

**Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Halifax Centre**  
**Annual General Meeting (AGM)**  
**Saturday, December 7, 2024 – 1:00-1:45 PM**  
 Via Zoom - Meeting ID 849 0006 6600

Time	Item
1:00 PM	<p><b>Agenda</b></p> <p><b>1. Welcome &amp; Opening Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Approval of 2024 Agenda (poll)</li> <li>b. Approval of AGM Minutes (December 2, 2023) (poll)</li> <li>c. Auction for Roy Bishops' Maksutov-Newtonian Telescope, Part 1</li> <li>d. Appointment of Auditor for 2024-2025</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Reports (attached)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Treasurer report – Dave Chapman for Gregg Dill</li> <li>b. Q&amp;A regarding pre-circulated reports</li> <li>c. Approval of reports as presented (with any amendments) (poll)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President Report – Tony McGrath</li> <li>• VP Report – Judy Black</li> <li>• Secretary Report – Peter Hurley</li> <li>• National Council Representative Report – Judy Black</li> <li>• Dark-Sky Preserve Committee – Peter Hurley, Tony Schellinck</li> <li>• Education &amp; Public Outreach (EPO) Chair Report – David Hoskin</li> <li>• Governance Committee Report – Judy Black</li> <li>• Nova East Report – Chris Young</li> <li>• Nova Notes – Lisa Ann Fanning, John McPhee</li> <li>• Observing Chair Report – David Hoskin</li> <li>• St. Croix Observatory (SCO) Report – John Liddard</li> <li>• Webmaster Report – Jerry Black</li> <li>• Auditor Report – TBD</li> <li>• Librarian Report – TBD</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Call for Nominations and Election of 2024 Board of Directors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Nominating Committee Report – Peter Hurley           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nominations for Board of Directors</li> <li>• Elections for Officer and Director positions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>4. Call for Nominations for Appointed Positions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Nominations for Appointed Positions – Peter Hurley</li> </ul>
1:45 PM	<p><b>5. By-Law No. 1 Amendments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Governance Review Committee Overview of Suggested Amendments</li> <li>b. Special Resolution of Members</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Adjournment of AGM</b></p>

**1. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Judy Black welcomed the nine RASC Halifax Centre members meeting by Zoom and the 28 attending in-person), stating Halifax Centre welcomes all with an interest in astronomy, without prejudice, and that the stars belong to everyone. Halifax Centre also respectfully acknowledges that we live and observe on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. Quorum was met.

The agenda for the afternoon was explained, i.e., the AGM was held first followed by the regularly scheduled member's meeting. The word "poll" in some of the items listed meant there were votes to be taken, such as approval of agenda, minutes, etc. Only members in good standing were allowed to vote.

**a. Approval of 2024 Agenda**

The agenda was presented for approval. It was explained the Treasurer, Nominating and By-Law Review reports would be addressed individually. The other reports cited had been pre-circulated and discussion for clarification purposes only would be held.

Judy Black invited members to participate at some level – on the Board, as the Chair and just as importantly as a member of a Committee. Governance review has been completed for another few years. She invited all to come have fun and be part of the Centre Team. She noted the acronym TEAM – Together Each Achieves More.

**241207AGM-Mot01:**

It was moved by Bob Russell and seconded by Blair MacDonald to approve the December 7, 2024, AGM agenda as circulated.

CARRIED unanimously.

**b. Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes**

The minutes of the December 2, 2023, AGM had been pre-circulated to members and were also available online for one year. No errors or omissions were noted.

**241207AGM-Mot02:**

It was moved by Mary Lou Whitehorne and seconded by Chris Young to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2023 AGM as posted on the RASC Halifax Centre website.

CARRIED unanimously with 1 abstention.

**c. Auction for Roy Bishop's Maksutov-Newtonian Telescope, Part 1**

Through social media and membership announce list, members were apprised of the features of the telescope gifted by Dr. Roy Bishop to Mary Lou Whitehorne in May, valued at approximately \$3,000.00. She decided to gift it to the Centre for a silent auction. The funds raised at the auction would go to the maintenance fund being set up for the St. Croix Observatory (SCO) in honour of Dave Lane. Roy's telescopes always have exquisite optics so encouraged bidding. Bidding is resuming at this meeting on Zoom and in the room; the winning bid will be announced at the end of this meeting.

Questions were asked about donating other scopes for this purpose. Mary Lou noted the Centre had a policy regarding donations that can be found on the Centre Website in "About Us".

**d. Appointment of a New Auditor, 2024-2025 Fiscal Year**

The Board had approached Dave Chapman to continue in his role as Auditor for 2024-2025. He had agreed.

**241207AGM-Mot03:**

It was moved by Paul Heath and seconded by Tony Schellinck to approve the appointment of David Chapman as the 2024-2025 Auditor.

CARRIED unanimously with 1 abstention.

## **2. Reports**

**(Note: Compiled reports will be included in the Jan/Feb 2025 edition of Nova Notes.)**

Judy Black noted the reports from the Board and the appointed positions had been pre-circulated October 29, November 22, and December 3 so would not be read during this meeting.

**a. Treasurer Report**

Dave Chapman addressed the Treasurer report prepared by Gregg Dill. If there are any questions, we will send them to Gregg to address. Dave will conduct the 2023-2024 audit for presentation early in the coming year. This year and last year were a little unusual partly due to Nova East. The Nova East Star Party was cancelled last year; registration funds submitted by members showed as income; these funds were returned but cashing of refund cheques were not completed before end of fiscal year. Nova East this year was small possibly due to the weather so income was smaller. Hopefully next year will return to normal.

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Halifax Centre Comparative Balance Sheet Years Ending September 30, 2023 and September 30, 2024			
September 30, 2024 Activity to: September 30, 2024	Years Ended September 30		Amount of Increase or (Decrease) during 2024
	2024	2023	
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash	\$11,783.33	\$10,175.49	\$1,607.84
Investments	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Accounts Receivable	\$485.97	\$282.22	\$203.75
Library Estimated	\$1,147.61	\$1,183.11	(\$35.50)
Observatory Equipment	\$8,263.10	\$9,178.78	(\$915.68)
Miscellaneous Estimated	\$13.00	\$0.00	\$13.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$29,693.01</b>	<b>\$28,819.60</b>	<b>\$873.41</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable	\$1,013.33	\$2,111.30	(\$1,097.97)
<b>Capital</b>			
Nova East Working Equity	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Common Equity	\$23,679.68	\$21,708.30	\$1,971.38
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>\$28,679.68</b>	<b>\$26,708.30</b>	<b>\$1,971.38</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Capital</b>	<b>\$29,693.01</b>	<b>\$28,819.60</b>	<b>\$873.41</b>

cited. A revision to the value of the SCO buildings and their contents will be done in the coming so that a more accurate accounting of them will be seen next year.

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Halifax Centre Comparative Income Statement Years Ending September 30, 2023 and September 30, 2024			
	Years Ended September 30		Amount of Increase or (Decrease) during 2024
	2024	2023	
<b>Revenue</b>			
Membership Fees	\$3,463.88	\$3,364.77	\$99.11
Donations	\$704.00	\$350.00	\$354.00
Observatory Donations	\$140.00	\$0.00	\$140.00
Education & Outreach	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interest	\$449.81	\$63.14	\$386.67
Sales of Merchandise	\$1,325.00	\$340.00	\$985.00
Nova East (Net)	\$430.38	\$1,190.00	(\$759.62)
National Processing Fees (Income)	(\$12.87)	(\$4.91)	(\$7.96)
Miscellaneous	\$122.00	\$0.00	\$122.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,622.20</b>	<b>\$5,303.00</b>	<b>\$1,319.20</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Meetings	\$411.51	\$230.00	\$181.51
Depreciation and write offs	\$951.18	\$1,056.23	(\$105.05)
Equipment and Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Purchase of merchandise	\$675.73	\$490.51	\$185.22
Office Administration	\$329.33	\$0.00	\$329.33
Educational Activities	\$0.00	\$35.80	(\$35.80)
Insurance	\$1,966.00	\$1,837.00	\$129.00
Awards and Donations	\$120.00	\$120.00	\$0.00
National Office Processing	\$96.92	\$106.53	(\$9.61)
Operating Expenses SCO	\$30.15	\$710.76	(\$680.61)
Miscellaneous (NE refunds)	\$70.00	\$1,190.00	(\$1,120.00)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,650.82</b>	<b>\$5,776.83</b>	<b>(\$1,126.01)</b>
<b>operational surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$1,971.38</b>	<b>(\$473.83)</b>	<b>\$2,445.21</b>

#### 241207AGM-Mot04:

It was moved by Blair MacDonald and seconded by Chris Young to approve the Financial Report as presented.

CARRIED unanimously with 1 abstention.

#### b. Written Pre-Circulated Reports

The **Comparative Income Statement** as of September 30, 2024, was presented with a few things highlighted. Generally speaking the numbers were similar to last year.

#### Income:

Membership fees were up a bit. There are 146 members with 18 Life members that do not pay memberships; however, many Life members do donate annually to the Centre. Donations are also received when Members renew their RASC membership.

We managed to make a profit on items purchased for sale to members, e.g., calendar, ETU Guides and solar glasses.

#### Expenses:

Expenses for meetings was mostly due to costs associated to the Zoom subscription.

The value of depreciation and write-offs are

There was a modest increase to the increase in property/liability Insurance. SCO operating expense was due to nominal tax expense.

The **Comparative Balance Statement** as of September 30, 2024, was presented.

#### Assets:

The Centre has \$11,783.33 in cash. Two GICs worth \$4000 each have the principal reinvested. Accounts payable reflects amount of money owed to the Centre.

