

RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, November 28, 2023: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Via Zoom - Meeting ID: 853 0598 1543

	Agenda Items				
Time	Item	Purpose	Responsibility	Support Documents / Notes	
7:00 PM	Welcome & Introductions Approval of Agenda Review Action List Approval of Previous Minutes of Meeting	Information Approval	John Nangreaves	Pre-circulated: Agenda: November 28, 2023 Minutes: October 30, 2023	
ONGOING		I			
	Upcoming Meeting Dates Guest Speakers a. 2023 Member's Meeting Date Confirmation and Format	Ongoing Discussion Approval	John Nangreaves	AGM agenda Refer to document attached to meeting invite last night Refer to Agenda Notes #1: Speakers &	
	b. Confirm Member's Meeting agenda c. Zoom/SMU Bookings d. Guest Speakers & Ideas for Future Presentations		Judy Black Peter Hurley	Approved 2023 Member Meeting Dates Refer to Agenda Notes #2: 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Dates Burnham's Celestial Handbook: An	
	riesentations		reter numey	Observer's Guide to the Universe Beyond the Solar System (3 Volume Set)	
	Report from National Council Representative Annual Centre Report to RASC National	Information Discussion	Judy Black	Refer to email from Judy Black sent to Board on November 25, 2023 9:40 pm	
	4. RASC Halifax Centre Website & YouTube	Discussion	Judy Black	n/a	
	5. Financial Update RJSC Update RASC Hfx 2023 Income statement + Balance sheet	Discussion	Gregg Dill	Refer to email from Gregg Dill sent to Board on November 27, 2023 9:14 am Table was also attached to the meeting invite last night	
	6. Member Welcome Package	Discussion	Tony McGrath	n/a	
	7. Education & Public Outreach (EPO) Outreach Requests	Discussion	David Hoskin	n/a	
UPDATE	S / REPORTS				
	8. SCO • Access – gate and key • Regular observing night - Announcement - Presentation	Discussion	John Liddard	Refer to Agenda Note #3	
	GLP certificates and training	Discussion	Judy Black	n/a	
	Nominating Committee Report Auditor 2022/23	Discussion	Peter Hurley	n/a	

	- 2023/24			
GOVERN	GOVERNANCE			
NEW BU	NEW BUSINESS			
Adjournment				
9:00 PM	12. Adjournment (Next meeting: Jan 2, 2024)			

RASC, Halifax Centre – Member's Meeting

Saturday, December 2, 2023 – 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM **Via Zoom – Meeting ID 863 8473 5559**

	Agenda Items			
Time*	Item	Responsibility		
1:00 PM	Welcome & Introductions	(emcee)		
	Photo Montage	David Hoskin		
	2024 Calendars and ETU guides for sale	Judy Black		
	Presentation: Percival Lowell and the canals of Mars	John Badowski		
	Social Break			
	Food for the Soul:	Paul Heath		
	What's Up? (December)	David Hoskin		
	News from the Board	Patrick Kelly		
	Astroimaging Contest	Judy Black		
4:00 PM	Adjournment			

^{*} Times are for Board of Director information only and for informing presenters of the length of their presentations; they will not be published on the Halifax Centre website. Times will be adjusted for each meeting.

AGENDA NOTES

Agenda Item, Proposed By, & Date Proposed	Description Received (& Proposed Motion, if Applicable)	
Agenda Note #1 re: Speakers & 2023 Member	2023 Approved Members Meeting Dates and Events Members' Meeting dates were approved at the November 2022 Board of Directors meeting. They have been posted on the RASC(HC) website.	
Meeting Dates	Confirmed Speakers	
Y	December 4, 2023 Confirmed: John Badowski – Percival Lowell and the canals of Mars	
	Proposed Meeting Speakers, 2024	
	• January 6, 2024	
	Confirmed: Pat Kelly - New ESA probe launched to survey Europa	
	• February 3, 2024	
	• March 2, 2024	
	• April 6, 2024	
	• May 4, 2024	
	• June 1, 2024	
	September 7, 2024	
	• October 5, 2024	

