



RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, January 28, 2025: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Via Zoom – Meeting 838 0134 3731

| Agenda Items | | | | |
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| 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 | Tony McGrath | Pre-circulated: Agenda: January 7, 2025 Refer to Agenda Notes #1: Open Action List Minutes: December 3, 2024 |
| ONGOING ITEMS | | | | |
| | 2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 Board Meeting Dates Confirm Member's Meeting agenda Zoom/SMU Bookings Guest Speakers & Ideas for Future Presentations Nominations for vacant Board and Appointed positions | Ongoing Discussion Approval | Tony McGrath | Refer to Agenda Notes #2: Speakers & Approved 2025 Public Meeting Dates Refer to Agenda Notes #3: Proposed 2025 Board Meeting Dates |
| | 3. Report from National Council Representative | Information Discussion | Judy Black | NC Meeting, February 9, 2025 |
| | 4. RASC Halifax Centre Website & YouTube | Discussion | Judy Black | Refer to Agenda Notes #4: Website Update |
| | 5. Financial Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Status Auditor Report | Discussion | Gregg Dill | Auditor Report from Dave Chapman circulated with Agenda |
| | 6. Education & Public Outreach (EPO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Requests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APS (Feb 4) SCO Observing Nights Nova East Star Party | Discussion Decision | David Hoskin Tony McGrath Judy Black | Set 2025 SCO Observing dates |
| RASC HALIFAX CENTRE – GOALS & OBJECTIVES | | | | |
| | 7. Dave Lane Memorial SCOPE Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matching Funds Tony Schellinck | Ongoing Discussion | Tony McGrath | Form a task team to develop fund-raising strategies for matching funds |
| | 8. 2025 Goals & Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize next steps Develop Action Plan Centre Membership Status | Ongoing Discussion | Tony McGrath Judy Black | Form a task team to develop an action plan |
| UPDATES / REPORTS | | | | |
| | 9. Outreach Travel Expenses | Information | Peter Hurley David Hoskin | n/a |
| | 10. Business Cards | Update | Judy Black | Discuss distribution |
| | 11. RASC Awards | Discussion | Judy Black | FRASC & Service Awards |
| NEW BUSINESS | | | | |
| | 12. SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance & Development Plan Inventory & Valuation | Discussion | Tony McGrath | n/a |
| | 13. 2025 Board Reference Manual | Discussion | Judy Black | n/a |

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| Adjournment | | | |
| 9:00 PM | Adjournment | | (Next meeting: February 25, 2025) |

RASC, Halifax Centre – Member & Public Meeting

Saturday, February 1, 2025: 1:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Via Zoom - Meeting ID 843 2061 7573

| Time | <i>General Meeting</i> | | |
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| 1:00 PM | Item | | |
| | 1. Welcome & Introductions • Photo Montage • ETU Guides for sale | Information | David Hoskin |
| | 2. Special Presentation: Dr. David Turner – The Indian Point Meteor Crater | Presentation | Dr. David Turner |
| | 3. Outreach Opportunities • Food for the Soul | Information | David Hoskin Paul Heath |
| | 4. News from the Board | Information | Tony McGrath / Judy Black |
| | 5. What's Up in February? | Information | David Hoskin |
| 4:00 PM | Adjournment | | |

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

AGENDA NOTES

| Agenda Item, Proposed By, & Date Proposed | Description Received (& Proposed Motion, if Applicable) |
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| Agenda Note #1re: Open Action List | <p><u>June 18, 2024</u> 240618MN-Act04: Jeff Donaldson, John Liddard and Tony McGrath to explore the possible benefits of using tech tools available to nonprofit organizations through TechSoup and report back to the Board.</p> <p><u>Sept. 3, 2024</u> 240903MN-Act011: Tony McGrath to review the documentation that Jerry Black prepared for using the Celestron 8" SCT and Hyperstar.</p> <p><u>Dec. 3, 2024</u> 241203MN-Act01: The Governance Committee to provide a document for the March Board meeting regarding the retention and disposal of historical documents.</p> <p><u>January 7, 2025</u> 250107MN-Act01: Judy Black to contact Tony Schellinck and Dave Chapman to confirm their presentations for the May and June public meetings.</p> <p>250107MN-Act02: Peter Hurley is to contact Jeff Donaldson about the Communication Committee Chair position.</p> <p>250107MN-Act03: Judy Black to contact Chris Young and Gary Weber about the Nova East Planning Committee and the requirement for budget, reports to the Board about ongoing planning, and the Annual Report for the AGM.</p> <p>250107MN-Act04: Judy Black to ensure the approved Board meeting minutes of October 29 and December 3 are uploaded to the Centre website.</p> |