D. Themelis noted the income from Nova East is cited but there are no expenses. Dave wondered if this was reflected in "NE Net" in the Comparative Statement.

T. Schellinck inquired how members can donate to the Centre. Judy Black noted the donation can be sent via e-transfer to the Treasurer, making note that it is a donation to the Centre. Dave reminded members that because the RASC Halifax Centre is not a charity, they would not receive a receipt for their donation.

Judy Black asked if there were any questions regarding the remaining reports that had been circulated. None were received.

**241207AGM-Mot05**

It was moved by Mary Lou Whitehorne and seconded by Chris Young to approve the executive and appointed position reports as pre-circulated  
CARRIED unanimously with 1 abstention.

**3. Call for Nominations and Election of 2024 Board of Directors**

Peter Hurley, Chair of the Nomination Committee, presented the nominations for the Board of Directors. He thanked his fellow members Tony McGrath and Judy Black. The slate of nominees for the 2025 Board of Directors was then presented as follows:

Executive Committee

President – Tony McGrath  
Vice-President – OPEN  
Secretary – Judy Black  
Treasurer – Gregg Dill

Directors

Matthew Dyer  
David Hoskin  
Peter Hurley  
Vincent Vallee  
1 OPEN position

Peter noted that according to our Centre’s By-Law No. 1, there is a requirement for up to 10 directors; we are open to nominations for the two open positions. There were 3 calls for nominations from the floor and from the online members in attendance for the 2025 Board of Directors.

**241207AGM-Mot06:**

It was moved by Bob Russell and seconded by Gary Weber to close nominations.  
CARRIED unanimously.

There being no further nominations, the 2025 Board of Directors positions were elected by acclamation. Congratulations to the newly elected Board. Peter noted the Board can approve nomination to the Board. He noted the position descriptions are on our website in *About Us*.

**4. Call for Nominations for Appointed Positions**

The Board had approved appointments at previous deliberations. There are a number of vacant positions.

Auditor, 2024-2025	Dave Chapman
Honorary President	Patrick Kelly
Governance review Committee	Judy Black
Education & Public Outreach (EPO), Chair	David Hoskin
Observing Chair	David Hoskin
Nova Notes, Editors	Lisa Ann Fanning, John McPhee
Webmaster	Webmaster
DSP Committee, Co-Chairs	Peter Hurley, vacant co-chair
Communications Chair	vacant
Librarian	vacant
Nominating Committee	vacant
Chair, Nova East Planning Committee	vacant
SCO Manager	vacant

Peter Hurley asked that members contact him or any other Board member regarding any further nominations or for volunteering. He stated the appointments would be approved by the incoming Board at their January 7, 2025, meeting.

Paul Heath asked if the Board and appointed lists as presented would be posted on our website. Jerry Black, Webmaster, agreed to post them on the Home page.

Dave Chapman inquired if a communications committee existed. Judy Black explained A communications plan had been developed by Judy Black, Dave Chapman and Melody Hamilton; this will be revised. She also noted the apology made in her Vice-President report for not having addressed this in the past year. One will be formed in January-February 2025 to review how and with whom we communicate. Any member can participate on this committee.

## **5. By-Law No. 1 (2024) Amendments**

Judy Black noted the proposed changes and the rationale for the changes had been pre-circulated three times. She noted that all gender references were removed and the spelling of the by-law title was changed. She then outlined the process of approval:

- 1- Presented to Board of Directors for approval to forward to members (Oct. 29)
- 2- Circulation to members at least 30 days before the AGM (Oct. 29, Nov. 22, Dec. 3)
- 3- Presentation and discussion of changes at AGM
- 4- Proposed changes and amendments proposed at AGM approved by ***Special Resolution of Members***
- 5- Documentation forwarded to the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) for their review and approval.
- 6- Enactment of By-Law No. 1 (2024) as of date approved by the RJSC.

Judy then provided a quick outline of the changes. She noted there were no changes in general procedures; the proposed changes dealt more with clarification of roles and existing procedures. Our By-Law is also sent to the National Board to ensure there are no conflicts with RASC policy or By-Law No. 1.

### **Section 1: Definitions**

- a- Added “hybrid meeting” due to incorporation of Zoom meetings and changed to reference of “National member”.

### **Section 5: Membership**

- b- 5.1 Membership
  - i. 5.1.2.4 now reflects the Society collects fees not the Centre
  - ii. 5.1.5 reflects the member must be in good standing to request to attend Board meetings
- c- Termination of Membership
  - i. 5.3.3.3 changed to reflect those in attendance at a members or Board meeting duly called may terminate a membership.

### **Section 6: Board of Directors**

- d- 6.3 Meetings of the RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors
  - i. The title was corrected to reflect the Centre’s correct reference
  - ii. 6.3.1 reflects the change in number of Board meetings required per annum.

### **Section 7: Officers and Directors**

- e- 7.6 Duties of the President
  - i. 7.6.1.2 clarifies which meetings the president does reside as Chair.
  - ii. 7.6.1.3 adds his role as Privacy Officer.
- f- 7.8 Duties of the Secretary
  - i. Removes the maintenance of the register of members as this the responsibility of the Society.
- g- 7.9 Duties of the Treasurer
  - i. 7.9.1.3 Adds responsibility to submit RJSC reports as required.

### **Section 9: Meetings of the Centre**

- e- 9.5 Proxies
  - i. Section is deleted.

Consequent to the above deletion:

- f- 9.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)
  - i. Voting by Proxy was removed from 9.1.8 and 9.1.9
- g- 9.2 Halifax Centre Members’ Meeting
  - i. Voting by Proxy was removed from 9.2.8 and 9.2.9
- h- 9.3 Members’ Meeting by Requisition
  - i. Voting by Proxy was removed and clarification made of how a person may be considered ‘present’ at a meeting.
- i- 9.4 Conducting of Business



- i. 2 statements added (9.4.1 and 9.4.2) to allow for attendance other than in person.
- ii. 9.4.6 provided a better definition as to how votes were cast at meetings and what happens in the case of a tie.

There were no questions or concerns raised from the floor or from those attending on-line regarding the proposed changes. A Special Resolution of Members pre-circulated was proposed.

### ***Special Resolution of Members***

**WHEREAS** it is recognized that from time-to-time RASC terminology changes and advances in technology affect how the RASC Halifax Centre business is being conducted, and  
**WHEREAS** the RASC policy changes may influence change; and  
**WHEREAS** the By-Law Review Committee completed their mandate to revise the RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 on 29 October 2024; and  
**WHEREAS** the RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 (2024) and the rationale for the changes were pre-circulated to RASC Halifax Centre members on 29 October 2024, 22 November 2024 and 3 December 2024 for consideration;

Be it resolved as a **Special Resolution of Members** that:

- RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 (2024) as presented in the revised By-Law No. 1 supported by the Rationale for Changes document be approved;
- RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 (2024) with the aforesaid revision be forwarded to the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) for approval prior to enactment.

#### ***241207AGM-Mot07:***

Moved by Gary Weber and seconded by Dave Chapman to adopt the Special Resolution of Members related to the adoption of the RASC By-Law No. 1 (2024).  
CARRIED unanimously with one abstention.

## **6. Adjournment**

#### ***241207AGM-Mot08:***

Moved by Paul Gray and seconded by Blair MacDonald to adjourn.  
CARRIED unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 PM AST.

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## **2024 Annual Report: President**

### **Highlights & Achievements**

**Membership Survey** - Completed in January 2024, the survey was designed to better understand the expectations of the RASC Halifax membership.

**RASC Halifax Centre Plan** - Based on data from the survey, a plan was developed to guide the Board of Directors in their annual goal setting. RASC Halifax Centre will use this plan to provide its members with opportunities to fulfill their astronomy expectations. I encourage all members to familiarize themselves with the document, and to provide feedback and suggestions on how things can be improved. The plan is available on the RASC Halifax website.

**New Members Welcome Package** - Halifax Centre now has a welcome package for new members designed to help those joining our centre better understand and take part in the various activities of the Centre.

**Howard Telescope & Kstars** - A huge debt of gratitude is owed to Jerry Black for the wonderful work that he has done in getting the Howard 200mm EdgeHD Hyperstar telescope up and running. This telescope now provides interested members the opportunity to start Astroimaging with an amazingly fast f1.9 instrument and CCD camera. All the equipment and software needed is in place and operational. With post-processing, all members now have the opportunity to create stunning images with absolutely no investment in equipment. This is a huge benefit to the members, and I encourage any who have an interest in astroimaging with this equipment to get in touch with Jerry who would be happy to set you on a learning pathway.

**Monthly Observing Nights @ SCO** - Monthly members nights have been restarted at SCO. A number of successful observing nights were held. The enthusiasm demonstrated by the participants speaks to the desire of members to get out under a dark sky with like-minded individuals.

**SCO BBQ** - The event was held on 14 September 2024, International Observe the Moon Night. It was a lovely evening at SCO with food, friends and observing.

**RASC Halifax Laser Pointer Certificate Program** - RASC Halifax Centre now has a program to provide training to interested members on the safe usage of laser pointers for astronomical outreach. Anyone interested in receiving this training and certification should contact the board.

### **Recognition & Awards**

The Qilak Award is a national award that recognizes those who have made an outstanding contribution to the public understanding and appreciation of astronomy in Canada. This year's award recipient was Halifax member Tony Schellinck. Congratulations, Tony!

