



RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, November 1, 2022: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Via Zoom - Meeting ID 816 1540 4716

Agenda Items				
Time	Item	Purpose	Responsibility	Support Documents / Notes
7:00 PM	1. Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of Agenda Review Action List Approval of Previous Minutes of Meeting 	Information Approval	Judy Black	Pre-circulated: Agenda: November 1, 2022 Minutes: September 27, 2022
ONGOING ITEMS				
	2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 2022 Member's Meeting Date Confirmation and Format b. Confirm Member's Meeting agenda c. Zoom/SMU Bookings d. Guest Speakers & Ideas for Future Presentations 	Ongoing Discussion Approval	Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #1: 2022 Member Meeting Dates & Speakers Refer to Agenda Notes #2: Approved 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Dates
	3. Report from National Council Representative	Information Decision	Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #3: Report from National Council (NC)
	4. RASC Halifax Centre Website & YouTube	Information	Judy Black	n/a
	5. Financial Update	Information Discussion	Gregg Dill	n/a
	6. Recruitment	Discussion Decision	Judy Black	n/a
	7. Education & Public Outreach (EPO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Requests 	Discussion Decision	David Hoskin	n/a
GOVERNANCE				
	8. Nominating Committee	Discussion Decision	Peter Hurley	n/a
	9. Terms of Reference: Nova East Planning Committee	Discussion Approval	Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #4: NEPC
UPDATES / REPORTS				
	10. SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates Report: SCO BBQ 	Information Discussion Decision	John Liddard Judy Black	n/a
	11. FINAL Report: 2022 Nova East (Aug 26-28)	Information Approval	Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #5: NEPC Final Report
	12. FINAL Report: Dark-Sky Weekend (Aug 26-28)	Information Approval	Judy Black	n/a
NEW BUSINESS				
	13. AGM (Dec 3, 2022)	Information Request	Judy Black	Board and Committee Annual reports required by November 13, 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judy: President, NEPC, NC Pat: VP Peter: Secretary, DSW, Nominating Committee Gregg: Audited financial statement

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David: EPO, Observing Lisa Ann: Nova Notes
	14. Dan McLelland Memorial Lecture, SMU	Information	Judy	Friday, November 25, 2022
9:00 PM	Adjournment (Next meeting: November 29, 2022)			

RASC, Halifax Centre – Member’s Meeting (Hybrid)

Saturday, November 5, 2021 – 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Via Zoom – Meeting ID 870 2875 6385

Agenda Items		
Time*	Item	Responsibility
1:00 PM	Welcome & Introductions Photo Montage	Judy Black David Hoskin
1:15 PM	Presentations: David Hoskin – <i>Eyepieces</i> Judy Black – <i>News from the National Council</i> Dave Chapman – <i>What’s in a name? How celestial objects are named</i>	David Hoskin Judy Black Dave Chapman
3:15 PM	What’s Up? (November)	David Hoskin
3:45 PM	News from the Board	Judy Black
4:00 PM	Adjournment	
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	<i>Astro-Chat</i>	

* 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.

Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting November 1, 2022 - 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Present: Judy Black, David Hoskin, Mary Lou Whitehorne, John Liddard, Kathy Walker, Pat Kelly, Jaime Whynot

Regrets: Lisa Ann Fanning, Peter Hurley, Gregg Dill, Tim Doucette, Matt Dyer

1. Welcome & Introductions

Judy called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm; quorum was not met. Members agreed to go through the agenda and to discuss what they could and that no decisions could be made due to lack of quorum. Agenda was not approved. Approval of the Minutes of the September 27 Board meeting was deferred to next meeting, and the associated Action List was not reviewed.

Thanks to Peter, the Meeting Agenda and previous minutes had been circulated by email. Pat’s suggested edits to the September minutes have been noted. The agenda was reviewed. Judy had two information items to add to the bottom of the agenda – Maclennan Memorial Lecture and Dave Chapman’s book signing.

Dave Lane had provided an update earlier today on the status of the hybrid meeting. Things were progressing with respect to organizing equipment needed and pre-tests of the system; however, the true test will be the members meeting. He had requested two members to be remote testers earlier in the day of November 1; Mary Lou agreed to do so from home.

ONGOING ITEMS

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

Upcoming meeting dates are summarized in Agenda Note #1. Judy reviewed speakers for the November 5 Members Meeting and the December 3 AGM/Members Meeting.

