

**Royal Astronomical Society of Canada,
Victoria Centre
Council Meeting Minutes
University of Victoria December 15, 2004**

Present: Scott Mair (Chair), Bruno Quenneville, Joe Carr, David Griffiths, Sid Sidhu, Dave Bennett, David Lee, Jim Hesser, Bill Almond, Ed Maxfield, Colin Scarfe, Frank Ogonoski, Li-Ann Dorrance

Regrets: Chris Gainor, Sandy Barta, Blaire Pellatt, Rich Willis.

Meeting called to order by the chair, Scott Mair at 7:30 pm

1. Review of Previous Minutes

Bruno Quenneville read the September 22, 2004 Council meeting minutes.

2. Amendments:

a) Amendments to the September 22, 2004 Council meeting minutes.

Sid Sidhu will develop the user policy for the projector and Astrovid and the centre telescopes. Michael Shepard performed the Egypt Presentation.

b) Amendments to the Dec 15, 2004 Agenda

Add to the agenda in Old Business a review of the AGM 2004

Add to new business AGM 2005 presentation

Add to reports dinner review

3. Reports

a) Library, Telescope Loan and School Programs - Sid Sidhu

i. Sid mentioned the library is not well used, and that we must encourage members to borrow. It was reported that 50 new books were donated in 2004. David suggested a book review or to display the selected books at the meetings. Joe suggested whoever borrows the book first does a book review. Jim suggested posting some titles in Sky News or on the Web. Bruno suggested a reminder in the newsletter that the library is open after the monthly general meetings.

Action: Bruno will contact Sandy about the reminder in Sky News

ii. Sid provided a handout detailing the Telescope Loan Program and the Library Loan Program.

Action: Council provide feedback on the proposed Telescope Loan Program over the next month.

Action: Sid will bring the final Telescope Loan Program policy to the next Council meeting for approval.

Action: Post Telescope Loan Program policy on website once approved.

iii) Sid read some responses from students and teachers from the School Program. Joe suggested scanning the responses and posting them on the website.

Sid explained his only concern with the program is on how to answer religious questions when they conflict with science and astronomy. David suggested he ask the teacher.

David also asked how to help Sid with the program. Sid encouraged assistance with the Night Sky Viewing, and that he would shout if he needs help.

Action: Sid will provide a News Release to the Schools advertising the Program

b) Treasurer - David Griffith

See New Business

c) Website - Joe Carr

There are email lists available updated by Joe. For questions, ask Joe.

Council is satisfied with the design of the website and also mentioned to look at other Centre websites for ideas.

Action: Li-Ann will email the meeting minutes directly to Joe Carr to post on the website.

It was suggested we examine the newsletter issue: Do we send the newsletter to other Centres or do we just post on our own website?

Action: Joe will create a table of mail outs to other clubs with the information provided by David Griffiths.

d) Newsletter - Joe Carr

-Alex Schmid mails the Sky News to members and Joe Carr provides the address labels.

-The issue of Joe making cards to be discussed at the next council meeting.

-Joe has received notice that 40 of the 104 members wish to receive Sky News notification by email.

-Electronic list originally has 60 members

Action: Joe will get the numbers for the Electronic list.

Action: Joe will coordinate the email and hard copy mailing lists for Sky news

-David suggested to post the Sky News in two formats.

-Sid discussed the hard copy for the Library, and the cost for printing and mailing.

e) Meeting Programs - Bruno Quenneville

Bruno read the list of monthly meeting schedule for 2004-2005

October: Dr. Gregory Arkos, Malaspina College, Mars Exploration

November: Drs. Jon Willis and Sara Ellison, UVic, Astronomy in Chile

December: Doug Johnstone, DAO

January: Dr. J.J. Kavelaars, HIA, DAO. Hunting for Moons

February: Gail Conway, Malaspina College, Nebulae

March: Henk Hoekstra, UVic

April: Laura Ferrarese and Pat Cole, DAO

May: Russell Robb, UVic

June: Members' Night

Fall 2005 possible speakers include:

Eric Peng, HIA, HST

Brenda Mathews, HIA

Tony Burke, UVic

4. Old Business

a) Site Selection Committee - Dave Bennett

-Dave read sections of communications received from other Centres on the subject detailing problems they encountered, and suggestions.

Issues to consider included: Expenses, maintenance agreements, insurance, security, politics, amount of work involved on a regular basis,

sensitivity to light pollution, impassible roads in winter, hours of operation,

site user fees, grants, partnerships.

-David questioned feasibility of the project and proposed instead to foster and develop further our relationships with the existing organizations such as the Centre of the Universe, and Pearson College.