**Acknowledgements** - I would like to extend my sincere thanks to:

- **Mary Lou Whitehorne**, who has completed her tenure as Honorary President. Mary Lou has been a member of RASC Halifax since 1985. She is a former president of the RASC, is a Fellow of the RASC, an author, educator and recipient of numerous awards. Our board was extremely fortunate to be able to take advantage of her insight and knowledge.
- **Peter Hurley**, our outgoing Secretary. Peter has served the board with distinction in the key role of secretary for the past 5 years. His commitment to the role has been invaluable, keeping things organized and pointed in the right direction.
- **John Liddard**, our outgoing SCO Manager. John has filled this very important role for many years, and I would like to thank him for his dedication and commitment to the St. Croix Observatory. Bringing 120-volt utility power to the observatory is one of John's projects that was pivotal in keeping SCO well placed to support the needs of the RASC Halifax Centre.
- **John Nangreaves**, outgoing director. John was my predecessor serving as president of RASC Halifax in 2023. I would like to thank him for his service in taking on that roll, and then continuing as director in 2024.
- **Dave Robertson**, outgoing director. Dave is a new member of RASC Halifax, having joined in 2024. Dave stepped in to fulfill a vacant director position and became a valuable member of the board, always willing to help and an enthusiastic supporter of the RASC.

### **Dave Lane, 1963 - 2024**

Finally, I would like to remember our friend and colleague Dave Lane, whom we lost in March this year. Dave was a significant contributor to the RASC and the broader astronomical community. His legacy is one of inspiration, innovation, and discovery. His contributions to astronomy were not just technical or organizational, they were human, driven by a passion for sharing the wonders of the universe with others. Dave's pioneering work, whether automating observatories or co-discovering supernovae, was grounded in the belief that the stars are for everyone. His spirit will live on in every curious gaze turned skyward at SCO, in every student inspired to explore the cosmos, and in the enduring work of the RASC and the observatories he helped transform.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tony G. McGrath  
President RASC Halifax Centre

## Board of Directors & Committees of the RASC Halifax Centre

<p><b>Board of Directors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President: Tony McGrath</li> <li>• Vice-President: Judy Black</li> <li>• Secretary: Peter Hurley</li> <li>• Treasurer: Gregg Dill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors: Jeff Donaldson, Matthew Dyer, David Hoskin, John Nangreaves, Dave Robertson</li> </ul>
<p><b>Appointed Positions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honorary President: Mary Lou Whitehorne</li> <li>• Editor, Nova Notes: Lisa Ann Fanning</li> <li>• Copy Editor, Nova Notes: John McPhee</li> <li>• Communications: Judy Black</li> <li>• Governance Review Committee: Judy Black</li> <li>• Librarian: Jerry Black / Wayne Harasimovitch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editors, Nova Notes: Lisa Ann Fanning</li> <li>• National Council Representative: Judy Black</li> <li>• Observing Chair: David Hoskin</li> <li>• Education &amp; Public Outreach (EPO) Chair: David Hoskin</li> <li>• SCO Manager: John Liddard</li> <li>• Webmaster: Jerry Black</li> </ul>
<p><b>Auditor 2023-2024</b> Dave Chapman (appointed Nov. 28/23)</p>	<p><b>Nominating Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair: Peter Hurley</li> <li>• Members: Tony McGrath, Judy Black</li> </ul>
<p><b>Governance Review Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair: Judy Black</li> <li>• Members: Patrick Kelly, Gregg Dill</li> </ul>	<p><b>Nova East Planning Committee (NEPC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair: Chris Young</li> <li>• Members: Gregg Dill (Treasurer), Dave Chapman, Lisa Ann Fanning, Patrick Kelly (Registrar), Kathy Walker, Jerry Black (webmaster), Judy Black, Paul Gray, Tony McGrath</li> </ul>
<p><b>Halifax Centre Astroimaging Contest</b> Adjudicators: Blair MacDonald</p>	<p><b>Website Maintenance &amp; Updates</b> SMU: Tiffany Fields RASC &amp; Nova East: Judy &amp; Jerry Black</p>
<p><b>Education &amp; Public Outreach (EPO) Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair: David Hoskin</li> </ul>	<p><b>Observing Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair: David Hoskin</li> <li>• Members: Dave Chapman (past Chair), Melody Hamilton, Stephen Payne</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dark-Sky Preserve Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Chairs: Peter Hurley, Tony Schellinck</li> <li>Members: Judy &amp; Jerry Black, Dave Chapman, David Hoskin, Chris Young, Wayne Mansfield</li> </ul>	<p><b>Nova Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editor: Lisa Ann Fanning</li> <li>• Copy Editor: John McPhee</li> </ul>

## 2024 Annual Report: Vice-President

As Vice-President, I chaired one meeting of the Board of Directors on behalf of President Tony McGrath. I kept the Board apprised of key activities that were required by the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) and those required as stated in our By-Law No. 1.

I coordinated the recruitment of speakers for our Centre with the assistance of members and fellow directors. I happily served as a proof-reader of *Nova Notes* content, as the Board liaison to the web master (Jerry Black) to keep him apprised of approved changes to our website, and as a consultant to Nova East. I also served as the Centre's Representative to the National Council (and served as its Chair for the third year) and as Chair of our Centre's Governance Review Committee.

One of the goals I was unable to fulfill this past year was the revision of our communications plan. Given our need to attract younger members and to keep current members engaged, It's important to provide mechanisms for all to access information about our Centre and to become engaged in its activities. If you have some communications experience and can assist us in the short or long term to identify shortcomings and needed improvements, please contact one of the Executive.



I look forward to continuing serving our Centre in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Black, Vice-President

## 2024 Annual Report: Secretary

Duties of the Secretary include provision of minutes, agendas and meeting announcements to the Board of Directors and the members of the Centre. An additional duty is to book meeting rooms through St. Mary's University (SMU) Conference Services. SMU has generously provided us with access to room AT101 for our Members meetings and we are grateful to SMU for their support.

Member's meetings were held on the first Saturday of the month from January to June and September to December, although the April meeting was cancelled to allow for those travelling to view the Solar eclipse and the Annual Centre BBQ at SCO was held in place of the September meeting. Meetings generally consisted of a welcome and introductions, a photo montage of astrophotography images posted by members during the preceding month presented by David Hoskin, a monthly installment of *Food for the Soul* by Paul Heath, *What's Up?* for the coming month presented by David Hoskin, *News from the Board*, a guest speaker, other news items and announcements, and discussion of upcoming Centre events. Presentations by our guest speakers included:

- Pat Kelly (*New ESA Probe Launched to Survey Europa*)
- Chris Curtis (*Outreach by the Bay*)
- Paul Gray (*Eclipse 2024! Be there!*)
- Ian Short (*Student Spectrography at the BGO*)
- Members' eclipse stories
- Tiffany Fields (*BGO Astronomy Technician*)
- Luigi Gallo (*JAXA's XRISM X-Ray Observatory*)
- Martin Connors (*100 Years Ago, Galaxies Did Not Exist*)
- Lisa Ann Fanning (*Seeing Double: Art & Practical Application of Stereoscopy in Space*)

Members meetings were again "hybrid meetings" – held in person at SMU AT101 and streamed simultaneously using the video conferencing application Zoom so that those choosing not to attend in-person or unable to travel from a remote location could still participate. Recordings of the Members meetings can be streamed from the Centre's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@RASCHalifax> and minutes can be found in *Nova Notes*. Thanks to Jerry Black and Bob Russell for applying their amazing skills in computer and audio-visual technology to make these hybrid meetings happen.

Meetings of the Board of Directors were usually held on the Tuesday evening preceding the Member's meeting. There was a total of 11 Board meetings in 2024; no Board meetings were held in July or August. The Board continues to use the video conferencing application Zoom to conduct its meetings.

Minutes from Board meetings can be found on our website (<https://halifax.rasc.ca/index.php/about-us/halifax-centre-board-minutes>) and in issues of the Centre newsletter *Nova Notes* also in the Centre website (<https://halifax.rasc.ca/index.php/publications/17-nova-notes-newsletter>).

This has been my fifth year serving as Secretary of the Centre. I would like to thank the Board for being such a great team to work with, and to thank them and Centre members for their support and for being such a great Society. It has been a pleasure.

Respectively submitted,  
Peter Hurley, Secretary  
RASC Halifax Centre

## 2024 Annual Report: Treasurer

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Halifax Centre  
Comparative Income Statement  
Years Ending September 30, 2023 and September 30, 2024

	Years Ended September 30		Amount of Increase or (Decrease) during 2024
	2024	2023	
<b>Revenue</b>			
Membership Fees	\$3,463.88	\$3,364.77	\$99.11
Donations	\$704.00	\$350.00	\$354.00
Observatory Donations	\$140.00	\$0.00	\$140.00
Education & Outreach	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interest	\$449.81	\$63.14	\$386.67
Sales of Merchandise	\$1,325.00	\$340.00	\$985.00
Nova East (Net)	\$430.38	\$1,190.00	(\$759.62)
National Processing Fees (Income)	(\$12.87)	(\$4.91)	(\$7.96)
Miscellaneous	\$122.00	\$0.00	\$122.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,622.20</b>	<b>\$5,303.00</b>	<b>\$1,319.20</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Meetings	\$411.51	\$230.00	\$181.51
Depreciation and write offs	\$951.18	\$1,056.23	(\$105.05)
Equipment and Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Purchase of merchandise	\$675.73	\$490.51	\$185.22
Office Administration	\$329.33	\$0.00	\$329.33
Educational Activities	\$0.00	\$35.80	(\$35.80)
Insurance	\$1,966.00	\$1,837.00	\$129.00
Awards and Donations	\$120.00	\$120.00	\$0.00
National Office Processing	\$96.92	\$106.53	(\$9.61)
Operating Expenses SCO	\$30.15	\$710.76	(\$680.61)
Miscellaneous (NE refunds)	\$70.00	\$1,190.00	(\$1,120.00)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,650.82</b>	<b>\$5,776.83</b>	<b>(\$1,126.01)</b>
<b>Operational surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$1,971.38</b>	<b>(\$473.83)</b>	<b>\$2,445.21</b>