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| | <p>250107MN-Act05: Judy Black to correct the date on the draft AGM minutes and repost them.</p> <p>250107MN-Act06: Tony McGrath to discuss the matched fund with Michelle Lane regarding inclusion of the donation of Tony Schellinck.</p> <p>250107MN-Act07: Judy Black to contact Alan Sutherland to set a date for a public outreach session at Atlantic Photo Supply at their Burnside site.</p> <p>250107MN-Act08: Tony McGrath to forward the Centre's Action Plan and the results of the Members' Survey to all Board members.</p> <p>250107MN-Act09: All Board members are to review the documents and provide Tony McGrath with their choice for first action priority.</p> <p>250107MN-Act10: Peter Hurley to provide the link to the Driven membership database training given by Jenna last year.</p> <p>250107MN-Act11: Tony McGrath to contact Tiffany to discuss her interest in the liaison role.</p> <p>250107MN-Act12: Tony McGrath to provide Tiffany with a copy of the Observer's Handbook.</p> |
| <p>Agenda Note #2 re: Speakers & 2025 Public Meeting Dates</p> | <p>2024/5 Approved Members Meeting Dates and Events Members' Meeting dates, approved November 2023, are posted on the RASC(HC) website.</p> <p>Confirmed Location & Speakers for 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (AT101) February 1 – Dr. David Turner (The Indian Point Meteor Crater) * • (AT101) March 1 – Robyn Foret (RASC/CASCA Awards) • (LA1171) April 5 – Reserved as an alternate for Dr. Turner * • (AT101) May 3 – Tony Schellinck (Women in Astronomy) • (AT101) June 7 – David Chapman (Celestial Birds, their Lore & Wonder) • (AT101) September 6 – David Hoskin (All-in-One Smart Telescopes) • (AT101) October 4 – (Tentative: Dan Falk re Edmond Halley) • (AT101) November 1 • (AT101) December 6 <p>* Blair MacDonald will be the substitute speaker for Dr. Turner on Feb 1 if he is unable to attend; if Dr. Turner does present on Feb. 1, he has been approached about the April 5 meeting. Pat Kelly was approached for Nov or December, or October if Dan Falk is not available. Their topics are listed below.</p> <p>Suggested Speakers / Special Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pat Kelly (Telling Time in Scotland: From Stones to Sundials) • Blair MacDonald (Black Holes) • Dan Falk (Edmond Halley) • John Badowski • SMU Astronomy and Physics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grad students • Tiffany Fields • Rob Thacker • https://rasc.ca/find-speaker |
| <p>Agenda Notes #3: 2025 Board Meeting Dates</p> | <p>Board Meeting Dates (no meetings July/August):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 28 • February 25 • April 1 • April 29 • June 3 • September 2 • September 30 • October 28 • December 2 |
| <p>Agenda Notes #4: Website Updates</p> | <p>Updates on the Website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date in Draft AGM minutes corrected • Uploaded October 29 and December 3 Board minutes of meeting • Corrected the Board and Appointed List in "News" on front page link and "Contact Us" |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added confirmed speakers and topics to “RASC Events” and “RASC Upcoming Events” • Corrected SCO Manager email link • Added APS Outreach event to home page • Uploaded “Image Processing 2025, Session 1” (Blair Macdonald, David Hoskin) |
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Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting

Present: Tony McGrath (President), Peter Hurley (Vice-President), Judy Black (Secretary), Gregg Dill (Treasurer), Jeff Donaldson, David Hoskin, Patrick Kelly (Hon. President), Vincent Vallee.

Regrets: Matt Dyer.

1. Welcome & Introductions

f. Tony called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed Board members. He welcomed new Board member David McMullin. He asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda which had been circulated by email by Judy earlier in the day. Judy indicated items had been added: Nova East under Item 6, 12. SCO maintenance and inventory, 13. 2025 Board Reference Manual.

250128MN-Mot01

It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the January 28, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as amended.
CARRIED.

Judy reviewed the action list on Tony’s behalf. The Action List included in Agenda Notes #1 was reviewed.

From June 18, 2024

Action 4: Open.