	November 2,2024		
	• December 7, 2024		
	Suggested Speakers / Special Presentations:		
	John Badowski		
	Kaja Rotermund (formation of a high-redshift galaxy cluster)		
	Dr. Samantha Lawler: New to the U of R and very busy rebuilding the astronomy		
	program. She also has her core research and took on a leadership role in the StarLink		
	issues and lobbying the federal government about it. Samantha.Lawler@uregina.ca		
	SMU Astronomy and Physics		
	Grad students		
	Tiffany Fields		
	Luigi Gallo		
	Rob Thacker		
	https://rasc.ca/find-speaker		
Agenda Note #2	2023 Approved Board Meeting Dates		
re: Approved 2023	• Nov 28		
Board of Directors	2024 Proposed Board Meeting Dates		
Meeting Dates	• Jan 2		
Agenda Note #3	From: John Liddard regarding SCO Gate and Key (November 15, 2023)		
SCO Access			
email	Good news		
	, (A)		
	I heard back from Harden Wile and he indicated he's fine if we want to relocate the gate key box		
	near the gate itself. I asked if we can try to attach it to the post itself and he's fine if we want to do		
	that. I'm going to try to get down to SCO as soon as I can to scope out a spot and options for the		
	key box to be relocated.		
	I also asked about leaving the gate open on scheduled member observing nights, if we reinstate		
	them. He has no issue with that asking as we let him know the dates.		
	Sincerely,		
	John		

Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting November 28, 2023 - 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM held via Zoom - Meeting ID 853 0598 1543

Present: Judy Black, Gregg Dill (joined at 8:18pm), Matt Dyer, Lisa Ann Fanning (until 8:21pm), David Hoskin, Peter Hurley, Pat Kelly, John Liddard, Tony McGrath, Kathy Walker, Mary Lou Whitehorne

Regrets: John Nangreaves

1. Welcome & Introductions

Judy called the meeting to order at 7:16pm and welcomed members. She asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda, which had been pre-circulated by email by Peter on November 27, 2023. Judy asked that we review a discussion that had occurred on the RASC National Discussion list about the April 8, 2024 solar eclipse under New Business.

231030MN-Mot01

It was moved by Pat Kelly and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the November 28, 2023 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as amended. CARRIED.

The Action List, which was attached to the minutes of the previous meeting, was reviewed.

From November 29, 2022

Action 9: Open.

From January 10, 2023 Action 10: Open.

From May 2, 2023

Action 4: Open.

From June 6, 2023

Action 5: Closed.

From September 5, 2023

Action 1: Open. Action 3: Open. Action 4: Open. Action 5: Open. Action 7: Closed.

231128MN-Act01

Judy Black and Peter Hurley to review the Inclusivity and Diversity statement.

From October 17, 2023

Action 4: Closed.
Action 9: Closed.

Action 10: Open. Waiting for response.

From October 30, 2023

Action 1-9: Closed.

The minutes of the previous Board meeting held on October 30, 2023 had been circulated by email by Peter on November 27, 2023. Judy provided a correction on the top of page 3.

231128MN-Mot02

It was moved by Kathy Walker and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the October 30, 2023 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as amended. CARRIED.

ONGOING ITEMS

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

Judy reminded us that we had agreed to Members meeting dates in 2024, and to the first Board meeting on January 2, 2024 pending approval by the incoming board after the AGM. Judy pointed out that the start time of the Members meeting on December 2, 2023 after the AGM should be changed to 1:45pm to allow sufficient time for the AGM and switch-over to the Members meeting if necessary. David agreed to MC the Members' meeting. Judy has contacted Paul Heath to see if he has a poem for Food for the Soul. Pat agreed to present News from the Board. Judy indicated that there were only 6 submissions for the Astroimaging contest. It was agreed that we combine all the submissions into the Peoples' Choice category. It was agreed that there was insufficient time to make the changes before the upcoming Members' meeting.

231128MN-Act02

Judy Black to work out the particulars of the Astroimaging contest to be announced at the Members' meeting on December 2, 2023.

The AGM agenda was reviewed. Judy confirmed that Jerry has set up the voting in the Zoom meeting. Judy indicated that there were 2 outstanding reports, the Auditor's report and the Dark-Sky Preserve Committee report. The auditor will be addressed later in this meeting and Peter needs to contact Tony Schellinck to finish the DSP report. As in the past, the collated reports will be distributed before the AGM so that reports won't need to be reviewed individually at the meeting unless there are questions.

231128MN-Mot03

It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Kathy Walker to approve the December 2, 2023 RASC Halifax Centre AGM agenda, as presented. CARRIED.

