

RASC Victoria Center Special Council Meeting  
Minutes February 3, 2016 (approved March 2, 2016)  
*Planning session for upcoming Public Outreach Events*  
Fourth Floor Lounge, Elliott Building, University of Victoria

**Attendees:** Sherry Buttner, Lauri Roche, David Lee, Chris Purse, Bruce Lane, Jim Hesser, Sid Sidhu, Nelson Walker, Diane Bell, Reg Dunkley, Matt Watson, Don Moffatt, James di Francesco, Greg Higgs, Alex Schmid, Darlene Choma, Michel Michaud

Meeting convened: 7:35 p.m.

Chair: Sherry Buttner

Serving as Recorder: Leslie Welsh

**Issues for Saturday evening Dominion Astrophysical Observatory (DAO) public evenings:**

1) Dates:--How many evenings do we want to run?

Sherry noted that Astronomy Day is May 14 (April 25 last year); should that be our opening night? (three weeks later than last year).

Final night last year was September 12. This year, it would be September 10th, but we cannot have that date due to a conflict. Further, the Centre star party is the weekend of August 26-28th, and our public outreach event occurs at the Saanich Fair on Labour Day weekend (September 3-5<sup>th</sup>), so would August 20th be our final evening? Do we want to run every evening, even through the solstice period, even though there isn't any real darkness until after closing time at 11 p.m.? There were complaints about our absence during the solstice period in 2015.

It was noted that we can't schedule into September because of star parties, and that Vox Humana has the DAO dome on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Possible schedule:

*May 14, 21, 28; June 4, 11; July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; August 6, 13, 20, from 7:30-11:00 p.m.*

***Above dates agreed by consensus.***

2) RASC personnel resources to help plan and facilitate the entire summer on the hill.

a- one person to recruit and schedule RASC volunteers

Duties include maintaining list of weekly volunteers, provide to DAO security to be let in (a requirement)

There could be a lead person with a back-up person. Sherry emphasized there's not much work on the night itself—mostly coordination ahead.

**Nelson agreed to serve as the RASC DAO Summer Evening Public Outreach Volunteer Coordinator.**

b- one person to recruit and schedule guest speakers (one per evening?)

Suggestion made that there be one key speaker, followed by a speaker about observing.

**David Lee agreed to recruit and schedule guest speakers.**

c- two or three RASC members to operate the planetarium.

Aaron is unavailable this summer as he'll be out-of-town, but he will run training to operate the planetarium.

**Diane Bell volunteered to be a lead planetarium operator, with Greg Higgs volunteering as a back-up operator and assistant.**

d- three RASC members to run the 16" telescope:

Clearances and training required. **James will investigate the procedure for this.**

**Sherry, Nelson, and Sid volunteered.**

3) Person-in-Charge (PIC) for each evening.

**Sherry will be PIC**, but would appreciate back-up people to do it some nights if some volunteer.

4) Operating the Plaskett Telescope

RASC will need to provide a couple of back-up or assistant telescope operators for the Plaskett, as we have had in previous summers, depending on the wishes of NRC. They will need training and security clearances. Dave Ballam only wants one RASC person assisting at a time.

**Dan Posey will volunteer for this, on a schedule of roughly alternating week-ends. Don will check with a possible person and report back to Sherry.**

5) Touring Speakers for inside the Plaskett dome.

**Don Moffatt and/or Ben Dorman** did most of this last summer; Sherry will ask if they will be doing that again. **Chris Gainor also volunteers.**

6) Other DAO matters:

- Need to organize training and security for Plaskett and 16" telescope operators.
- NRC is kicking in for some improvements, including an improved projection system in the dome. Dennis is really behind things, so there will be a bit of money. FDAO has raised about \$10K. RASC Special Projects Program is granting \$2K for tablets, etc.
- Is there material on RASC Victoria Centre available for public engagement and prospecting membership? Yes, there's a brochure, but it's hard to judge cause-effect response.

**Other Events:--What help is required?**

1) Westshore Hobby Show--Bruce:

**Volunteer list in hand.**

2) Astronomy Day (May 14th)--Nelson:

**Nelson** has Sid's materials in hand, has met with the Royal B.C. Museum to meet Kim Goth, who is on top of the event from the museum's perspective. Planning is going well. There will be guest speakers in the auditorium. **James** has some ideas for speakers on Canada's Telescopes.

3) The "Beavery".

**Greg Higgs volunteered to organize.**

**New Business:**

**RASC/FDAO Internet proposal**--Matt:

Matt will give a talk to Hertzberg Institute tomorrow to promote a particular internet proposal (see attachments: <https://docs.google.com/a/victoria.rasc.ca/presentation/d/1zW9tDpjLJLgxfKbBqkqL1wK2Wx4WGRtvR3QUXniwO70/edit?usp=gmail> and <https://docs.google.com/a/victoria.rasc.ca/spreadsheets/d/1wecR7NAIGvddUuypSG94EEqMyKFupilA7YX2prmhksw/edit?usp=gmail>). Stocksy United, the company for which Matt works, has a direct line of sight to the Centre of the Universe roof that could support for a point-to-point link with 450 Mb/s throughput. Stocksy is willing to support internet access for both RASC Victoria Centre and the Friends of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory using their in-house high speed internet connection. There would be a onetime capital cost totalling \$2,705.60, with RASC Victoria Centre taking a \$1,185 share. The frequency will be 2.4 GHz or more likely 5 GHz, which should cause no interference with the Hertzberg Institute. Parabolic antennae would need to be installed on the rooves with precise alignment.

With much enthusiasm among the council members present, and thanks to Matt, Sherry made a motion **that RASC Victoria Centre commit to its proposed share of the costs and provide support for the arrangement as outlined in Matt's proposal: Carried** with James and Jim abstaining. FDAO will need to decide on their share.

Adjourned 9:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, Fourth Floor, Elliot Building, University of Victoria.