

RASC Victoria Centre Council Minutes

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

Fourth Floor Lounge, Elliott Building, University of Victoria

Chair: Chris Purse Serving as Recorder: Leslie Welsh

Attendees: Joe Carr, Sid, Deb Crawford, Ken Mallory, Matt Watson, Jim Hesser, Bruce Lane, Michel Michaud, Reg Dunkley, David Lee, Nelson Walker

1. Call to order, roll call, approval of agenda – Chris
Meeting called to order at 7:33 p.m.

Sid suggested adding “Hobby Show” and “Fort Rodd Hill event” to the agenda, and Jim suggested adding “Christ Church Cathedral Concert”. Motion carried to approve the agenda as updated with the three new business items.

2. Approval of the December 7, 2016 minutes – Leslie

After noting corrections suggested by e-mail by Sherry, and the addition of “Les” and “Chris” under the attendee list, a motion by Bruce, seconded by Leslie, to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2016 meeting carried.

3. Reports

- a. President & Membership – Chris

The Centre has 238 members with 8 people in the grace period.

- b. Vice President & SkyNews Editor – Reg

There are speakers booked until May for the monthly seminars. Reg is suggesting that we hold a special general meeting in June to review and share members’ 2017 total solar eclipse plans.

Two speakers are identified for the fall, but travel expense reimbursement may be necessary. It was noted that if application is made in advance, the RASC national office may pay for speaker travel expenses.

Reg noted the need for input from the President for the pending SkyNews—**Action: Chris**

- c. Second Vice President – Deb

No report.

- d. Treasurer – Bruce

There is \$10,658 in our current account (minus the \$7,000 which in the Victoria Centre Observatory Replacement Fund) and \$20 in the gaming account. Bruce noted that changing the Centre’s fiscal year appears to be straightforward, but will required having a shortened transitional fiscal year. **Action:**

Bruce will propose a motion to effect change in the Centre’s fiscal year.

Centre budget was tabled until next meeting.

- e. Secretary – Leslie

No report.

- f. National Representative – Nelson

Nelson reports that the time to register for the residence accommodation for the AGM has passed, but AGM registration has commenced.

g. Technical Committee – Matt

Matt reported that there had been 970 visits to the Centre web site from 734 users with an average duration 1 ½ minutes.

h. Website – Joe

We've encountered minor technical issues with the "https" protocol. They are being addressed.

i. Library – Michel

Michel noted that two Centre nights on the Plaskett telescope are scheduled for 25 February and April 1 (but not for the time of the Messier marathon as hoped).

j. Schools Program – Sid

Sid reported that school has been off for the two week Christmas holiday, but the program was busy in the fall, and is gearing up for a number of schools.

k. Public Outreach – Ken

Ken noted with thanks that Nelson has donated some books for public outreach. Ken himself has yet to make any purchases.

Nelson reports that the RBCM facility Astronomy Day is confirmed for April 29.

Action: Ken to produce write-up for RASC Victoria Centre web site on Astronomy Day.

l. Observing Chairs – Michel and Jim S

Michel reported that the Member-in-Charge schedule for Victoria Centre Observatory activities is in place.

m. Light Pollution Abatement Committee – Dave

No report. **Action: Les** to ask Dave for a written report.

n. FDAO Liaison – Lauri

No report.

o. DAO Liaison – James

No report.

p. UVic Liaison – Alex

No report.

q. Past President – Sherry

No report.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes/Old Business

a. New meeting format – Chris

Action: Michel to coordinate observers' reports, and will ask for brief reports/images from active observers' list. Prime the pump by having some planned people to present, but also ask for the future. Michel volunteered to highlight upcoming astro-events.

b. Mailing address – Leslie

The Centre wishes to explore using a post office box for a mailing address. It was noted that the Heart Pharmacy IDA on Cordova Bay Road may also have post office boxes, in addition to the University of Victoria Campus Pharmacy. Investigation of post office box options is carried forward for **Action: Leslie**.