231128MN-Act03

Judy Black to send the AGM agenda and the collated reports to the RASC Halifax Centre Announce List.

Peter indicated there had been a suggestion that the set of Burnham's Celestial Handbook that had been donated to the Centre could be used as a door prize for the AGM, but it was agreed that there was insufficient time for that to be put in place and that the set should be made available to the Nova East Committee.

3. Report from the National Council Representative

Judy reported that the draft RASC NC terms of reference document C11 has gone to NC members and would be reviewed and hopefully approved at their next meeting on December 3, 2023 so it can be sent to the RASC Board for their consideration and approval.

Judy had distributed to our Board members by email on November 25, 2023 a request from Robyn Foret, who is responsible for compiling the RASC Annual Report, requesting that Centre Annual Reports be sent to him by the end of January. There is a limit of 800 words and 2 photos. There was discussion of what photos should be included and damage at Smileys and at SCO from the flooding were agreed as highlights of the year. Judy will circulate the draft again between Christmas and New Year's for comment and discussion at the Board meeting on January 2, 2024.

231128MN-Act04

Judy Black to circulate the draft RASC Halifax Centre Annual Report to Board members before the January 2, 2024 Board meeting.

4. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube

Judy reported that there had been no changes other than the usual updates.

5. Financial Update

Judy pointed out that we should defer this item, as Gregg wasn't present.

Peter explained that Tim Doucette, our guest speaker at the Members meeting last month, had left his computer mouse in room AT101 after the meeting and Peter had incurred an expense in mailing the mouse back to Tim. While Tim had indicated he would send Peter an e-transfer to cover the postage, Peter asked the Board to consider paying for the postage.

231128MN-Mot04

It was moved by Kathy Walker and seconded by Pat Kelly that the Centre pay the postage to mail Tim Doucette's computer mouse back to him.

CARRIED.

231128MN-Act05

Peter Hurley to tell Tim Doucette the Board approved that the Centre pay for the postage to mail his computer mouse to him.

6. Member Welcome Package

Tony pointed out that Pat has determined how to identify when new members join our Centre and that we should start sending the Welcome Package to new members. He indicated that the action item had originated from a wish to determine members' wants and needs of the Centre, in an effort to keep the membership connected, strong and healthy, and that was a separate issue from the Welcome Package. There was discussion of whether this could be accomplished by sending the Welcome Package to all members and asking them to complete the survey that's included in the Package. Judy suggested that an online survey might be effective.

231128MN-Act06

Judy Black, Jerry Black, and Tony McGrath to explore how to conduct the survey in the Member Welcome Package as an online survey of the entire Centre membership.

It was felt that sending the Package to all members would help inform recent, not just new members, and the reminder might benefit all members.

231128MN-Act07

Tony McGrath to draft a cover letter to accompany the survey explaining the purpose, for review at the January Board meeting.

Matt described a conversation with a new member at the last Members' meeting about access to SCO and asked if that might be captured in the online survey. Judy suggested that perhaps on a quarterly basis, we should have a session at SCO to introduce new members to SCO and what it has to offer and to learn what their expectations of SCO might be. This would be a great way to get new members introduced to the Centre and to other new members.

7. Education and Public Outreach

David indicated that November had been busy but that there was nothing much for December yet, he had one request to speak at a school. In February he will be judging a science fair at Halifax Independent School and he thought he might set up a telescope at the same time if the situation seemed appropriate. He indicated that he and Peter had been discussing making a list of observing sites in the HRM area perhaps to post on the website or to provide to new observers. He had visited Harry DeWolf Park in Bedford and thought that the lighting seemed suitable and that he planned to test the area by setting up a telescope. Mary Lou recommended the Uniacke Estate Museum Park, either the field in front of the house or up onto the drumlin. The gate is locked after-hours, and you have to walk but it's a relatively short distance. In the past, Halifax Centre would observe from that location. It's a good dark-sky site.

Judy asked if we should prepare a short video for parents and teachers on how to safely observe the Solar eclipse on April 2024 that could be distributed to schools for their use. Several members indicated they thought that the National Eclipse Committee was putting something together. David told us there had been discussions about issues associated with the timing of the eclipse and school hours and liability during the last Committee meeting he had attended. David indicated that Tiffany Fields was a member of that committee, and it was agreed to invite her to our January 30 Board meeting. There was a brief discussion about the safety of old viewing glasses. And about viewing locations in Atlantic Canada.