- Consequent to Randy Attwood not attending the November 5 meeting, four members stepped up – David Hoskin, Dave Lane, Dave Chapman and Judy Black.
- Judy had contacted Tarek El Wazzi but he was unavailable but was willing to present in February, March or April.
- Tiffany Field will be the guest speaker for the AGM in December.
- The January 2023 meeting will have a Youth Day theme with the confirmed speakers as noted.

Pat reminded members he would present “The Sun is not an average star; the Earth is not an average planet” in February or March; he had previously presented it to the Blomidon Naturalists Society (BNS).

3. Report from National Council (NC) Representative

Judy gave a brief summary of actions taken since the June 2022 RASC GA and AGM. Following the Open Letter to the RASC Board of Directors from the RASC National Council, She and Stephen Nourse (President, Ottawa Centre) met with the Board on October 15. The meeting was very positive and productive with everyone wanting to move forward. She asked if she could provide a report from the National Council at the upcoming meeting and for an ongoing column in Nova Notes regarding National Council News. Members agreed this would be a good thing to do. Judy reminded members that there were only 4 NC meetings per year so reports through these two means would not necessarily be monthly.

4. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube Channel

Judy indicated that the only changes to the Website had been updates as needed. The November What's up? has been loaded. Consequent to a request from Dave Chapman, she noted there is no history of Nova Notes Editors nor of dates, location, chairperson(s) and speakers for Nova East / Camping Observing Weekend (COW). She will be looking into this in 2023 and will make suggestions for addition to the website at that time.

5. Financial Update

This item was deferred as Gregg wasn't in attendance.

6. Recruitment

Judy noted that David Hoskin had suggested a Dalhousie University student had expressed interest in becoming a Board member. David agreed to contact her to determine if the interest is still there.

221101MN-Act01

David Hoskin to contact the Dalhousie University student about involvement with the RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors.

7. Observing & Education and Public Outreach

David reported that he and Peter put on a morning presentation at the Discovery Center on October 15th at the Discovery Centre. It was not as well attended as the August event but that may be a function of time of year. They estimate interactions with 30-40 individuals, mostly in family groups. He also had an event in River John on October 28 with their local Astronomy Club, the Night Owls. The Head Librarian is planning to become a member of the RASC and will act as a conduit to the other members of the Night Owls for materials. To the delight of the River John Library, our Centre donated the small Sky Watcher telescope with tripod that was in the SCO Warm Room. Dave cleaned, centre spotted and collimated the mirror and tightened up the mount before handing it over.

David also has an upcoming Zoom event with Kings County Academy to talk about some aspect of astronomy and to provide an electronically assisted observation session.

Jaime Whynot noted that she and Wayne Mansfield held an observing session on October 8 in Liverpool where 16 people attended; there were several children in the group. They were shown Jupiter, Saturn and the Moon.

GOVERNANCE

8. Nominating Committee

Board of Directors Meeting: November 1, 2022

No report from the Nominating Committee. Deferred to next meeting.

Members discussed the status of current Board members with respect to re-offering or stepping down. Suggestions for nominations for President were also made. Pat and Judy agreed they would meet with Peter via Zoom to go through the membership list to determine potential candidates.

9. Terms of Reference: Nova East Terms of Reference

This was deferred to next meeting.

UPDATES / REPORTS

10. SCO

John Liddard reported he replaced the two GFCI plugs in the roll-off and for now are functioning. We were planning on replacing the plugs while managing the GFCI functionality with breakers in the breaker panel, based on the last meeting. It turned out that that's a little more involved than anticipated. Wouldn't be a problem for one of the outlets, but the second one is configured in a slightly different way so that it requires a different type of GFCI outlet and it's a two-pole breaker.

The pilot light on the furnace would not light despite the tank being 70% full. It would need servicing. At this point, we could also look into installation of a 2-pole breaker and installation of the 2200W electric heater stored in the Warm Room; these would require an electrician. The electrical line between the Warm Room and the Storeroom may be a challenge if the work is conducted late in the fall or winter.

Members agreed that John will obtain a price quote for the propane furnace servicing and for the electrician's work (McKinnon Electric) for the next Board meeting. A decision will be made then as to which route to take.

221101MN-Act02

John Liddard will acquire price quotes for servicing the furnace and for acquiring an electrician's services for electrical heat installation.

11. Report: 2022 Nova East

Judy noted the report had not been circulated as the financial statement had not been attached; the full report will be available at the next meeting and at the AGM for approval. It was noted by members the report did not need approval, only consideration by the Board.