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Halifax Centre  
Comparative Balance Sheet  
Years Ending September 30, 2023 and September 30, 2024

September 30, 2024 Activity to: September 30, 2024	Years Ended September 30		Amount of Increase or (Decrease) during 2024
	2024	2023	
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash	\$11,783.33	\$10,175.49	\$1,607.84
Investments	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Accounts Receivable	\$485.97	\$282.22	\$203.75
Library Estimated	\$1,147.61	\$1,183.11	(\$35.50)
Observatory Equipment	\$8,263.10	\$9,178.78	(\$915.68)
Miscellaneous Estimated	\$13.00	\$0.00	\$13.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$29,693.01</b>	<b>\$28,819.60</b>	<b>\$873.41</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable	\$1,013.33	\$2,111.30	(\$1,097.97)
<b>Capital</b>			
Nova East Working Equity	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Common Equity	\$23,679.68	\$21,708.30	\$1,971.38
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>\$28,679.68</b>	<b>\$26,708.30</b>	<b>\$1,971.38</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Capital</b>	<b>\$29,693.01</b>	<b>\$28,819.60</b>	<b>\$873.41</b>

## 2024 Annual Report: National Council

In June 2024, I was re-elected as Chair of the National Council (NC). It has been a busy year building on the momentum of the previous two years.

National Council met six times in 2024 – February 11, April 21, June 9, September 15, October 27, and the upcoming December 8. Centre Presidents were invited to attend the February meeting at which a financial update was provided.

Election of the officers was held June 9, 2024. I offered to have my name stand for the Chair position. Charles Ennis (Sunshine Coast) volunteered for Vice-Chair. Both were elected by acclamation. At the September 15 meeting, Adriana Jones (Calgary Centre) volunteered her name for the NC Recorder position and was elected by acclamation.

National Council no longer meets in person in conjunction with the General Assembly; both are now held independent of each other via Zoom. In collaboration with my fellow National Council Representatives, we have worked on the following projects in 2024.

- The draft revisions to the *RASC Policy C11: National Council Terms of Reference* were approved by the NC for forwarding to the RASC Board of Directors for their consideration. Comments have been received and will be discussed by the NC and Board for final approval by the Board before the end of the year.
- The welcome package for new National Council Representatives is being implemented in 2024 and amendments made as required.

### **Clarification of the National Council Role with the RASC**

Much activity in the past two years has centred around redefining the role of the National Council within the RASC. The National Council and the RASC Board of Directors have worked to improve the working relationship between them, and to continue strengthening the three pillars – communication, collaboration, and transparency. As noted above, *Policy C11* that was drafted by the NC was forwarded to the Board for their approval; this should be achieved later this year.

### **Work with the RASC Board of Directors**

The RASC President (Michael Watson), Treasurer (Stuart Heggie), RASC Executive Director (Jenna Hinds) and other Board members have attended meetings to provide guidance when needed and to update on Board activities for which they requested input.

The Board has 40 minutes of every 2-hour meeting to present the RASC financial statements and other updates (such as the *RASC Observer's Handbook* and the *RASC Observer's Calendar* publication and mailout timelines), and to inform members of services of which they may not be aware (such as liability insurance for Centre Executive). NC Representatives asked questions and provided suggestions at the meeting and, after presenting the information to their Council/Board, were invited to provide further comments.

One thing instituted this year as a result of a suggestion from the National Council was having the financial statements reviewed by the Board every month at their meetings. The need for membership fee increases was discussed with the NC prior to implementation.

### **Work with the RASC Committees & Task Forces**

Collaboration with Board committees and task teams continued into 2024. The Eclipse Task Force, chaired by Randy Attwood, provided regular updates at meetings prior to the Eclipse. An Eclipse Planning Guide was produced for municipalities and public facility managers to help prepare them with what to expect with an eclipse. They also held a webinar with educational eclipse presentations which were geared to help municipalities and organizations manage the logistics of an eclipse event.

The question of digital versus print versions of publications was raised by the National Council. The Board of Directors and the Editorial Board discussed this and determined it would be completely impractical for the Society to venture into an electronic version of the *Observer's Handbook* because of the complexity of having both electronic and printed, the cost of producing an interactive versus PDF version, and the additional work it would impose on head office staff. C. Gainor, Chair of the Editorial Board, noted the digital version had been offered before and there was no significant pick-up of that version.

The need to reprint education/ outreach materials was identified. A special report produced by two Toronto Centre members was discussed at length by the NC. Consequently, *Moongazers* will be reprinted in the coming months; there are sufficient quantities of *StarFinders* for Centres.

Task Forces are being formed to address office space, to investigate membership management programs and to simplify the *RASC Policy Manual*. NC input and participation are ensured.

### **Centre Operations Manual (COM)**

The Centre Operations Manual (COM) was completed and published on the RASC website <https://rasc.ca/centreopsmanual>. It is a highly recommended read for all RASC Centre Council/Board members and serves as a guide for all Centres.

### **Laser Pointer Training**

Laser Pointer training was developed through the work of NC member Dennis Lyons (Winnipeg Centre) and Jenna Hinds with much input from fellow NC members. A training program comprising a PowerPoint slide deck, complementary print materials, course completion cards, and multiple choice exams had input from the NC in the course of the program development.

### **2024/2025 Priorities**

Priorities for 2024/2025 were determined at the September meeting.

- Ongoing consultation with the RASC Board of Directors regarding the RASC financial position.
- Policy C11 should be approved by the end of December 2024.
- Our three pillars are transparency, collaboration and communication. We want to make sure the mechanisms are in place for these to occur, especially communications with the Board. Improved communication mechanisms will be addressed and includes ongoing revision of the NC welcome package (when needed) and an improved communication strategy for the NC.
- RASC Committee consultation will continue.
- Other business would be prioritized as it arises.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Black

NC Representative, RASC Halifax Centre  
Chair, RASC National Council

## **2024 Annual Report: Dark-Sky Preserve Committee**

Tony Schellinck and Peter Hurley served as co-chairs of the RASC Halifax Centre Dark-Sky Preserve (DSP) Committee in 2024. Activities involved interacting with Kejimikujik Park staff, planning and delivery of the annual Kejimikujik Dark-Sky Weekend, reviewing activities within the Park that might impact the DSP designation, preparing for a lighting audit of the Park, and corresponding with the RASC Light Pollution Abatement Committee and the RASC Dark-Sky Sites Program. Planning and scheduling of events were assisted by Dave Chapman, Chris Young, Jerry Black, Judy Black, David Hoskin and Wayne Mansfield.

### **Lighting Audit Activities**

There were plans to complete a lighting audit of the Park this year and discussions of changes in lighting within the Park occurred in planning meetings and during the Dark-Sky Weekend. Unfortunately, Tony and Peter were unable to complete a lighting audit before the Park closed for the season. They plan to complete a lighting audit in early 2025.

### **Maintenance of Park Telescope**

Andrea Misner and Kevin Mogk used the Park telescope, a 10" Sky-Watcher Dobsonian, in the Sky Circle field on Friday evening during DSW and it was obvious that there were a few issues with the telescope operation. Dave Chapman and Chris Young will get the telescope back into proper working order and they plan to train Park staff in its use and care next season.

## **August 2 – 4, 2024 Dark Sky Weekend**

This year presented us with a new Moon on Sunday, August 4 and Moon set each night before the evening programs began. The weather was variable all weekend, with cloudy periods and intermittent rain, and some heavy rain. But there were dark skies when we could see them. On Friday evening, the clouds cleared off and provided mostly clear skies. An SQM reading of 20.8 was measured in the Sky Circle field.

Although the peak of the Perseid meteor shower wasn't until August 11/12, many meteors were spotted throughout the programs on Friday evening to thrill the audience. Saturn rose shortly after 10pm and cleared the trees before we finished for the evening but that was the only planet available for viewing. The weather on Saturday and Sunday was mostly cloudy and often rainy and we had to be adaptable and creative with our activities.

Because we were using laser pointers (LPs) for the evening programs this year, we had several spotters when an LP was in use and there was a presentation by Chris Young at the beginning of the program each night about the regulation of laser pointers in Canada and the reasons for the regulations. By the end of the programs, members in the audience were helping our spotters spot aircraft in the sky.

### **Friday, August 2**

9:30 pm – 10:00 pm (Sky Circle): Introductions by Colleen Andersen (Park staff) and Chris Young. *Tour of the Night Sky* by Chris Young. Chris was using a laser pointer and Peter Hurley and Gary Weber spotted for Chris.

10:00 pm – midnight (Sky Circle field): Jerry Black, Judy Black, Gerry Brosky, Matt Dyer, Paul Gray, David Hoskin, Wayne Mansfield, Andrea Misner, Kevin Mogk, and John Read were in the field with telescopes. Tony Schellinck was at the binocular table and Peter Hurley was his LP spotter. Tony did two shows and signed many *Ace Amateur Astronomer* certificates. Chris Young and Park staff answered questions in the Sky Circle. It was a wonderful night, and we were all packed up by 12:30am.

### **Saturday, August 3**

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm (Merrymakedge Beach): At 1pm, there was a severe thunderstorm watch in effect so only a handful of us set up our *Ask-an-Astronomer* table under a canopy provided by the Park but others joined over the course of the afternoon. Judy Black, Jerry Black, Gerry Brosky, Matt Dyer, David Hoskin, and Wayne Mansfield participated. Telescopes and binoculars were set up on display at the Merrymakedge Beach Canteen. The skies cleared briefly about 3:40pm and 10 guests were able to do some impromptu solar observing with Gerry, David and Peter.