From September 3, 2024

Action 11: Open.

From December 3, 2024

Action 1: Open.

From January 7, 2025

Action 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: Closed.

Action 7: Closed. Date set for February 4 observing session; February 5 and 6 are cloud dates.

Action 8, 9: Closed.

Action 10: Closed. The link forwarded by Peter has restricted use. Judy had contacted Jenna Hinds to determine if she can provide a training session to those on our Board requiring access to the database.

250128MN-Act01

Judy Black to contact Jenna Hinds to determine a date and time for Driven membership database training for Judy Black, Peter Hurley, Pat Kelly and Tony McGrath.

Action 11, 12: Closed.

Tony asked if there were errors or omissions in the January 7, 2025 minutes.

250128MN-Mot02

It was moved by Peter Hurley and seconded by Jeff Donaldson to approve the January 07, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated.
CARRIED.

ONGOING ITEMS

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

The list of meetings was presented in Agenda Notes #2 of the agenda. Judy reviewed the speakers acquired to date. Peter Hurley had previously confirmed all meeting rooms with SMU.

She noted that thanks to the efforts of Paul Gray, an exciting speaker is being arranged for the October 4 meeting. Until the speaker is confirmed, Paul has asked that their name not be provided. Suffice to say that the speaker is a well-known Canadian.

Pat Kelly volunteered to present *Telling Time in Scotland: From Stones to Sundials* at the November 1 Public meeting.

Membership Numbers

Judy noted there are 139 current members, 6 requiring renewal, 10 lapsed (membership is 2 months or less from their expiry date) and 33 expired.

Nominations for Vacant Board Positions

Tony noted there is still one opening for a director. Judy noted that according to our By-Law No. 1, we do have to make formal recognition of the motion that went out to the members of the elected Board via email. The motion made by Peter Hurley and seconded by Judy Black was approved unanimously yes by the 8 members of the Board. The Board will now be looking for a volunteer to fill the vacant director position.

Peter noted that Jeff Donaldson agreed to nomination as the Communications Committee Chair.

250128MN-Mot03

It was moved by Peter Hurley and seconded by Judy Black to approve the appointment of Jeff Donaldson as the Chair of the Communications Committee.
CARRIED.

Judy and Dave Chapman agreed to be on the Committee with Jeff. The previous communications strategy does require change. Jeff was thanked for agreeing to taking the position.

250128MN-Act02

Peter Hurley to forward the Communications plan to Jeff Donaldson.

3. Report from National Council Representative

No Report. Judy indicated the next meeting was February 9, 2025.

4. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube

Tony stated the list of website updates is noted in Agenda Notes #4. Judy noted that changes made by Jerry Black or other members were listed here in chronological order.

Peter noted the wording in the meeting notice states "public" twice and wondered if it was necessary. It was agreed a wording change was needed.

250128MN-Act03

Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to change the wording to "open to members and the public."

5. Financial Update

Gregg reported that in addition to the \$10,000 donation from Michelle and Dave, there is \$13,542 in the bank. Gregg also suggested the annual \$50.00 donation the Centre gives to Clear Sky Chart (CSC) and to the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) be increased to \$100.00.

250128MN-Act04

Judy Black to add increases to fees paid to Clear Sky Chart (CSC) and to the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) as a discussion/decision item on the February 25, 2025 Board agenda.

He hoped members had seen Dave Chapman's *Auditor Report*. He noted Dave questioned if the Centre had a policy regarding sending flowers. Gregg noted we do not have a policy but that the Board felt it appropriate to send flowers to Judy when her mother died.

Gregg noted the list of assets are outdated, that perhaps some of those items are no longer at SCO. A list was initially done by Judy Black and there was a second one by John Liddard. Tony has taken on the task and has put everything into a spreadsheet. He is doing a valuation of the inventory currently on the list; however, he will visit SCO upon his return to have a proper accounting of what is there and what we are going to keep. Tony returns in April so hopes by the end of April to have a proper inventory completed and what the assets are worth.

Gregg noted there is a difference between 'inventory' and 'depreciation schedule'. Because some items are not worth depreciating, Gregg expected the depreciation schedule to be a much-reduced version of the inventory. Tony also noted his valuation total currently exceeds what is currently in the SCO property insurance policy, but the insurance can be adjusted, if need be, once an accurate inventory is taken.