- Scott added that in light of the budget, this might be the way to proceed, especially if we do not charge a user fee.
- Joe informed Council it would be a \$15.00 user fee to make this a realization.
- Scott mentioned that CRD and DAO are open to a partnership but there would be some difficulties involved.
- Bruno suggested the RASC Victoria make an effort to find locations for regular observing nights to test the amount of member support to judge if there is a real need to pursue the issue especially in lieu of expanding hours and programs at the Centre of the Universe starting May 24, 2005

b) Volunteer relationship with the Centre of the Universe - Bruno Quenneville

A report from Kevin Ferris indicated the job description has been written and has been sent to the underwriters. The Government of Canada will require insurance and this price must be established. No ETA on this decision has been given.

Action: Jim will contact Kevin for an update, ETA, and who will fill the position of Administrator/Record Keeper for this project.

c) Centre 20 inch Dob refit

Tabled until next meeting

d) AGM and Dinner Review - Scott Mair

Feedback on the AGM 2004 included: Rich Willis may be able to supply a larger screen for the speaker presentations; Speakers could be encouraged to use the wireless mike that was donated by Rich Willis; The projector can enlarge the screen image and a manual is available; In positioning the speaker at the end of the hall there was difficulty in hearing one of the speakers; Noise from the air conditioning unit made it difficult to hear the speakers; The variety of Volunteer Awards of Excellence was a good way of thanking the members

5. New Business

a) Review of some specific roles and responsibilities - Scott Mair

Bruno Quenneville, Joe Carr and David Griffiths met before the meeting to reassign Laurie Roches duties. The role of maintaining membership lists will be shared by Joe Carr and David Griffiths. Bruno will be responsible for the general meeting coffee.

b) Status of Signing Authority Transfer - David Griffiths

The transfer is complete and David has started a new account.

c) Issues Related to Budget - David Griffiths

David provided a handout of the Treasurer's Report for the year ending September 30, 2004.

- The account balance is \$2500.00 and is considered small.
 - The income from dues is distributed through the year with a majority in September.
- David provided a handout of the cash-flow forecast for 2004/2005 warning of a low starting amount.
- The handout does not cover exactly 12 months.
 - There are some outstanding amounts.
 - There is a loss on the 2004 Annual Christmas dinner.
 - The net revenue gain from the Star Party was \$150 after the \$400 expense for the site rental.
- David provided a handout showing month by month balance.
- There was an increase in October, and a decrease in November and December.
 - David is concerned there will be no income in before the Star Party. -Bruno explained the pattern seen in the past is that we are at the end of the expense cycle.

-The 2002/2003 BC Gaming Commission money which is in a separate account was discussed and it was discovered that the \$1000 donation went into the General Revenue instead of the Gaming account.

-Bruno summed up the understanding that the Centre is operating on bare bones without a buffer, so we should proceed cautiously and examine our expenses closely.

-The major expenses are the Newsletter, Annual Christmas Dinner and Astronomy Day

-Sid explained the RASC Victoria Centre is a non profit organization and the expectation is to break even at year end.

-After discussion, it was decided not to raise member dues.

-David asked what reports are required.

Action: As Treasurer, David Griffiths will provide the Projected Expenses Report and a Balance Report and will copy to Council by email.

d) Review Logistics of Newsletter Production, Mailing Labels and Distribution - Joe Carr

e) Astronomy Day - Sid Sidhu

International Astronomy Day is set for April 16, 2005. The Victoria Centre will look into hosting the event at the Royal BC Museum Corporation. Expected expenses this year include posters, the banner, and event programs. Budget \$500.00

Action: Sid To contact the Royal BC Museum Corporation and give updates to Council.

f) Star Party 2005 - Frank Ogonoski

The event will be hosted by Rich Willis at the Vancouver Island Fish and Game Reserve. Damage deposit \$500.00. A walk through inspection and photos of the site are recommended. The daily rental fee will remain the same as 2004, but the fee for the Kitchen will increase to around \$250 per day.

g) AGM 2005 - David Lee

The AGM will be held May 22, 2005 in Kelona BC.

h) RASC Centre AGM Special Presentation - David Lee

Action: David will gather information on what the RASC Victoria Centre has accomplished over the last while and create a presentation to bring to the AGM 2005.

Action: David will add a note in Sky news asking for input by members.

Action: Scott will mention the presentation at the General Meetings.

Action: Set a target date to present to Council.

Action: Set a target date to present to members.

Feedback: David Bennett suggested the presentation should include information on the Centre of the Universe and Pearson College.

6. Call to the floor for other business

Jim Hesser invites the RASC Victoria Centre's effort in supporting and promoting the long range plan set by The Canadian Astronomical Society.

Action: Scott will add a note in the Sky News asking Members to contact their MPs regarding support of the Canadian Astronomical Society's long range plans.

Action: Joe Carr will add the note to the website.

7. Next Council Meeting

Thursday January 20, 2005

Meeting Adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Recording Secretary: Li-Ann Dorrance