4:00 pm – 4:45 pm (Sky Circle field): *Walk the Solar System* with David Hoskin was cancelled, due to rain.

9:30 pm – 10:00 pm (Sky Circle): Introduction by Colleen Anderson and Chris Young.

10:00 pm – 10:30 pm. Park interpreters Marlene Lebel and Alex Balkam presented the *Muin and The Seven Bird Hunters* story in a new and truly imaginative and participatory performance that involved children from the audience carrying glow-in-the-dark painted cardboard props around the Sky Circle. The introduction was in English, French and Mi'kmaq and the narration of the story was in English and Mi'kmaq. It was an amazing experience.

10:30 pm – midnight (Sky Circle field): Telescope & binocular observing. The same volunteers were involved as on Friday night, but viewing wasn't great.

### **Sunday, August 4**

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm (Merrymakedge Beach): *Ask-an-Astronomer* table crewed by Judy Black, Jerry Black, Matt Dyer, David Hoskin, and Peter Hurley. Between the clouds, solar viewing by Gerry Brosky, Peter Hurley and Wayne Mansfield.

4pm – 4:45pm (Sky Circle field): *Walk the Solar System* with David Hoskin, assisted by Matt Dyer.

9:30 pm – 10:00 pm (Sky Circle): Introduction by Colleen Anderson and Chris Young.

The clouds didn't part Sunday evening, but we had been expecting this and had got a bit creative in our planning. Those that had astroimages with them and a tablet or laptop that they could be viewed on and the telescope that it had been used to capture the images, set up in the Sky Circle field and talked to audience members about the images, the targets in the images, and about the equipment they had used. This proved to be quite successful and the people that had come out weren't disappointed.

Despite the clouds and rain, it was a very successful Dark-Sky Weekend with great attendance.



The final attendance numbers tabulated with assistance from the Parks staff are listed below.

<b>Friday, August 2</b>	
Sky Circle	362
<b>Saturday, August 3</b>	
Astronomy Drop-in	50
Walk the Solar System	n/a
Sky Circle	89
<b>Sunday, August 4</b>	
Astronomy Drop-in	44
Walk the Solar System	4
Sky Circle	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>609</b>

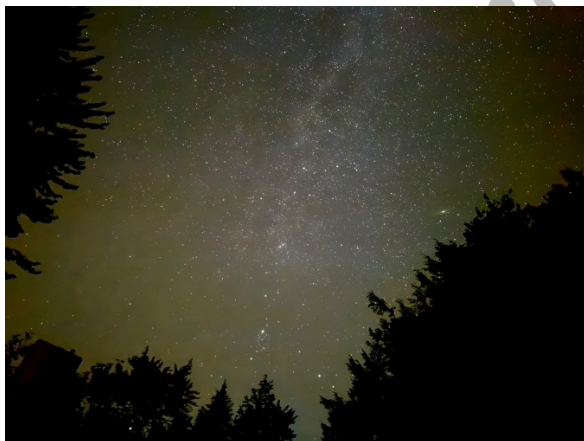
We want to recognize the amazing work put in by Parks staff, in particular Colleen Anderson, in organizing this event on behalf of Parks Canada. This involved months of preparation and planning, numerous meetings, and lots of emails to make this happen as smoothly as it did. Other Parks Canada staff including Ashley Moffat, Sam Shepard, Oryan Currie, Brooke Dickie, Jonathan Oickle, and Jonathan Riley also assisted and we thank them all for their efforts on our behalf.

Thank you to all the RASC volunteers who made this happen. There were 14 volunteers actively involved in the weekend. Their names are mentioned above, and we apologize if we have forgotten anyone. We hope you enjoyed this weekend event and will consider participating again next year.

Photographs and a time-lapse video (see below) were taken by various DSW participants and Jerry Black respectively. Here is a link to a video produced by Jerry Black to highlight the 2024 Kejimikujik Dark-Sky weekend.

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1030328267>

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Hurley, DSP Committee Co-chair  
Tony Schellinck, DSP Committee Co-chair



An image of the Milky Way captured with an iPhone 15 Pro Max from the Sky Circle field at Kejimikujik National Park Dark-Sky Weekend – 1am, Saturday, August 3, 2024



An astroimaging setup at demonstration on Sunday evening



Wayne Mansfield Sunday evening with a telescope demonstration



Jerry and Judy Black and two members of the public Sunday evening with an astroimaging demonstration



David Hoskin on Sunday evening with a Dwarf 2 demonstration



Peter Hurley, Matt Dyer, Colleen Anderson and Daphne Themelis on Sunday evening with a ZWO SeeStar S50 demonstration

## 2024 Annual Report: Education and Public Outreach (EPO)

2024 was an active year for education and public outreach by 20 RASC Halifax Centre members. Dark-Sky Weekend on August 2-4 at Kejimikujik National Park was a great success. Over 2 nights there were 609 registrants for Sky Circle events that included Night Sky Tour and Sky Lore presentations by Dave Chapman and Chris Young, guided binocular tours with Tony Schellinck, eyepiece observing, and electronically assisted astronomy that allowed registrants to view several celestial objects on a tablet screen. The Astronomy Drop-in sessions on Saturday and afternoon at Merrymakedge Beach engaged with a total of 40 interested individuals for each day. Unfortunately, *Walk the Solar System* on Saturday was cancelled due to rain; 4 attended this event on Sunday. There were 12 volunteers from RASC Halifax Centre who assisted with program delivery.

On January 14, Peter Hurley and David Hoskin provided 2 members of the Dalhousie University Astronomy Club with a tour of the St. Croix Observatory. On January 19, Tim Doucette hosted 36 students from Maple Grove Elementary School, teaching them about the *Counting Stars* project, telescopes, and getting a view of the Sun through the hydrogen-alpha telescope at Deep-Sky Eye Observatory.

On February 8, David Hoskin used his smart telescope to provide 20 students and staff at Halifax Independent School with a live view of several large sunspots on the Sun. On February 9, David Hoskin met via Zoom with a librarian from Advocate Harbour to advise on setting up a public stargazing program.

On February 10, David Hoskin hosted a stargazing session at Benjamin Bridge Winery in Wolfville. Approximately 20 attendees were treated to eyepiece views of Jupiter and the Great Orion Nebula. A laptop computer was used to show event attendees solar, lunar, planetary and deep sky images to event attendees. Questions concerning amateur astronomy and the upcoming total solar eclipse were answered. On February 26, David Hoskin distributed RASC *Starfinders* and *Moon Gazer Guides* to 6 Cubs and 4 adults at Joseph Giles Elementary School in Dartmouth. *Starfinders* were used to explain rotation of the stars around the north celestial pole, as well as the seasonal change in visible constellations. Attendees also enjoyed some sky lore.

On March 18, Jerry and Judy Black, and Peter Hurley attended the last Space Camp session at Discovery Centre and provided 8 campers with live views of the Sun. On March 20, David Hoskin hosted a Zoom presentation on the upcoming total solar eclipse to 6 members of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners.

On April 8, Wasundara Fernando and Lauren Westhaver assisted Discovery Centre staff with their solar eclipse event, providing many members of the public with safe views of the eclipse through telescopes equipped with solar filters. About 800 attended the event at Discovery Centre. Paul Heath and Wayne Harasimovitch assisted with eclipse viewing by many members of the public at Saint Mary's University. David Hoskin was at Rogersville, New Brunswick, where he explained the eclipse process and related phenomena, as well as showing filtered images throughout the total solar eclipse to 9 members of the public. On April 30, David Hoskin and Stewart Cameron hosted a stargazing event at York Redoubt for 5 members of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners. M3, M44, M51, and M109 were observed using telescopes.

On May 15, Dave Chapman and David Hoskin talked about the Sun, its features, the effect of space weather on the Earth, and how to safely observe the Sun to 75 grade-11 students and 3 teachers at Dartmouth High School. Students were treated to white light and hydrogen-alpha views of the Sun. On May 18 (International Astronomy Day), Michael Boschat, Gerry Brosky, Matt Dyer, Wayne Harasimovitch, David Hoskin, and Peter Hurley manned a RASC Halifax display at the Discovery Centre, which engaged with about 200 members of the public (mostly in family groups). Many astronomy-related questions were answered and RASC Starfinders and Moon Gazer Guides were distributed. On May 31, David Hoskin talked about the Sun, its features, and the effect of space weather on the Earth with 12 students and 3 staff at Grosvenor Wentworth Park Elementary School in Halifax. RASC Starfinders and Moon Gazer Guides were distributed.

On July 19, David Hoskin and Wasundara Fernando met with 17 grade 7-9 campers and 2 staff members at Acadia University's Women in Science and Engineering Camp. Campers observed sunspots and other solar features using a white light solar filter and hydrogen-alpha solar telescope. Campers participated in "Walk the Solar System" and RASC Starfinders were distributed. On July 27, David Hoskin and David McMullin hosted a stargazing event at the United Church Camp in Berwick. Attendees (50, mostly family groups) learned about summer stars and constellations and asterisms and viewed M13 through a telescope.

On August 25, David Hoskin talked about the Sun, its features, and the effect of space weather on the Earth with an audience of 16 at Chicory Blue General Store in Blockhouse, Nova Scotia. The audience was treated to white light and hydrogen-alpha views of the Sun.

On September 6, David Hoskin joined members of RASC New Brunswick Centre at the Kouchibouguac Fall Starfest at Kouchibouguac National Park in New Brunswick where he provided eyepiece views of Albireo, M31 and Saturn.