Peter brought attention to the Auditor citing at least three collections of eyepieces that should be consolidated and inventoried, that surplus eyepieces be liquidated and the remainder properly stored at SCO for member use. They should also be identified as RASC property to prevent accidental disappearance (such as the 9mm Nagler). Proper storage is required.

6. Education and Public Outreach

EPO Events:

David Hoskin reported we've had an outreach request from a section Scout leader for Sweets Corner via the National Office for a response.

The other outreach coming up is the urban star party at the Atlantic Photo Supply (APS) on February 4. Several volunteers have come forward – Jeff, Judy and Jerry, Matt, Peter and Frank Logan. It is being advertised on our website and in Astronomy Nova Scotia. APS has an ad on their Facebook and on the door of the Dartmouth location. Tiffany Field has included it on the BGO website. David Hoskin noted the nice thing about the APS event is we don't need absolutely clear skies as we are mainly will be looking at planets and the Moon.

SCO Observing Nights:

Tony stated the list of observing nights were posted by Jerry. Judy noted the nights are all New Moons and consequently the August date is the weekend of Nova East. She suggested that given the likelihood of a SCO observing session that weekend that we invite them to join us at Nova East and provide a link.

250128MN-Act05

Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to change the August observing night to an invitation to join us at Nova East and to provide the link to the event site.

Nova East:

Judy has been in contact with Gary Weber and Chris Young to follow up on a discussion held at the December public meeting. We agreed that after several years of not doing so, it was time the goals and objectives were reviewed. Potential themes for 2025 could also be discussed. We agreed we were not going to call this a "committee" but rather a brainstorming session where longtime and new members could join in the discussion as to what would entice them to attend (what's missing, never been offered, etc.). In early to mid-February, a Zoom session would be provided where any member can participate in the discussion. Judy volunteered to be the Board liaison for the group. Gregg voiced concerns about not having a lead. Vince volunteered to participate.

David McMullin asked if there was any document about what Nova East does sort of traditionally in the past, is there some sort of framework, and do we know if there are other star parties nearby or far away that have documents about what they tried to do. Judy stated she mined *Nova Notes* to collate the activities and speakers since the star party was first a Maritime Star Party where New Brunswick and possibly P.E.I. were involved. Judy consequently has produced a document with chairs and committee members, activities, speakers and their topics, themes and other information when it could be found. She would be willing to share with the Board. There is a Terms of Reference for the Nova East Planning Committee (NEPC) in the Centre's policy regarding committees, but no goals or objectives are cited.

Tony noted that in the past, people attended Nova East from all over, including the USA, and that has not been the case lately. Perhaps better advertising could be suggested. Judy noted it is cited in both the *RASC Observer's Handbook* and the *RASC Observer's Calendar* but that should not be considered an advertisement. It was suggested that once a date and location were confirmed, it should be advertised in the RASC Monthly Bulletin that gets sent to RASC members worldwide, our Centre and Astronomy Nova Scotia Facebook pages, and Meetup. We could possibly rely on our American members in New Jersey and Massachusetts to advertise through groups there. We should contact Provincial Parks to determine if/how they can advertise the 'free' public components on the Smileys' site.

Chris Young emailed Mark Meadows at Smileys to confirm us being there and to determine if we would have use of the Event Building; he is waiting for a response. We would also consider renting a storage unit to put their gear into for the short term or renting a tent as had been the case in years past. The date has been set – August 22-25. It was noted the date and location have not been cited on the website.

250128MN-Act06

Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to change the Nova East Star Party home page to reflect the 2025 date and location change.

RASC Halifax Centre – Goals and Objectives

7. Dave Lane Memorial SCOPE Fund

Tony Schellinck confirmed his interest is to motivate members to contribute towards a fund that will enable the Centre to maintain and to expand St. Croix. Tony S. felt the best way to proceed likely is to use the \$5,000 matching component from as Michelle has proposed, and he will donate the \$5,000 regardless of what happens. If we get only a portion of the matching fund at the end of the year, then his donation will top it up so that we get the \$5,000 and the balance of his donation would go to the SCOPE Fund as well.

Tony McGrath suggested a task team be formed to discuss the fundraising strategy. The members are Tony McGrath, Judy Black, Blair MacDonald and Mary Lou Whitehorne. Gregg also agreed as Treasurer that he should attend the first meeting for his input and to determine his future involvement. The concept is that we would kick this off at the March meeting. Tony M. will be contacting Michelle to inform her of the progress being made.