12. Report: 2022 Dark-Sky Weekend

Deferred to next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

13. AGM (December 3, 2022)

Judy had forwarded the previous year's reports to those who were required this year to produce a report. She shared the 2021 AGM agenda with members and there were no suggested changes provided other than changing the names of those responsible for reports.

221101MN-Act03

Judy Black will circulate the draft agenda for the AGM and Members Meeting of December 3, 2022 for inclusion with the November 29, 2022 Board meeting agenda.

14. MacLennan Memorial Lecture

Judy gave thanks to RASC member Daphne Themelis for reminding Peter of this annual event. Judy contact Dr. Rob Thacker who informed her the date was November 25, 2022; details to be provided soon. There was a discussion about hosting a display again this year, but members agreed that if it was a Zoom session or a hybrid session that a display probably should not be considered as all attendees would not benefit from it and the potential challenge of obtaining volunteers to person it.

15. Dave Chapman & Cathy LeBlanc Book Signing Event

Judy noted that Dave Chapman had sent an invitation through the RASC discussion list for members to attend. She and David Hoskin noted they registered through EventBrite. Judy agreed to provide a brief welcome from the Halifax Centre and David Hoskin, given he was to be in attendance, agreed to provide a small display.

Adjournment

Without quorum, not all business could be addressed. Member agreed to adjourn at 8:44 pm. Judy reminded members that the next meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Black, President
On behalf of Peter Hurley, Secretary

ACTION LIST (as of November 1, 2022):

<i>From May 3, 2022</i>		
220503MN-Act03	Judy Black to raise the concerns to the GA Working Group regarding the GA and AGM potentially being held separately and to determine if members have received any feedback from their members.	Open
<i>From September 6, 2022</i>		
220906MN-Act01	Peter Hurley and Tim Doucette to discuss light pollution abatement, where it best fits within the DSP Committee or as a separate entity, and report how best to go forward at the October Board meeting.	Open
220906MN-Act03	Judy Black to contact Dave Lane and Gregg Dill to organize the inventory of SCO equipment.	
<i>From September 27, 2022</i>		
220927MN-Act01	Judy Black to add Recruitment to the October 5, 2022 Members meeting agenda, as an information item.	Open
220927MN-Act02	Peter Hurley to contact Stephen Payne to enquire about the status of the Dalhousie Planetarium and enquire if RASC could help in some way.	Open
220927MN-Act03	Pat Kelly to arrange to add Lisa Ann Fanning as an administrator of the RASC Halifax Centre Facebook page.	Open
220927MN-Act04	Judy Black to obtain contact information for John Wood's replacement and invite them and Harden Wile and their families to the October 21/22, 2022 BBQ and observing event.	Open
220927MN-Act05	Judy Black to remind members of the October 21/22, 2022 BBQ and observing night at the Members meeting on October 1, 2022 and through the Centre Announce list.	Open
220927MN-Act06	Peter Hurley to organize a work party to clean up SCO before the BBQ on October 21/22, 2022.	Open
220927MN-Act07	John Liddard to contact Minas Energy for permission to open the gate to SCO for the BBQ on October 21/22, 2022.	Open

220927MN-Act08	David Hoskin to obtain the Sky-Watcher Newtonian telescope from SCO for donation to the group in River John.	Open
From November 1, 2022		
221101MN-Act01	David Hoskin to contact the Dalhousie University student about involvement with the RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors.	Open
221101MN-Act02	John Liddard will acquire price quotes for servicing the furnace and for acquiring an electrician's services for electrical heat installation.	Open
221101MN-Act03	Judy Black will circulate the draft agenda for the AGM and Members Meeting of December 3, 2022 for inclusion with the November 29, 2022 Board meeting agenda.	Open

MOTION LIST (November 1, 2022):

No motions were made due to lack of quorum.