231128MN-Act08

David Hoskin to invite Tiffany Fields to the January 30, 2024 Board meeting to tell us about the plans of the National Eclipse Committee.

There was a question about distributing the eclipse glasses we had purchased from National office, and it was agreed that this should be put on the January Board meeting agenda.

231128MN-Act09

Peter Hurley to put distribution of eclipse glasses on the January 2 and 30, 2024 Board meeting agendas.

Updates/Reports

8. SCO

John Liddard reported he had received a very positive response from Harden Wile of Minas Energy. Harden had indicated that the major work replacing the penstock was complete, the road was passable although it was coarse stone and still needed top dressing and grading. Harden had responded positively to relocating the key box close to the gate and to leaving the gate open for scheduled observing events, he just requested that we let him know in advance of the event.

There was discussion about the value to the Centre of re-establishing regular observing nights. Judy pointed out that there was a statement on the observing page of the Centre website indicating that observing happens on most clear nights. John indicated that when he had last been Observing chair, he had organized regular sessions in that capacity. David suggested picking a regular date such as second Friday of the month with a rain date of the following Friday so people could plan for it. Judy suggested using the Observers Handbook to determine new moon dates to set the dates.

231128MN-Act010

David Hoskin and John Liddard to work on setting dates for regular SCO observing nights for discussion at the January 2, 2024 Board meeting.

There was agreement that it would be good if we could announce it in January to start in February. We would have to remind members via the Centre Announce List that they needed to be subscribed to the Centre Discussion List to be able to coordinate participation. And we would have to work out a mechanism to coordinate carpooling. There was also discussion of the difficulties of coordinating events and getting a group of volunteers committed to "hosting" observing sessions.

9. GLP certificates and training

Judy indicated she had not heard back from the National office, but Dennis Lyons had indicated that GLP training certificates had not been generated at the National level and that it wasn't presently a priority and that we could develop something ourselves if we wanted to. Judy suggested that a letter from the Board on Centre letterhead indicating when the training had been conducted and who instructed it might be sufficient. Several Board members indicated they would like to receive the training and it was suggested that we advertise an online session, with the exam to be administered after a Member's meeting.

10. Nominating Committee

Peter summarized the nominations received to date; Tony McGrath (Pres), Judy Black (VP), himself (Sec) and Gregg Dill (Tres) as executive and David, Matt, John Nangreaves and Jamie Whynot as Directors, leaving two Director positions open. He and Judy summarized the procedures to be followed in the AGM, and the circumstances that would require an election. Judy has the polls required for an election in place now. Peter reported that he had approached Dave Chapman who had accepted a nomination as Auditor for 2022/23 on behalf of Dave Lane. Dave's only condition had been that the audit didn't need to be completed immediately. It was agreed that it didn't need to be completed until the new year. Gregg indicated that he would be comfortable working with Dave.

231128MN-Mot05

It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Gregg Dill to accept Dave Chapman as Auditor for FY2022/23.

CARRIED.

There was discussion of whether the Auditors report should appear on the AGM agenda if there was no report, and it was agreed that the membership should be notified that Dave had been appointed and that the report was late but was coming and that it would appear in Nova Notes once it was completed. There was discussion again of the requirement for an audit and that it was a requirement of our bylaws not NS RJSC or the NS Societies Act. That requirement couldn't be changed before the AGM because of the requirement in the bylaws for a period of notification prior to the AGM; but it was agreed that the Governance Committee will review it again when they meet in January. Changing a bylaw before the next AGM would require 30 days' notice to the membership and then a special resolution to be presented and approved at a member's meeting. It was agreed that Pat would repeat the request for nomination of an Auditor for 2023/24 as part of News from the Board at the meeting on Saturday.

As Gregg was now present, Judy asked if there were any questions regarding the Balance Sheet that Gregg had circulated. There was a question about the increase in depreciation in the last year and Gregg indicated that in the Auditors report last year, it had been suggested that an annual depreciation of 10% was more appropriate than the 3% used previously, which had resulted in the increase. Gregg indicated that he would be at the AGM in person to address any questions that were raised at that time.