c. Astro Café TV and Cabinet – Reg

Reg reported that a TV monitor advisory team was established including Matt, Joe, and John McDonald. They examined a monitor at Matt's workplace, and four more at Atlas Audio-Video Unlimited. The team determined that the best monitor was a 4K UHD 55" Sony, which Reg found was \$400 off on Boxing Day, so Reg bought it with a mount. An extended 5-year warranty was also purchased for discounted price of \$161 (\$300 regular price). The warranty covers all break-downs of the TV. Total price was \$1,696.79.

Centre member Terry Riles is a professional cabinet maker who's putting together a cabinet from scratch for an estimated cost of \$217. Thomas King of Fairfield Community Centre has approved the design. Mesh was suggested for the top of the cabinet where there are ventilation holes. We'll also need a replacement for the existing white board, for an estimated \$140 for 4'x8' whiteboard to cover the cabinet. The existing extra white board could be used for public outreach. Altogether, this puts the budget over the Council authorization by \$60.

Reg moved, seconded by Michel, that \$100, be added to the budget for the Astro-Café monitor. Carried.

d. Plaskett Telescope Evenings – Michel

Michel again noted that the Centre would have access to the Plaskett Telescope on February 25 and April 1. He noted that we could do 10-s shots to have nearly live images earlier in the evening before serious imaging starts. There will be an opportunity for members to have a tour. **Action Michel:** formulate notice for February SkyNews.

e. UVic Telescope Evenings – Chris

Chris noted that he has met with Dr. Karun Thanjavur, the Physics and Astronomy Department Senior Lab Instructor responsible for the UVic telescope (who replaced Russ Robb). The Centre is getting closer to having our access restored. There's now a locking door on the dome, and RASC Victoria Centre will get one key. We'll have 3 sets of building access keys, and a padlock on a locker in which the key would be located. Friday night once a month would be ideal and would avoid conflicting with VCO nights and UVic activities. In response to a question as to whether the 32" telescope is only for visual observing, or can we image with it, Chris noted that a camera can be added to the auxiliary 5" refractor for imaging. It may be possible in the future to use the University's CCD imager with a filter wheel once it is up and running.

f. Summer Star Parties 2017 – Chris

Nothing to report—haven't met with Ben, who has been unavailable.

g. By-Laws Committee – Nelson, Leslie, Jim

No progress to report. A question was raised as to whether proxy voting should be allowed.

h. International Astronomy Day (Saturday, April 29) – Ken, Nelson

Nelson has contacted Royal B.C. Museum and confirmed the date as April 29. We also need to get that night at the Centre of the Universe. **Action: Nelson**

i. Sale of A Photographic Atlas of Selected Regions of the Milky Way – Michel

Michel sent an e-mail to the National office to enlist their help on the distribution of the book sale to a Centre list. No response as yet. Suggestion was made to place a notice in the RASC Bulletin. **Action: Michel.** A further suggestion was made to place ads in the SkyNews or other astronomical magazines.

j. VCO Telescope Replacement Project – Matt

Matt reports that the project is "treading water".

k. 2017 Raffle – Bruce, Sid

Raffle tickets at DAO are a good opportunity, matching free events and childrens' interest in the telescope. The draws are typically held at the end of the summer season. Sales are also made at RASCal star party. There are constraints around the raffle—must have limited period and set draw date. **Action: Bruce** will investigate timelines to optimize sales and events.

l. Potential Summer Star Party in Metchosin (Saturday, July 29) – Chris

Could we do both at DAO and Metchosin, or even Cattle Point. Something on July 29, some advocate having a serious star party at new moon.

Reg moved, seconded by Sid, that the Centre hold a July 29 RASCals Star party to coincide with the National Star Party planned for this summer. Carried.