AGENDA NOTES

Agenda Item, Proposed By, & Date Proposed	Description Received (& Proposed Motion, if Applicable)
Agenda Note #1 re: 2022 Member Meeting Dates & Speakers	<p>A) 2022 Approved Member Meeting Dates and Events Members' Meeting dates were approved at the November 30, 2021, Board of Directors meetings. They have been posted on the RASC(HC) website.</p> <p>NOTE: We have space confirmed with SMU for the November and December meetings.</p> <p>B) Confirmed Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 5, 2022 (Hybrid meeting) – Host: Mary Lou Whitehorne David Hoskin (Eyepieces) Judy Black (News from National Council) Dave Chapman (What's in a Name? How celestial objects are named) December 3, 2022 (+ AGM) (Hybrid meeting) Tiffany Field (SMU & the BGO) Chris Young (Sky Lore) January 7, 2023 (Hybrid meeting) Youth Day – Keegan Oickle, Silas Eastwood, (?)Hasan Ali <p>C) Suggested Speakers Special Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaja Rotermund (formation of a high-redshift galaxy cluster) https://rasc.ca/find-speaker 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 SCANS Gary Welch – Life in Space Chair, Observing Committee (Blake Nancarrow): "Observing. Looking up.... now and in the future" RASC programs now and in the future. from Dave Chapman/Peter Jedicke) Prof. Philip McCausland (also a Handbook contributor) on the topic of the Golden Meteorite. He runs the Canadian Fireball Reporting Centre. email: pmccausl@uwo.ca Nathan Hellner-Mastelman – <i>Size and Scale</i> as well as <i>Seeing Beyond</i> ("a colloquial term in the astronomy community which means "to see the true smallness of the Earth and human civilization when put against the vastness of the universe." 15 minutes)
Agenda Note #2 re: Approval of 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Dates	<p>Approved Board Meeting Dates, 2022 Member Meeting dates for 2022 were approved by the Board. However, Board meeting dates need to be reaffirmed by the newly elected Board. The following dates are all on Tuesday evenings unless otherwise noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nov 1