Gregg Dill expressed concern about investing the \$10,000 in the stock market. Our goal is to have income and capital appreciation. He asked about the level of risk we wanted to take and who is to make the decision, i.e., do we want it in bank stocks, dividend funds, US equity funds, European or Asian fund, or GICs. Tony noted this was something the task team could address.

There has not been a lot of money spent on SCO in the recent past. Tony noted the actual operation and maintenance of St. Croix as it currently stands does not consume a lot of capital. If we just want to maintain the status quo or if our plan is to have expand equipment owned, then our investment strategy should differ. Judy noted that a wish list had been determined when the 2020 fundraising project, and she could circulate it to the Board.

Judy also noted that Roy has been our benefactor in terms of getting that land donated to us and keeping it for us to use. If at some point Minas Energy determines they require the site for their purposes, our Centre would then have to acquire new land and move what we own. This fund would be used in part or in whole to finance such a move.

250128MN-Act07

Tony McGrath is to determine a date for the SCOPE Fund Task Team (Tony, Blair MacDonald, Judy Black, Mary Lou Whitehorne, Gregg Dill) to meet.

8. 2025 Goals and Objectives

Tony requested that members review the Centre Plan and determine one or two priorities based on the results of the recent member survey. Tony explained the process to date. David Hoskin said he would like the Centre to do something about member retention. We don't know how many of the people we lost this year had joined for one year and were not getting anything out of it. David wondered if something like the NOVA program would help with retention, that it would be seen as a way to learn about astronomy – beyond looking through an eyepiece. Peter suggested we could offer an ETU course at SCO or somewhere else, especially since 27% of people surveyed said they joined because they wanted to learn about astronomy.

Vince suggested we could extend a reminder email to people who haven't renewed and include an exit survey inquiring as to why they're choosing not to continue being a RASC member.

The ETU program may be a good place to start as we have not any observing or imaging certificates issued since 2022. The last certificates issued to RASC Halifax members were the ETU and Explore the Moon in 2022; the last astroimaging award was in 2020. Pat looked at national RASC website and noted our Centre has been awarded nine ETU certificates since 2019 which puts us two ahead of Toronto and 4 ahead of Ottawa. If you look at the Centres, it seems to stop at 2022. This may have been because of the lockdowns which put a damper on observing and it just never got kick started back up again afterwards.

The Nova Program is available in-person, totally via Zoom or be a hybrid course. David Hoskin voiced concern that NOVA involves \$75 (\$50 for the RASC, \$25 for the Centre) payment per person to the national RASC. Members may not receive additional payment favourably. Judy wondered what administration costs were included in these fees to national RASC such as print materials, etc.

250128MN-Act08

Judy Black will contact Lauri Roche to confirm the fees associated with NOVA and the administrative responsibilities of the Centres.

Jeff noted that for the last two years he has been running a successful youth program Halifax Recreation. Judy and Jerry brought their telescopes over a few times to assist in the observing sessions. Jeff was approached following the highly successful youth program at Carol's Corner Community Centre. Their Board reached out to Jeff because they want to run their own astronomy program; this could be used as a funnel to get more youth involved in the RASC.

Pat noted the last thing on the list of things that they want to do is guest lectures; the first one is actual observing. Tony noted when we do have an observing session at the St. Croix even with some clouds, the attendance and the level of enthusiasm were both high. Judy suggested that additional observing nights be interspersed with our New Moon dates to provide First and Third Quarter Moon observing. Tony noted these additional sessions do not need to

be at SCO, and there is the challenge of getting volunteers to conduct these programs.

Tony stressed the need to focus on one priority and determine if we can achieve that. He questioned whether our plan needed revision, was it missing something and, if so, what would those items be. Our priorities for the year need to be identified because we only have so much energy to dedicate to it. Pat noted it might be much easier to convince people who were members to rejoin than to get new members from scratch; finding out why some of the people have left is probably going to pay off fairly quickly in terms of whether the reasons they left was because what they wanted was not being offered or whether it was something as simple as just cost too much. It was agreed that the exit survey suggested earlier could educate us as to why members are leaving. David McMullin also wondered if changes to changes to time available or their observing habits may have played a factor in their leaving. Given the attendance number before and after the pandemic, we know something has shifted.

250128MN-Act09

Peter Hurley will compile a list of those RASC Halifax Centre members who have left in the past two years.