On October 5, Dave Chapman and Stephen Payne hosted a binocular astronomy workshop and talked about Explore the Universe to 20 members of the public at the Deanery Project, Nova Scotia.

On October 18, Rob and Lissa Fanning hosted a lunar observing session for 14 attendees at Bayshore Waterfront Park (Port Monmouth, New Jersey).

On October 22, David Hoskin and Stewart Cameron hosted a stargazing session at York Redoubt for 12 members of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners. Saturn, Comet C/2023 A3, and several deep sky objects were viewed through binoculars and telescopes.

Respectfully Submitted,



David Hoskin  
Education and Public Outreach Chair  
RASC, Halifax Centre

## 2024 Annual Report: Governance Review Committee

I would like to thank my fellow members on the Governance Review Committee, Patrick Kelly and Gregg Dill, for the work accomplished in the past year, and for the interesting discussions we had during our deliberations.

No changes were recommended for *Policy G2: RASC Halifax Centre Objectives*, *Policy G3: Signing Authority*, and *Policy G10: Commercial Activities* at this time.

On June 18, 2024, minor changes were proposed and approved for the position descriptions of the five elected positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Director) and the eight appointed positions (Honorary President, National Council Representative, *Nova Notes* Editors, Observing Chair, EPO Chair, Librarian, SCO Manager, and Web Master).

On September 3, 2024, the Board of Directors approved proposed revisions to the following RASC Halifax Centre policies and guidelines:



- a) **B1: Terms of Reference – Board of Directors** – (Adopted November 2, 2019; Revised September 3, 2024).
- b) **B2: Terms of Reference – Ordinary Committees of the RASC Halifax Centre** – (Adopted October 19, 2018; Revised September 3, 2024). Addition of *Communications Committee* and *Education & Public Outreach (EPO) Committee*. Clarification of the various methods for meetings. Addition of *Communications Committee*. Thanks to David Hoskin for input.
- c) **G4: Policy Regarding Speaker Reimbursement for RASC Halifax Centre Events** – (Adopted April 20, 2018; Revised September 3, 2024). Increases to the reimbursement amount.
- d) **G5: Halifax Centre Privacy Policy** – (Adopted October 19, 2018; Revised September 3, 2024). Handling of personal information collected as part of EPO and Observing program registrations.
- e) **G6: Procedures Regarding Nomination, Elections & Appointments** – (Adopted October 19, 2018; Revised September 3, 2024) Deleted specific references to By-Law No. 1.
- f) **G7: RASC Halifax Centre Website Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)** – (Adopted November 2, 2019; Revised September 3, 2024) Correction of the login for the Centre and clarification of passwords for our Centre and Nova East. Thanks to Jerry Black and Tiffany Fields for input.
- g) **G8: RASC Halifax Centre Astro-imaging Contest** – (Adopted May 4, 2019; Revised September 3, 2024). Addressed the use of AI to generate images in part or in whole. Thanks to Blair MacDonald for input.
- h) **G9: RASC Halifax Centre Guidelines Regarding In-Camera Sessions** – (Adopted May 4, 2019; Revised September 3, 2024). The method of exclusion of a Board member from the discussion and/or decision making is clarified. Thanks to Tony McGrath and Peter Hurley for input.
- i) **G11: Policies Regarding RASC Halifax Centre Membership & Conflict Resolution** – (Adopted June 1, 2021; Revised September 3, 2024). Removed references to specific policies and changed wording to more general terms. No suggested changes to the actual process.
- a) **G12: Policy Regarding Expulsion from RASC Halifax Centre Membership** – (Adopted May 3, 2022; Revised September 3, 2024). Removed references to specific policies and changed wording to more general terms. No suggested changes to the actual process.
- b) **G13: Policies & Recommendations Regarding the Use of Laser Pointers (LPs) at Halifax Centre Event** – (Adopted May 2, 2023; Revised September 3, 2024). Clarification of the process for an ‘event’ to be considered a “RASC Halifax Centre event’.
- c) **G14: Policies Regarding Donations to the RASC Halifax Centre** – (Adopted October 30, 2023; Revised October 1, 2024). Added section regarding bequests and legacies.

The Governance Committee will continue to review all Halifax Centre policies and position descriptions annually and when situations dictate a change. In the new year, recommendations regarding handling historic documents will be developed.

Based on changes made to our policies and position descriptions and given some changes to the RASC policies and By-Law in the past year, the Committee proposed some changes to our Centre By-Law No.1. Documentation was sent to the membership regarding the rationale for the changes for which approval from the RASC Halifax Centre membership will be sought at the AGM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Judy Black, Chair  
 Governance Review Committee  
 RASC Halifax Centre



## 2024 Annual Report: Nova East Star Party



**STARS AND BIRDS** was the theme for our star party held at Blomidon Provincial Park during the weekend of August 9th to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This was the 36<sup>th</sup> Nova East (N.E.). The Theme "Birds & Stars" was originally proposed for the cancelled 2023 Nova East and we were pleased to be able to proceed with it.

Many thanks to Lisa Ann Fanning for the 2024 logo design for printing on the Nova East t-shirts (all the while knowing she would not be able to attend) and to Gregg Dill (Centre Treasurer) for setting up the printing of the T-shirts at Pro Design Cresting Ltd. in Truro.

### **2024 NE Planning Committee (NEPC):**

Members and supporters included Chris Young (Chair), David Chapman (presenter), Lisa Ann Fanning (artist), Kathy Walker, Patrick Kelly (Registrar), Jerry Black (webmaster), Judy Black, Paul Gray, and Tony McGrath. Meetings were on Zoom with planning meetings held in May and June. The success of Nova East 2024 was because of their input and work. The Committee's goal was that this event should be an observing weekend and a social event. All activities and decisions considered for previous NE's were reviewed and updated.

### **Task Chart:**

The 2022 N.E. Task Chart acted as a guide for the 2024 Nova East Planning Committee and provided the timeline for planning the event. This document was used throughout the planning process and revised as required. Many thanks to Judy Black for making our planning easy with her Schedules, Minutes and Task Lists from NE's gone by!

Planning for the 2024 N.E. had been largely done for the 2023 event which was cancelled due to flooding. The Committee was able to carry on using their earlier work by re-branding it to Blomidon, with many thanks to Jerry and Dave C. for their work on this. Insurance from National was in effect for the event.

### **Weather:**

The weather predicted for the weekend was overcast and wet. We considered cancelling the event but felt it was important to provide a social event. In the past NE has been held in bad weather except during hurricanes. We are pleased that we carried through.

### **Speakers and Events:**

The wet weather made it necessary to cancel most of the outdoor public events including: "*The Sky Tour*" (Gary Weber) and "*Walk the Solar System*" (David Hoskin). The public did join in for the presentations.

The weekend events which proceeded indoors were:

- **Friday evening** - Tony Schellinck received his Qilak Award Plaque, presented to him by Dave Chapman.
- **Friday evening** - Dave Chapman gave his presentation: "*Celestial Birds, their Lore and Wonder*" (attendance 32).
- **Saturday noon** – Michelle Lane hosted "*Lane's Book Mart: Books for sale from Dave Lane*", and at the same time the members "*Nova East Swap: Equipment and Books*" took place.
- **Saturday afternoon** - David Hoskin gave a presentation on "*All-in-One Smart Telescopes*" (attendance 16).
- **Saturday night** Keynote speaker Tony Schellinck provided the talk: "*Women in Astronomy*" (attendance 24).
- **Sunday morning** the Sun came out and Pat Kelly led the "Sherman Williams Walk - Birding at Blomidon" along with sharing much natural plant lore with us. (attendance 9).
- **Sunday night** we shared the clear sky with several of the Park's Campers. They joined us first in the shelter for a tutorial with Tony Schellinck, and then in the field (attendance 10). All those who remained, are now certified "Ace

*Amateur Astronomers*". Green laser pointer rules were maintained with a brief announcement of Transport Canada's rules for RASC using them. The Aurora Borealis at 3:00 AM Monday morning was a bonus for those of us that could be woken up. Monday the members packed up in the sunshine and headed home.

**Door Prizes:**

Dave Chapman and Chris Young, with assistance from Lisa Ann Fanning, and other donors, had collected Door Prizes. 15 Prizes were given away and there are several put away for NE 2025. The Centre provided a budget of \$600.00 and the prize list was supplemented with donations.

**Other Highlights:**

An **Astro Breakfast**, always popular, was provided Saturday and Sunday morning with coffee, juice, muffins, donuts and fresh whole fruit.

The **Astronomer's Lounge** was scaled back, with tea, coffee and hot chocolate always available in the shelter. The Park requested that the regular Park visitors have some access to the shelter as they needed. This was provided and we all got along well.

**Date of 2025 Nova East:**

As approved by the Board of Directors and now included in the 2025 RASC Calendar, Nova East 2025 will be held the on August 22-24 of 2025. The New Moon is on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Smiley's facilities are available for N.E. in 2025. At present, the shelter there is being used for maintenance equipment and its availability next year is important consideration for NE planning. Discussion with the attendees is that while Blomidon worked out well, Smiley's is a better fit for our event (i.e. travel distance, location of the shelter and WR). The Blomidon staff were helpful and the facilities there are well maintained. We are grateful for their assistance with our event.

**Finances**

A summary of Nova East finances are as follows:

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expense</u>
1. Camping, 3 nights	\$400.00	\$600.00
2. Registration	\$1,440.00	
3. Astro Breakfasts/snacks		\$300.00
4. T-Shirts	\$600.00	\$360.24
5. Door prizes (15)		\$650.00 (includes \$180. worth of prizes for 2025)
Total	\$2,440.00	\$1,910.24
PROFIT		<u>\$529.76</u>

This is my second year as N.E. Chair and I will not be re-offering for 2025. I will, however, volunteer to be on the Committee in any capacity the new Chair requests.

