

# Minutes of the RASC Victoria Centre Council Meeting

March 2, 2016 (approved May 4, 2016)

Fourth Floor Lounge, Elliott Building, University of Victoria

**Attendees:** Bruce Lane, Chris Purse, Sherry Buttnor, Jim Hesser, Leslie Welsh, Matt Watson, Nelson Walker, Michel Michaud, Sid Sidhu, Reg Dunkley, Ben Dorman

Meeting convened: 7:35 p.m.

Chair: Sherry Buttnor

Serving as Recorder: Leslie Welsh

## 1. Minutes—January and February, 2016: Leslie

Chris moved, seconded by Bruce, that the minutes of the January 6 and February 3, 2016 Council meetings be approved as circulated. Carried.

Business arising from meeting of January 6, 2016:

*Action: Sherry will send a note to inform John of the specific liaisons in both FDAO and Victoria Centre, in a partnership effort.*

Sherry noted that she had sent a letter to MP John Aldag. No response has been received as yet.

*Jim noted that Council positions should be updated. Action: Joe*

Sherry noted that this had been completed.

*Action: Sherry will send an e-mail to Dave to ask what is going to be done with respect to the City of Victoria prospective upgrade program.*

Sherry has sent an e-mail to Dave Robertson, Chairman, Progressive Lighting Policies Lighting Committee, and has had a reply that plans are being prepared for lobbying of city officials on new LED luminaires.

Business arising from meeting of February 3, 2016:

*Action: Nelson volunteered to do a preliminary draft of the new by-laws by the next meeting, for discussion.*

Carried forward.

*Matt will give a talk tomorrow to the Herzberg Institute to promote a particular internet proposal.*

Update deferred until Committee reports.

## 2. Executive Officers Reports (2 minutes):

### a. Treasurer's Report—Bruce:

Bruce noted that our current balance is \$12,805.00, with a gaming account balance of \$474.00. Bruce will send a final charitable organization report sent to the Canada Revenue Agency within the next couple of weeks. Bruce noted that different categorizations for expenses and revenues for each organization complicates this reporting.

### b. Secretary's Report—Les:

No report.

### c. VP Report—Michel:

Michel noted that the guest speakers for the Victoria Centre General Meetings in May and June are Maan Hani (topic TBD) and Zac Draper on exoplanets. The new contact for University of Victoria astronomy speakers, Steve Mairs, is normally to be contacted by e-mail (smairs@uvic.ca). Michel will be away April 11, returning for the second weeks of August to September. Diane Bell will assume responsibility for the Victoria Centre library after the next general meeting.

The Centre Library has books checked out dating from 2012 and 2013. **Action: Michel will e-mail members who are supposed to have the books that have been overdue since 2013 or earlier.**

d. VP2/Membership Report—Chris:

Chris reported that Centre membership is 222, with 13 people in the three-month grace period, and 4 expired at the end of January (scheduled to fall off at the end of March).

e. Skynews—Reg:

Reg reported that he's updating the monthly sky graph in Skynews to include moon rise and set curves.

3. Committee/Project/Other Reports (3 minutes):

a. Star Party—: Sherry

Sherry is waiting for a response delayed until March 7 from Metchosin Council on the waiver of the fees for the location of the Star Party. Fees would be some \$1,000 if levied. Question whether a back-up site should be sought in case this doesn't work out. **Action: Matt to call Malahat Gun Range to check fees, etc.**

b. Public Outreach—:

c. School Outreach—Sid:

Sid reported that there have been 1,850 Galileo moments since September. There will be more school outreach after the Easter break.

d. DAO Summer Saturdays—Sherry:

David Lee has 3 or 4 speaker volunteers. Additional volunteers are needed. First date is May 14<sup>th</sup>, following Astronomy Day at the Royal B.C. Museum.

Sherry has proposal for the Victoria Centre's input on a land-use agreement with the National Research Council ready to go for whomever it is to be submitted to. There seem to be delays originating in the Ottawa bureaucracy.

Ben reported that provision is to be made to stream from tablets to large screens.

Lauri has suggested having a display "billboard" with a "rolling" display from different Canadian observatories.

e. Website—Joe:

No report from Joe.

Matt mentioned that as of today, the Victoria Centre has changed over from dreamhost to amazon web services because of cost savings and faster speed.

In the last month, Victoria Centre web site statistics on visitors are: 1:50 minutes residence time per visitor, with 902 visitors compared to 1,165 times in February 2015.

f. Tech Committee—Matt:

FDAO and RASC Victoria Centre partnership is a "no go", since the "radio interference people" at DAO object. The scheduled February 4th meeting was delayed. Dennis Crabtree of NRC/DAO spoke of other possibilities at the meeting, including installing a hard line up the Hill. Dennis is currently in Japan, and the **Victoria Centre and/or the Friends of DAO should get back to him**

**after his return (Action: by unspecified).** Matt notes that he's available now only for technical advice, as he can't spend more time on organizing internet service for the Victoria Centre Observatory and Centre of the Universe.

g. Other—

Nelson: International Astronomy Day

Nelson has contacted everyone who volunteered last year and a few others, including Science Venture, who've confirmed their participation. Some responses yet to come, and he will seek further volunteers.