Judy suggested that if the list isn't too onerous that in lieu of just sending out an email, we could phone them. We might get more information talking to them over the phone or in person than we ever would through email. Vince suggested the use of Survey Monkey as an easy means to conduct a survey.

From the discussion, our priority at this point is to increase retention through offering different programs such as NOVA, the ETU, and other types of programs, and to find out why people are leaving and to address the reasons they left. Given we don't have many young members, acquiring new younger members is also a priority.

Updates/Reports

9. Outreach Travel Expenses

Our Centre has a travel expense policy but only as it relates to bringing outside speakers for a meeting or special event such as Nova East. Peter had raised this item a couple years ago but it lost traction. He wants to raise it again as he has had questions asked if travel expenses would be paid for an LP-trained volunteer to travel to an event. The first question is should we have a general outreach expense policy; the second question is, if we do at what mileage rate. Members noted that per kilometer rates varied from \$0.30/km in the 2019 RASC Policy to \$0.7/km by the CRA. Gregg noted our Centre in the past has offered \$0.25/km to attend Nova East or the DSW or conduct business with Kejimikujik National Park. Peter noted the Park has agreed to do this for specific cases.

Judy stated that in the policy we need to differentiate between RASC-sanctioned events and those personal events being conducted by a member. If the latter, the member should pay the mileage, not the RASC. Tony suggested expenses be for per kilometer rates and offered two things to consider: outreach expenses and SCO maintenance. David Hoskin noted that for now he sees his travel as a donation to the Centre but that other members cannot afford it.

To help us better determine expense rates, it would be helpful to know what other groups and organizations currently offer.

250128MN-Act10

All Board members are requested to forward to Judy Black the travel expense reimbursement rates where they work or for whom they volunteer.

250128MN-Act11

The Governance Review Committee is to develop a policy regarding travel expenses for Centre activities.

10. Business Cards

Judy stated we now own 1000 RASC Halifax Centre business cards for use at our events. The Centre should acknowledge Wayne Harasimovitch for his time in the development of the card. She explained what was on the front and reverse side of the rounded-corner card. The cost was \$143.69 or approximately \$0.14 per card. Any member can order the cards from R&M Rubber. Discussion was held regarding the need to charge a nominal fee to members so that monies are recouped for the next order. The value of the cards at outreach event would depend on the age of the audience, e.g., is it an Embers or Sparks group versus an adult event such as at a resort or winery.

Peter noted we currently get flyers printed at Staples; these may be handed out more freely than we might business cards. It is hoped the cards will replace the flyers; the flyers and all other Centre brochures are on our website. Pat expressed concern that if we charge for the cards, very few would purchase them.

Judy questioned what we were to tell members on Saturday regarding the business cards for outreach events. It was agreed to tell members they are available for handout at Centre outreach events, and that David Hoskin is the contact to request them at outreach@halifax.rasc.

11. RASC Awards

Judy informed the group a nomination was sent to the RASC for Paul Gray to receive the Fellow of the RASC award. She wanted the Board to keep in mind this is confidential because we want it to be a surprise for Paul. Judy requested that she and Tony McGrath be apprised of the award (not Paul), and we would ensure he attends the March meeting where hopefully our guest speaker Robyn Foret can make the announcement.

Judy also noted there had been a suggestion by Dave Chapman that we should make nominations for other RASC awards, notably the Service Award, as some of our members have contributed with honours both nationally and here in Halifax Centre. Any proposed award would be announced in the 2026 Awards announcements as it is too late for 2025 submissions.

New Business

12. SCO

Tony stated that as the SCO Manager for 2025, he has started a maintenance and development plan for St. Croix. He is going to solicit some input just by tapping some people on the shoulder, like some of our long-time users of St. Croix, just to get their take on maintenance and development and whether SCO meets their needs. For example, it was suggested we have a rest station for astroimagers who want to rest before driving home. Another suggestion was to have internet connectivity – better connection on the site and possible access from home.

Jerry was invited to attend the meeting to explain he ordered a new router with 2.4 or 5 GHz that would be set up for use at SCO as a local network with auto connectivity to the Hyperstar. It would be stored in the Warm Room. He will be trying it out in the coming week and will have directions written out for its use. He stated there were no costs as Jerry is the provider. It is not common knowledge yet but will be announced once ready.

Judy noted that when we went through the 2020 SCO fund development a wish list had been developed by survey or another means.