<p>Agenda Notes #3: Report from National Council</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">• Nov 29</p> <p>From Judy Black, National Council (NC) Representative for Halifax Centre, and NC Chair</p> <p>Consequent to the meeting held September 11, 2022, and the Open Letter sent to the Board of Directors, the president of Ottawa Centre Stephen Nourse and me as NC Chair were invited to attend the upcoming Board meeting on October 15, 2022 to discuss the document and to hopefully develop some action items to move things forward. The Open Letter had been shared with our Centre Board members on August 16, 2022.</p> <p>Progress has been made since Halifax Centre Board of Directors last met:</p> <p>1- Society Board of Directors Meeting – October 15, 2022 This was highly productive and very positive. Clarifications were made of the Open Letter and the Board was very attentive to and receptive of the NC concerns and some possible solutions. The Board was told that they were viewed as an Ivory Tower and that the 5000+ members represented through the Centre Reps at the NC were not being consulted. It was acknowledged the Board was the ultimate decision-making body; however, the best decisions would be acquired through consultation with the membership.</p> <p>Three areas for improvement were identified: communication (from and to all levels within the Society), collaboration (between the Board and the NC) and transparency (especially in the area of finances.</p> <p>Driven, the current database, was also cited as a bane to many members with so many faults; the Board fully agreed. We were assured this was on the Board’s agenda and would be addressed. Items like the remote telescope, the telescope museum, SkyNews, the OH, and other “member benefits” were briefly mentioned and it was suggested that a review be conducted to define the term and then evaluate what is currently cited as a benefit. Staffing challenges were also briefly discussed.</p> <p>It was agreed that updates of RASC Board activities be reported on a regular basis through the weekly or monthly updates, whether or not the activities were fait du complit. Members need to know that work is being done on their behalf to improve the Society and right now they do not know what’s going on.</p> <p>The actions going forward include: a- the Board addressing Driven, the membership to be advised of what’s being worked on, acquire more Treasurers to respond to solicitation for membership on the finance committee b- The NC approving the draft position descriptions for the Chair, Vice-Chair, Council Recorder and Centre Representative to the National Council. Terms of Reference for the Council will be drafted for considerations once its role and relationship to the Board have improved. c- The 2017 RASC Strategic Plan will be reviewed for items to be actioned.</p> <p>2- Joint Statement – October 21, 2022 Because of criticisms based on lack of knowledge of what was transpiring came through the NC Forum and there was the desire to begin the open communication between the Board and the NC, RASC President Charles Ennis and I sent the following Joint Statement through the NC and President Forums.</p> <p>Last weekend the RASC Board of Directors met with Judy Black, National Council Chair, and Stephen Nourse, President of Ottawa Centre. We had a very frank and productive discussion and came up with various action items. Three key areas were identified: communication, collaboration, and transparency. We recognized that these needed improvement between the Board and National Council (NC), the Board with the members at large, and the Centre Representatives with their Centres.</p> <p>Transparency is certainly a key issue as identified in the Open Letter and in communications in the discussion lists. If you haven’t seen that letter, it is on the President’s List. Prior to this meeting, we issued an invitation to Centre treasurers which resulted in a new member for the Finance Committee from the Kingston Centre. The Society Treasurer is being given an hour at the next National Council meeting along with the Executive Director and other Board members to brief the NC on the state of finances to seek input from the NC in the budget planning process.</p>
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	<p>Another area identified by members is the database and the challenges it currently presents. The Board has come up with strategies for dealing with Driven and will update the NC on this at their next meeting on December 4.</p> <p>The NC has drafted job descriptions for Chair, Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary and Centre Representative to the NC and hope to have them approved at the next NC meeting. Once approved, the Terms of Reference for the NC will be drafted to reflect a newly defined role for the NC within the RASC. Members of the Board and NC are openly working on this and talking about it online. Both sides agreed that it was a promising start and look forward to working together.</p> <p>Although it is frustrating and disappointing to see complaints about issues that have been previously identified and are being addressed, we know that communication from and to all levels of the RASC needs improvement - and it is improving. Please know the challenges raised by the Centres through the Centre Representatives and the Presidents and included in the Open Letter are being addressed. We have listened and will continue to listen to your concerns. You will see changes and be notified of them.</p> <p>It has taken several years for the RASC to arrive at this stage in its history. Not all challenges raised in the Open Letter can be fixed overnight. The Board and the NC have agreed to communicate progress made on these challenges to members, to collaborate on projects and direction the RASC is to take, and thus increase transparency by helping the NC and their Centre members understand the why, how, who and when of those actions.</p> <p>It is our sincere hope that members recognize we are "banding together" to find solutions to the challenges raised. Our hope is that members who are concerned about the RASC come forward to become part of the solution. We have to change the way of thinking to "we", not "them" and "us". The talents and expertise of members within the RASC can be pooled. It is by working together as a team with these pooled talents that the RASC can change to become the Society we all want it to be.</p> <p>Charles Ennis, President, RASC Judy Black, National Council Chair, RASC</p> <p>3- NC Meeting – December 4, 2022</p> <p>As noted in the Joint Statement, the Society Treasurer, ED and other Board members will be present to address the state of finances and to seek input in the budget planning process. They will also inform the NC of the strategies they developed to deal with <i>Driven</i>. A huge step forward in collaboration and communication.</p> <p>As your representative and as NC Chair, I see great promise for change in the coming year. President Charles Ennis and I have had numerous phone calls in the past three months to discuss how to go forward. He has initiated calls for discussions and is very receptive of calls from me. There is a positivity that I hope will translate into fixing what is considered broken and to strengthening the Society as a whole. As noted in the Joint Statement, it will take time and my optimism hopes we see significant change in the coming year. I will keep our Board informed of progress made and please continue to bring your concerns forward to address at the NC.</p> <p>Request: To improve the communications aspect going forward, I would like permission from the Board to include a brief report from the NC at members meetings starting November 5 and in editions of Nova Notes beginning Nov/Dec 2022.</p> <p>Regards, Judy Black, Halifax Centre Representative to the NC</p>
<p>Agenda Notes #4: NEPC</p>	<p>From Judy Black</p> <p>At the wrap-up meeting of the Nova East Planning Committee, the terms of reference were reviewed. The current version can be found on our website: http://halifax.rasc.ca/images/documents/B2_TOR_Committees.pdf</p> <p>The Board is being asked to approve three changes to the policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair Appointment and Responsibilities: Recommend changing the date cited in the statement #1 from "October 31 of each calendar year" to "January 31 of each calendar year". 2. Committee Membership: Recommend changing the date cited in the statement #4 from "Members will be appointed annually prior to September 30 of each calendar year by the Board of Halifax Centre" to "Recommended that members will be appointed no later than February 14 of each calendar year by the Board of Halifax Centre".

	<p>3. Meetings: The current first sentence does not reflect the current situation of using Zoom as the sole means of hosting meetings or as part of the hybrid meeting. Recommend changing the first sentence to read: The Nova East Planning Committee will conduct its business through meetings in person, by email, or through other social media.</p>
<p>Agenda Notes #5: NEPC FINAL: Report</p>	<p>The Committee is asking for approval of the report that will also be included in the reports presented for approval at the AGM. The report was circulated to members as a separate document.</p>

Approved November 29, 2022