4. National Issues (2 minutes)—Lauri:

No report.

5. Year End Practise—Bruce:

Bruce suggests that the Council's year end meeting happen in the third week of October (instead of November) and our first Council meeting afterwards be in November, to have a better transition for new councils. That way, we're less likely to be muddling through the first three months of our Centre's year every year anytime there's a change in council members, and budgeting could be done in a more timely and efficient way.

Personally, Bruce would prefer it if our Centre's year end moved to the end of December, so it's more in keeping with the rest of the world, but that's something different that requires a lot more administrative hassles and would require looking into to see what is required. Leslie suggested that a change in fiscal year wasn't so problematic in the context of by-law revision, and this could lead to new opportunities for efficiencies, such as the creation of an Executive Committee that could meet between Council meetings and be more agile in making some selected decisions, including on budgeting.

6. Revision of Bylaws—Nelson:

The new B.C. *Societies Act* won't come into force until November 2016, then there will be two years to get revised and compliant bylaws updated.

Jim and Les have volunteered for a committee headed by Nelson. **Committee work will start soon. Action: By-laws Committee.**

7. Friends of DAO update—written report from Ben, supplemented by oral comments:

1) FDAO's fundraiser at the Bateman Centre last November "Science and Culture in the Inner Harbour" was sold out and raised just over \$5,000. The money from this and the Indiegogo Fundraiser (which ran from August-October and raised an additional \$3,400), is being put towards a pilot program for schools which is being actively worked on, plus enabling administration for the society. [As an aside, the FDAO AGM at which we will present Financial reports is to be held before the end of our First year of operation, which is the beginning of June]. It is expected that the school program should start in a very limited fashion either later in the spring or (more likely) in the fall.

2) FDAO's current membership list has 183 names including family members.

3) FDAO held an event for members of FDAO and RASC on 2016 February 13th at DAO, including [unfortunately] cloudy skies, but a great presentation from NRC astronomer JJ Kavelaars.

4) FDAO is shortly to conclude an agreement with NRC which is a 'License to Occupy' both the Centre of the Universe Building and the Plaskett Dome—naturally, for public science outreach purposes. [Ben noted orally that he had met with Susan Engle on February 22, so the 3-year agreement can't begin March 1; now anticipated for April 1. The RASC Victoria Centre proposal should go to Ben. Dennis is the primary contact; since he's on the FDAO Board, he'll get a copy anyway.] The net effect of this for RASC is intended to be no extra paperwork and hopefully some of the administrative load for

Saturday nights being taken on in future by FDAO. RASC will continue to determine Saturday night dates and programming as for the last few years. Current state is that an agreement approved by NRC in Ottawa has been reviewed by FDAO and NRC/DAO and is awaiting Final revisions. We expect to sign the agreement sometime in March.

5) FDAO has been working on other potential public tours with cruise line operators. For 2016 this programme will be limited to a few [possibly only one] selected dates. [FDAO has decided it can't do this alone, given the number of desired tours, because of shortage of volunteers. But FDAO would like to obtain some support from RASC members e.g. guiding people on the Hill. Daytime event May 6 will be handled by FDAO. Getting the Visitor Centre re-opened would be made easier by having some initial daytime events. These events would be fundraisers for FDAO. Volunteers would receive Honoria. FDAO has a tentative program and hopes some exhibits will be available by May 6. Bob McDonald will narrate one. [Also a potential small school program pilot for the fall; will keep Sid informed.]

6) FDAO is shortly going to start a program to attract volunteers for various roles on the Hill. This will ultimately assist with guides on public tours and possibly also on Saturday nights as required/requested.

## 7. New Business

Sid is cleaning up his garage with RASC Victoria Centre equipment. There's a **20-inch newly aluminized mirror**, but no secondary (it's been lost), inherited from Pearson College. How should these be advertised? Several commented that this **should be sold locally if possible**. **Action: Sid**

## 8. Adjourn.

Nelson, seconded by Bruce, moved adjournment at 9:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 4, 2016 in the Fourth Floor Lounge of the Elliot Building, University of Victoria

### **Next Victoria Centre General Meeting:**

Wednesday, March 2, 2016 Fourth Floor Lounge, Elliot Building, University of Victoria  
Speaker: Dr. James DiFrancesco on "The Secret Sits: What's in Our Galactic Centre?"