250128MN-Act12

Judy Black will forward the SCO Wish List to the Board.

Tony reiterated the inventory and valuation will be conducted in April.

13. 2025 Board Reference Manual

Judy developed this product when she was Secretary in 2016 to address answers to questions frequently asked; it was last modified in 2022. The Board Reference Manual explains everything about us as a Centre and the national RASC as an entity in terms of where to find things. Included in the appendices is the communication strategy which we know needs updating. Another appendix is the month-by-month board calendar that lists the responsibilities of the president, the vice-president, secretary, treasurer, board members, webmaster and *Nova Notes* editors. The calendar serves as a guide, not written in stone and may not be accurate but provides what should be done. One piece of the puzzle to be corrected is how our members can subscribe and unsubscribe to our Centre Discussion List; Pat and Jerry are assisting in clarifying the process. Once finished, it will be forwarded as a PDF to Board members; Judy should be notified of information missing information or errors made.

250128MN-Act13

Judy Black will distribute the Board Reference Manual to elected Board members before the end of February.

Judy noted the board list is not included in the Board Reference Manual. It is a separate entity because of the privacy issues. The Contact list is for Board use only and cannot be distributed to anyone or any entity unless approved by the Board to do so.

250128MN-Act14

Judy Black will distribute the revised 2025 Board contact list following this meeting.

Adjournment

No further business to conduct.

250107MN-Mot04

It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by David Hoskin to adjourn.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm. He reminded us that our next meeting is February 25, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Black, Secretary

ACTION LIST (January 7, 2025):

| From June 18, 2024 | | |
|-------------------------------|---|------|
| 240618MN-Act04 | Jeff Donaldson, John Liddard and Tony McGrath to explore the possible benefits of using tech tools available to nonprofit organizations through TechSoup and report back to the Board. | Open |
| From September 3, 2024 | | |
| 240903MN-Act011 | Tony McGrath to review the documentation that Jerry Black prepared for using the Celestron 8" SCT and Hyperstar. | Open |
| From December 3, 2024 | | |
| 241203MN-Act01 | The Governance Committee to provide a document for the March Board meeting regarding the retention and disposal of historical documents. | Open |
| From January 28, 2025 | | |
| 250128MN-Act01 | Judy Black to contact Jenna Hinds to determine a date and time for Driven membership database training for Judy Black, Peter Hurley, Pat Kelly and Tony McGrath. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act02 | Peter Hurley to forward the Communications plan to Jeff Donaldson. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act03 | Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to change the wording to "open to members and the public." | Open |
| 250128MN-Act04 | Judy Black to add increases to fees paid to Clear Sky Chart (CSC) and to the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) as a discussion/decision item on the February 25, 2025 Board agenda. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act05 | Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to change the August observing night to an invitation to join us at Nova East and to provide the link to the event site. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act06 | Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to change the Nova East Star Party home page to reflect the 2025 date and location change. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act07 | Tony McGrath is to determine a date for the SCOPE Fund Task Team (Tony, Blair MacDonald, Judy Black, Mary Lou Whitehorne, Gregg Dill) to meet. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act08 | Judy Black will contact Lauri Roche to confirm the fees associated with NOVA and the administrative responsibilities of the Centres. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act09 | Peter Hurley will compile a list of those RASC Halifax Centre members who have left in the past two years. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act10 | All Board members are requested to forward to Judy Black the travel expense reimbursement rates where they work or for whom they volunteer. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act11 | The Governance Review Committee is to develop a policy regarding travel expenses for Centre activities. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act12 | Judy Black will forward the SCO Wish List to the Board. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act13 | Judy Black will distribute the Board Reference Manual to elected Board members before the end of February. | Open |
| 250128MN-Act14 | Judy Black will distribute the revised 2025 Board contact list following this meeting. | Open |

MOTION LIST (January 28, 2025):

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| 250128MN-Mot01 | It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the January 28, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as circulated. CARRIED. |
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| 250128MN-Mot02 | It was moved by Peter Hurley and seconded by Jeff Donaldson to approve the January 07, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated. CARRIED. |
| 250128MN-Mot03 | It was moved by Peter Hurley and seconded by Judy Black to approve the appointment of Jeff Donaldson as the Chair of the Communications Committee. CARRIED. |
| 250128MN-Mot04 | It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by David Hoskin for the meeting to adjourn. |

Approved February 25, 2025