I would be pleased to discuss any part of this Report at the AGM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Chris Young  
Chair, Nova East Committee 2024  
RASC Halifax Centre



Photo: © Gary Weber

## 2024 Annual Report: Nova Notes

To date four issues of *Nova Notes* have been published, with the fifth and final issue (Vol 55 No 5) for 2024 to be published at the end of December (content deadline is December 15, 2024.)

*Nova Notes*' editorial staff consists of Lisa Ann Fanning (Editor) and John McPhee (Copy Editor).

Additional review is provided by Judy Black.

Jerry Black assists with posting to the Halifax Centre website.

Once posted, editions are promoted with a Member Announcement (via email), and announcements on the RASC Facebook page and Listserv.

Edition Sizes:

- Jan/Feb 2024 (Vol 55 No 1) issue was 28 pages total
- March/April 2024 (Vol 55 No 2) issue was 21 pages total
- May/June 2024 (Vol 55 No 3) issue was 22 pages total
- Sept/Oct 2024 (Vol 55 No 4) issue was 24 pages total
- Nov/Dec 2024 (Vol 55 No 5) is TBD

Regular features include:

- *From the Editor* (Lisa Ann Fanning or John McPhee)
- Halifax centre Information page
- *From The President* (Tony McGrath)
- *Food for the Soul* (poetry by Paul Heath)
- *Puzzle Corner* (some were reprints from prior editions and others newly authored by Judy Black or Lisa Ann Fanning)
- *Member News* (Members being featured in other media)
- *Members' Universe* (member news and submitted work)
- Member's Meetings reports
- *Moonscapes* is a feature where David Hoskin highlights a region or feature on the Moon.

Main cover photos were provided by: Jerry Black (M1, The Crab Nebula), Jason Dain (The Great North American Eclipse), Michael Gatto (Aurora over Shubenacadie) and Blair MacDonald (The Boogie Man Nebula)

In 2024, contributors of articles, features, photos and sketches include: Dr. Roy Bishop, Jerry Black, Judy Black, Michael Boschat, Barry Burgess, David Chapman, Jason Dain, James Edgar FRASC, Lisa Ann Fanning, Tiffany Fields, Michael Gatto, Paul Heath (Poetry), David Hoskin, Jeremy Kuzub, Blair MacDonald, John McPhee, Tony McGrath (From the President), John A. Read, Gary Weber and Mary Lou Whitehorne.

2023 Annual Reports not published in the Nov/Dec 2023 edition appeared in the Jan/Feb 2024 edition.

Highlights:

- *A Brief History of SCO* by Dr. Roy Bishop appeared in the Jan/Feb 2024 edition.
- The March/April 2024 edition had a theme of *The Great North American Eclipse*.
- Qilak Award winner Tony Schellinck was showcased in the May/June 2024 edition.
- A new series of articles, *Asteroids with a Nova Scotia Connection*, by Dr. Roy Bishop and Judy Black premiered (the first of six) in the Sept/Oct 2024 edition.
- Tributes to Dave Lane appeared in the March/April 2024 and Sept/Oct 2024 editions.

Once again, we extend our sincerest thanks to the many folks who help make *Nova Notes* a success!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Ann Fanning and John McPhee  
*Nova Notes, RASC Halifax Centre*

## 2024 Annual Report: Observing Committee

The Chair of the Observing Committee is David Hoskin. Committee members include Dave Chapman (past Chair), Melody Hamilton, and Stephen Payne. Melody Hamilton and Dave Chapman are past members of the Society-wide RASC Observing Committee, which is involved in reviewing applications and guiding policy. Stephen Payne organizes Planetarium events at Dalhousie University.

RASC Halifax Centre was actively involved in observing events this past year. RASC Halifax Centre members Wasundara Fernando and Lauren Westhaver assisted Discovery Centre staff at the 8 April solar eclipse event, providing the public with safe views of the eclipse through telescopes equipped with solar filters. RASC Halifax Centre members who volunteered at Kejimikujik Dark Sky Weekend engaged in and offered eyepiece views of night sky wonders to the public on Friday evening. Binocular observing of deep sky objects was organized and hosted by Tony Schellinck. A brief break in the clouds allowed for some solar observing at Saturday's Astronomy Drop-in. Because clouds prevented any eyepiece observing Saturday evening, RASC Halifax Centre members set up telescopes and explained their function to campers, as well as using electronic media to display images of various deep sky objects. Unfortunately, observing events on Sunday were cancelled due to rain.

Nova East 2024 was held at Blomidon Provincial Park due to the ongoing repairs to Smiley's Provincial Park in response to 2023 flood damage. Unfortunately, extended periods of rain, wind, and fog prevented any observing until the weather cleared on Sunday. Tony Schellinck organized and hosted a binocular observing session Sunday evening.

At the conclusion of Discovery Centre Space Camp on March 18, several RASC Halifax Centre members provided campers with filtered views of the Sun. Unfortunately, poor weather prevented RASC Halifax Centre members from offering public viewing on the boardwalk behind the Discovery Centre on International Astronomy Day (May 18). Public observing by RASC Halifax Centre members on International Observe the Moon Night (September 14) was not offered due to a conflict with the Fall SCO BBQ date.

Activity at the Halifax Centre's Saint Croix Observatory continues to increase, in large part because of relocation of the key needed to unlock/lock the road gate to a readily accessible location. The Fall SCO BBQ on September 14 was a great success. Clear skies allowed for eyepiece observing of the Moon, Saturn, and other celestial objects.

David Hoskin prepared and presented *What's Up?* at monthly members' meetings to highlight observing opportunities for the coming month. *What's Up?* presentations for 2024 are available on the Halifax Centre's You-Tube Channel and the Halifax Centre's website.

There were no Observing Certificates awarded in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



David Hoskin  
Observing Committee Chair  
RASC, Halifax Centre

2025

## 2024 Annual Report: Manager, St. Croix Observatory

### Road Improvements by Minas Energy

Minas Energy has made significant progress in repairing the road damaged by flooding last year. These ongoing improvements are crucial for ensuring safe and easy access to the Saint Croix Observatory, especially during adverse weather conditions.

### Main Gate Key Relocation

In March, Harden Wile from Minas Energy relocated the key to the main gate to a much more convenient location, making it easier for members to access the road to the observatory.

### Video Tour for the RASC GA

In April, a video tour of the Saint Croix Observatory was produced for the RASC General Assembly (GA). The video creation was great fun, with a fantastic script written by John MacPhee and Judy Black, and expert videography and editing by Jerry Black. The resulting video was a great success and provided a comprehensive look at the observatory for the GA participants.

### Successful Observing Nights

There were several successful observing nights hosted by Tony McGrath and Judy and Jerry Black. These events provided excellent opportunities for members to gather and observe the night sky in good conditions, and they continue to be well received by members and their guests.

### Small Repairs and Maintenance

A number of small but necessary repairs have been made, including:

- Fixing the driveway gate lock
- Repairing the roll-off door knob lock
- Addressing the southwestern GFCI outlet issues
- Additionally, new GFCI breakers have been obtained to replace the need for GFCI outlets, which will enhance the safety and functionality of the facility.

### Upgrades to the Celestron Edge HD SCT Astrophotography System

Jerry Black has done an outstanding job transitioning the Celestron EdgeHD SCT astrophotography system from relying on a dedicated laptop to a more user-friendly setup where members can connect their own computers via Wi-Fi. This improvement has expanded the accessibility and versatility of the system, and Jerry has already captured some stunning astrophotography images with it.

### Celebration of Life for Dave Lane

A private celebration of life was held at SCO in honor of Dave Lane. During this event, Michelle Lane generously donated several Adirondack chairs to the observatory, creating a beautiful and peaceful space for members to relax and reflect.



### **InOMN-Themed BBQ**

In September, we held a well-attended BBQ in celebration of International Observe the Moon Night (InOMN). The skies were clear, and attendees had the opportunity to capture stunning images of the Moon and other celestial objects. It was a wonderful event with great food, conversation, and skywatching.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Liddard  
SCO Manager  
RASC, Halifax Centre

### **2024 Annual Report: Webmaster**

Our websites (Halifax RASC and Nova East) hosted by St. Mary's University have been based on the Joomla content management system for some time.

Since the last report, Joomla4 has been updated as security/feature updates are made available from version 4.4.3 to the current version 4.4.9. Although Joomla5 has been released, neither website has been migrated to Joomla5. This would provide additional features and security updates as Joomla 4 has entered security only update mode. Support ends 16 October 2025. Upgrading requires SMU staff to perform the update, for which time constraints have made this difficult.

The website is generally not updated as frequently as might be beneficial. Meeting notices and *What's Up?* and *Nova Notes* are updated when available.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Upgrade to Joomla5 for both websites when time permits Tiffany Fields is the person able to do this.
2. Consider purchasing PDF Indexer (\$34.99 US) to provide for search results from the contents of PDF documents stored on the server.
3. Review the content informally and update web content where appropriate.

Respectively submitted,  
Jerry Black, Webmaster  
RASC Halifax Centre

## 2024 Annual Report: Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee this year consisted of Peter Hurley (chair), Judy Black and Tony McGrath. The following is the list of nominations being put forward to all members as of November 21, 2024, through the Announce List. The call for further nominations will be made at the AGM on December 7, 2024.

President	Tony McGrath
Vice-President	VACANT
Secretary	Judy Black
Treasurer	Gregg Dill
Director	Jeff Donaldson
Director	Matthew Dyer
Director	David Hoskin
Director	Peter Hurley
Director	Vincent Vallee
Director	VACANT

The following appointments will be discussed at the Board of Directors meeting of December 3, 2024. The positions will be appointed by the newly elected Board at their meeting in January 2025. The call for further nominations will be made at the AGM on December 7, 2024.