Governance

11. Review of Bylaws

Judy pointed out that the Governance Committee wasn't going to meet until January. Another item was the suggestion from Dave Lane in September that we address the retention of historical records; that would include the boxes of financial records that Gregg presently has and the binders and briefcase that Judy had received from Dave Lane. Pat reported that he was halfway through reviewing documents. Judy indicated there would be something ready for the February Board meeting.

New Business

12. 2024 Solar Eclipse

Judy suggested that given the time we should deal with this new item offline because it wasn't likely to generate a position from our Board but that she was suggesting a discussion regarding eclipse viewing and liability issues particularly with respect to schools. The matter had come up in the National discussion list after an Ontario school board had announced that there would be a professional development day and therefore no classes on the day of the eclipse.

Adjournment

There being no other business, Judy adjourned the meeting at 9:15pm. She reminded us that our next meeting was scheduled for January 2, 2024.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Hurley, Secretary

ACTION LIST (November 28, 2023):

From November 29, 2022		
221129MN-Act09	Peter Hurley to put amendment of Bylaw #1 to include use of social media to hold meetings on a future he Board meeting agenda (not January 3, 2023).	Open

From January 10, 20	23	
230110MN-Act10	Peter Hurley to work with David Hoskin to create a list of volunteers to help with observing and outreach requests that are remote to the HRM area.	Open
From May 2, 2023		
230502MN-Act04	Peter Hurley to explore with National office how member statistics are generated from the Driven database.	Open
From September 5, 2	2023	
230905MN-Act01	Gregg Dill and John Liddard to review SCO inventory and confirm items still exist and assign value to assets.	Open
230905MN-Act03	Gregg Dill to submit the RASC Halifax Centre 2021-22 Annual Financial Statement to NS RJSC.	Open
230905MN-Act04	Gregg Dill to provide an update on SCO upgrade fundraising budget.	Open
230905MN-Act05	The Governance Committee to provide a recommendation to the Board regarding retention and disposal of historical documents.	Open
From October 17, 20	23	
231017MN-Act010	Judy Black to email Dennis Lyon and Jenna Hinds to inquire if RASC National office or other Centres had a template for a GLP training certificate.	Open
From November 28,	2023	
231128MN-Act01	Judy Black and Peter Hurley to review the Inclusivity and Diversity statement.	Open
231128MN-Act02	Judy Black to work out the particulars of the Astroimaging contest to be announced at the Members' meeting on December 2, 2023.	Open
231128MN-Act03	Judy Black to send the AGM agenda and the collated reports to the RASC Halifax Centre Announce List.	Open
231128MN-Act04	Judy Black to circulate the draft RASC Halifax Centre Annual Report to Board members before the January 2, 2024 Board meeting.	Open
231128MN-Act05	Peter Hurley to tell Tim Doucette the Board approved that the Centre pay for the postage to mail his computer mouse to him.	Open
231128MN-Act06	Judy Black, Jerry Black, and Tony McGrath to explore how to conduct the survey in the Member Welcome Package as an online survey of the entire Centre membership.	Open
231128MN-Act07	Tony McGrath to draft a cover letter to accompany the survey explaining the purpose, for review at the January Board meeting.	Open
231128MN-Act08	David Hoskin to invite Tiffany Fields to the January 30, 2024 Board meeting to tell us about the plans of the National Eclipse Committee.	Open
231128MN-Act09	Peter Hurley to put distribution of eclipse glasses on the January 2 and 30, 2024 Board meeting agendas.	Open
231128MN-Act010	David Hoskin and John Liddard to work on setting dates for regular SCO observing nights for discussion at the January 2, 2024 Board meeting.	Open

MOTION LIST (November 28, 2023):

231128MN-Mot01	It was moved by Pat Kelly and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the November 28, 2023 RASC
	Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as amended.
	CARRIED.

231128MN-Mot02	It was moved by Kathy Walker and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the October 30, 2023 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as amended. CARRIED.
231128MN-Mot03	It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Kathy Walker to approve the December 2, 2023 RASC Halifax Centre AGM agenda, as presented. CARRIED.
231128MN-Mot04	It was moved by Kathy Walker and seconded by Pat Kelly that the Centre pay the postage to mail Tim Doucette's computer mouse back to him. CARRIED.
231128MN-Mot05	It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Gregg Dill to accept Dave Chapman as Auditor for FY2022/23. CARRIED.