It was noted that the same people are typically not at the Metchosin star party as the DAO summer star party. Sherry has tentatively agreed to deal with Metchosin Council. Including the July 29th date means that the overall RASCals' star party would be on July 28-30.

m. RASC 150th Anniversary in 2018 – Jim

Jim doesn't need anything more from the Centre.

n. CASCA 2018 Meeting – Jim

Jim reported that public events are planned in association with the 2018 Canadian Astronomical Society of Canada conference, to be held in Victoria 22-26 May 2018. The Local Organizing Committee chaired by David Bohlender would welcome a member from the RASC Victoria Centre. **Action: Victoria Centre Council.**

5. New Business

a. SkyNews magazine distribution – Chris

For a 3-issue trial period beginning next month, we'll receive 50 SkyNews magazines at \$0.25 each, couriered to us by SkyNews at their expense. RASC Victoria Centre will use these as a recruitment items at Astro-Café and other public events. We'll use special stickers with a URL to enable tracking of the distribution and effectiveness of this communication. **Action: Deb** is to establish a membership desk at the DAO Summer Star Party.

b. August 21 Eclipse Activities in Victoria – Chris

Randy Atwood has written Centre Presidents to ask:

I am curious if anyone has thought about activities on eclipse day at your centre. All centres will see a rather large partial phase. This is an excellent opportunity to run public outreach programs. But will anybody be left at home to run your program? To support this we would like to provide solar viewers and handouts to enhance the experience. But we need to work together. Please let me know what if any plans you have to:

- a) run a program during the partial eclipse,*
- b) purchase solar viewers,*
- c) create your own information handout.*

Let's get the discussion going between the centres, this office and the Education Committee.

Chris asks the Council if we might do some public outreach for the eclipse. Sid noted that he'll be here in Victoria. **Action: Ken** will seek volunteers for Mount Tolmie event on August 21. **Action: Chris** to report to Randy that we're doing this.

c. Other liaisons? (Camosun, Pearson, Planetary Society) – Chris

We have liaisons for FDAO, DAO, UVic—do we want additional ones? **Action: Chris** will talk with Camosun.

- d. Explore the Universe Guide – copy donated by Ontario Telescopes to be given to a youth member – Chris

An “Explore the Universe Guide” has been provided to each Centre with the expectation that it be given to a youth member. Chris asks if it could be used as a Science Fair prize? Or, provided to a young teenage Centre member? **Action: Council** to make suggestions for a recipient.

- e. e-mail from hobby show people requesting our attendance.

After much discussion, it was noted that the Centre had already decided to not participate in the Hobby Show.

- f. Fort Rodd Hill august 11 evening.

Ken e-mailed the contact person today. They’d like the RASC Victoria Centre to provide a speaker and 5-10 telescopes. Ken needs help from David for a speaker. Ken suggested it would be great to have a telescope that could project on a screen. It was suggested that Scott Mair could be the speaker, will talk to Ken about this opportunity. **Action: Ken and David**

- g. Christ Church Cathedral Concert

Baroque music specialist (harpsichord, organ, fortepiano) Michael Jarvis is behind a Saturday January 21 concert in the Chapel of New Jerusalem in Christ Church Cathedral. The Chapel has excellent acoustics. Hershel’s music, not previously played in North America, will be highlighted, along with astronomical images provided by Victoria Centre members John MacDonald and David lee from Zenfolio or direct solicitation. A pre-concert talk will be held at 7:00 p.m. SkyNews has a notice for the event. Jim will sell tickets on consignment at the January 11 monthly meeting. A successful event will be encouragement for an even bigger event in 2018.

- h. Forbes’ “30 under 30”

Matt noted that Forbes’ “30 under 30” coverage honours Ann Makosinski, the inventor of a flashlight which runs on the heat from a human hand. RASC Victoria Centre has also recognized her work in the past.

Bruce moved adjournment, seconded by Joe. Adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 1 in the Fourth Floor Lounge of the Elliot Building.