from the CASCA Board and EIC, which is available on the CASCA website.
 - ii. Post-COVID, we are trying new activities: e.g., this year, free childcare provided
 - iii. We continue to revise the guide
- h. What are some current problems in Canadian astronomy? How are you working to fix those problems?
 - i. We have an ambitious community, but we are resource limited. This is always a challenge.
 - ii. Goal: our community should be as inclusive as possible – and we are still working on this.
 - iii. We are part of the physics community. Some universities are closing their physics departments. We need to acknowledge and value the technical skills – and make the case for it to others.
 - iv. We are distributed across a large country – so we have to work on building community.

- v. Funding – not enough grad scholarships, the value of grad scholarships are not enough, etc. Go to the NSERC session at the CASCA AGM, and help us continue to advocate for more funding.
 - vi. CASCA is a small organization; we are volunteers on the Board and have one part-time employee.
 - vii. We have a strong guiding hand for Gemini and CFHT; not so much for within ESO.
- i. NSERC funding mostly affects domestic students, not international student. Does CASCA have any lobbying power for increasing funding for international students?
 - i. Sarah is meeting with the presidents of the other physical scientists' communities to discuss how to advocate increase funding for international students. This affects not just astronomers – so it's more effective to advocate with other (larger) communities.
 - j. What does CASCA's membership/finances look like?
 - i. We have about 600 members
 - ii. Expenses are going up, and we are supporting newer initiatives.
 - iii. Membership fees are relatively low – we may need to increase membership fees.
 - iv. Come to the business meeting on Thursday to learn more!
9. Who is doing what during the AGM
- a. Schedule and rubric for talk/poster marking arranged
 - b. Prize lecture introductions (alternate President and VP)
 - i. Read the citation.
 - ii. Sarah does Plaskett and Qilak; Adam is doing the Beals and Dunlap
 - iii. Plaskett medal has not arrived yet; we're checking the text on the plaque
10. Set the business meeting agenda
11. Committee reports' approval: link to folder
- a. **Motion**: to approve Dec committee; moved by Adam; seconded by Maria; approved
 - b. **Motion**: to approve May committee; moved by Adam; seconded by Renée; approved
 - c. Action Items to be assigned from Committee reports (more details in VP report).
 - i. General: suggest creating a template for reports for consistency in the shared information and format.
 - ii. Awards - specific recommendations
 - iii. Outreach - specific recommendations
 - iv. CADC committee appears to be essentially defunct
 - v. IEC: Congrats to Laurie Nepton-Rousseau and Julie Bolduc Duval on Promoscience grant
 - vi. GAC: ALMA assessment point in 2024, publication cost issues (suggest this be a charge for the new VP), concern on RFI (perhaps connect with CAP for consortium approach on this issue?)
12. Modified by-laws - send out note to CASCA
- a. Slight modifications suggested by lawyer
 - b. Electronic voting was particularly scrutinized
 - c. There will be several votes related to the bylaw changes put forth by Renée
13. EIC items
- a. Overview of EIC session
 - i. Grey zone ethics exercise
 - ii. Moderated discussion on those topics
 - iii. Panel discussion on the code of conduct
 - iv. Timeline and next steps

- b. Notification of the draft of the new Code of Conduct will be sent via the CASCA exploder along with all the other AGM-related documents
- 14. IAU Board
 - a. We have been doing IAU action items over the entire year
- 15. AOB
 - a. Discussion of prep for Mid-Term Review
 - i. Remind people it's coming up
 - ii. Not much has changed since LRP, but a few things need attention (e.g., VLOT)
 - iii. Chair has not yet been identified
 - iv. MTR committee must be set up by end of summer
- 16. Adjourn
 - a. Moved by Renée; seconded by Sarah; approved.

Next meetings: Rob to send out poll after new VP joins, then add new members to Igloo and Google drive. Aiming for sometime in July for first meeting (we are expecting the OIR committee report by the end of June, and MTR committee needs to be set up by the end of the summer)

Action item log

#	Assigned	Working with	Description	Updates
184	Rob		Find out if we can automate Paypal receipts	Note from Jessica: That is already set up.
185	Lewis		To investigate Digital Research Alliance payment (\$500).	
186	Matt		To look into CADC membership renewal and latest report	