Honorary President	Pat Kelly
Auditor 2023-2024	Dave Chapman
National Council Representative	Judy Black
Education & Public Outreach (EPO) Chair	David Hoskin
Observing Chair	David Hoskin
Communications Committee Chair	VACANT
Nova East Planning Committee Chair	VACANT
Dark-Sky Preserve (DSP) Committee Chair	Peter Hurley, co-chair VACANT
Nova Notes Co-Editors	Lisa Ann Fanning, John McPhee
St. Croix Observatory (SCO) Manager	VACANT
Governance Committee Chair	Judy Black
Nominating Committee Chair	VACANT
Webmaster	Jerry Black
Librarian	VACANT

**Policy G6: Procedures regarding Nominations, Elections and Appointments** can be found on the RASC Halifax centre website ([https://halifax.rasc.ca/images/documents/G6\\_Nominations\\_Elections.pdf](https://halifax.rasc.ca/images/documents/G6_Nominations_Elections.pdf)).

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Hurley  
 Nominating Committee Chair  
 RASC Halifax Centre

## Proposed Changes to RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1

Suggested changes to the January 2019 version of By-Law #1 were made to reflect changing terminology, technology and decisions made by the Centre.

### Notes:

- 1) Throughout the document, the attempt was made to remove gender references; for example, “his or her” was replaced by “their” or the actual position they are replacing. This was done throughout and has not been highlighted as a change.
- 2) “Bylaw #1” changed to “**By-Law No. 1**” to match the Society spelling and to reduce confusion with the “hashtag”/# symbol. This has been changed throughout and has not been highlighted as a change.

### **Section 1: Definitions:**

**Add** - Since COVID, our Centre has used electronic means for our meetings as well as allowing for in-person meetings. Simultaneous use is “hybrid” and the added clause clearly define what it means.

1.1.7 “Hybrid Meeting” refers to meetings in which there is a mix of in-person participants and those attending remotely through an electronic means

**Change** - The term utilized by the Society to describe those members not wishing to attach themselves to a specific Centre was changed from “Unattached” to “National”. Where the term “unattached” was used, it has subsequently been changed to “National” throughout the document.

1.1.12 “National Member” means a member of the Society who is not also a member of a Centre

### **Section 5: Membership**

#### **5.1 Membership Conditions:**

**Clarify** – Fees are no longer paid directly to the Centre via the Treasurer; they are paid directly to the Society who forwards the Centre portion of the fee to the Centre.

5.1.2.4 those members who pay the annual fee to the Society in an amount under the terms and conditions determined by the Board and the Society.

**Clarify** – The qualifier “in good standing” was added for clarification that members’ annual fee had to be paid up.

5.1.5 Every member of the Centre in good standing has the right to and is welcome to attend all meetings of the Board, unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Board declares, by ordinary resolution, a meeting or part of a meeting to be closed to the membership.

#### **5.3 Termination of Membership:**

**Clarify** – The phrase was changed from “a vote of the majority of members of the Centre....at a meeting duly called” to “a majority vote of members of the Centre.... at a meeting duly called”. Our Centre has yet to get the majority of members attend a meeting or respond to a questionnaire or poll. Therefore, the statement was changed to reflect those in attendance at a meeting duly called, whether it be the members meeting or a Board meeting.

5.3.3.3 if, by a majority vote of members of the Centre or a majority vote of the directors of the Centre at a meeting duly called and for which notice of the proposed action has been given, the member's membership in the Centre has been terminated.

### **Section 6: Board of Directors**

#### **6.3 Meetings of the RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors**

**Change** – The title of this subsection was changed to properly cite the official name of our Centre.

**Change** – The clause originally stated, “at least three times in each membership year”. For the past few years, there have been 10 meetings per year; however, we could stipulate six meetings per year but there would be nothing to prevent the Board from having additional meetings per year as required. Consequently, this has been changed to “at least 6 times in each membership year”. The Board agreed it should meet on the Tuesday before each member meeting and additionally when a specific topic required discussion at a meeting by Requisition.

6.3.1 The Board shall meet as often as the business of the Centre shall require, but at least six (6) times in each membership year.

## **Section 7: Officers and Directors**

### **7.6 Duties of the President**

**Change** – The clause currently states the President shall “preside as chair at all meetings of the Centre and the Board”. The President does not preside over committee meetings. The change in wording specifies which meetings the President oversees.

7.6.1.2 preside as chair at all meetings of the Centre Board of Directors and Members’ Meetings unless other arrangements have been made and agreed upon by the Board.

**Add** – Policy G5: RASC Halifax Centre Privacy Policy states the President is the Centre’s Privacy Officer. This was added to the President’s responsibilities.

7.6.1.3 act as the Privacy Officer in matters relating to the RASC Halifax Centre Privacy Policy.

### **7.8 Duties of the Secretary**

**Delete** – It currently states the Secretary is responsible for records relating to “the register of members”. The Society is responsible for this, not our Centre nor its Secretary; therefore, the phrase has been removed.

7.8.1.4 be responsible for the preparation and custody of all books and records including the accurate minutes of Board meetings and the filing of the annual requirements with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) and with the Society.

### **7.9 Duties of the Treasurer**

**Add** – We wanted to ensure the Treasurer was aware of their responsibility to submit annual reports to the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

7.9.1.3 Submit annual financial reports to the Society when requested and to the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) as required.

## **Section 8: Committees**

### **8.2 Committee Membership of the President**

**Add** – Provision has been added to allow the President to determine if they want to be an active member of any given Committee *except* the DSP where they potentially could be an arbiter as cited in the agreement with Parks Canada.

8.2.3 The President may choose to be an official member of any committee except Dark-Sky Preserve (DSP) Committee. The President may be considered a member of that committee for the purpose of reckoning the number of members of the committee or a quorum of the committee and has the rights thereof.

## **Section 9: Meetings of the Centre**

### **Delete – 9.5 Proxies**

#### **Rationale:**

- 1) The members attending via an electronic means have the right to vote and controlling the voting electronically is easily done.
- 2) Proxy voting is not allowed at the national RASC meetings nor is it mentioned in any of their policies. (Refer to [RASC By-Law No. 1](#), 4.3 Absentee Voting at Members’ Meetings, 5.8 Votes to Govern at Members’ Meetings, 5.9 Participation by Electronic Means at Members’ Meetings, 5.10 Members’ Meeting Held Entirely by Electronic Means).
- 3) Our Centre in the past 10 years or more has not had anyone represented by proxy.

With removal of proxy voting, the following changes are recommended:

### **9.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**Change** – Voting by proxy was removed from 2 clauses as we are proposing that references to proxy voting be removed.

9.1.8 Every member who is personally present or attends through a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility shall have one vote and no more.

9.1.9 Quorum shall consist of 15 members who are personally present or present through a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility. No business shall be conducted at any meeting unless a quorum is present to open the meeting and, upon request, before any vote.

### **9.2 Halifax Centre Members' Meeting**

**Change** – Voting by proxy was removed from 2 clauses as we are proposing that references to proxy voting be removed for the same rationale provided in the section above regarding the AGM.

9.2.8 Every member who is personally present or attends through a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility, shall have one vote and no more.

9.2.9 Quorum shall consist of 15 members who are personally present or attends through a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility. No business shall be conducted at any meeting unless a quorum is present to open the meeting and, upon request, before any vote.

### **9.3 Members' Meeting on Requisition**

**Change** – Voting by proxy was removed and clarification of how a person may be considered “present” at a meeting. References to “proxies” removed for the same rationale provided in the section above regarding the AGM.

9.3.5 Every member who is personally present or attends through a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility shall have one vote and no more.

9.3.8 Quorum shall consist of 15 members who are personally present or attends through a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility.

### **9.4 Conducting of Business**

**Add** – The following two statements were added to allow for attendance other than in person.

9.4.1 If the Directors or members of the Centre call a meeting of members, those Directors or members, as the case may be, may determine that the meeting shall be held in person or in part or entirely by telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.

9.4.2 If the Centre chooses to make available a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility, any person participating in a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting.

**Change** – The current clause provides a descriptor of how votes are cast. With the addition of the above 2 statements, this now becomes 9.4.6 and has been changed to better define how a vote is cast and what happens in the case of a tie vote. The latter was not explained in the previous version. It was also felt that the Chair should not vote except in the case of a tied vote.

9.4.6 At any meeting of members every question shall, unless otherwise provided by the By-Law or provincial legislation, be determined by a majority of the votes cast on the question. In case of an equality of votes either on a show of hands or on a ballot or in the results of electronic voting or any combination thereof, the chair of the meeting may vote only to cast a deciding vote in the event of a tied vote.

### ***Special Resolution of Members***

**WHEREAS** it is recognized that from time-to-time RASC terminology changes and advances in technology affect how RASC Halifax Centre business is being conducted, and

**WHEREAS** the RASC policy changes may influence change; and

**WHEREAS** the By-Law Review Committee completed their mandate to revise the RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 on 29 October 2024; and

**WHEREAS** the RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 (2024) and the rationale or the changes were pre-circulated to RASC Halifax Centre members on 29 October 2024, 22 November 2024 and 3 December 2024 for consideration;

Be it resolved as a **Special Resolution of Members** that:

- RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 (2024) as presented in the revised By-Law No. 1 supported by the Rationale for Changes document be approved;
- RASC Halifax Centre By-Law No. 1 (2024) with the aforesaid revision be forwarded to the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) for approval prior to enactment.