



RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors Meeting
 Monday, February 27, 2024: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
 Via Zoom - Meeting ID: 811 4153 0840

Agenda Items				
Time	Item	Purpose	Responsibility	Support Documents / Notes
7:00 PM	1. Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of Agenda Review Action List Approval of Previous Minutes of Meeting 	Information Approval	Tony McGrath	Pre-circulated: Agenda: February 27, 2024 Minutes: January 30, 2024; February 20, 2024 (Special Meeting by Requisition)
ONGOING ITEMS				
	2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Member's Meeting Date Confirmation and Format Confirm Member's Meeting agenda Zoom/SMU Bookings Guest Speakers & Ideas for Future Presentations 	Ongoing Discussion Approval	Tony McGrath Judy Black	<i>Refer to Agenda Notes #1: Speakers & Approved 2024 Member Meeting Dates</i> <i>Refer to Agenda Notes #2: 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Dates</i>
	3. Report from National Council Representative	Information Discussion	Judy Black	<i>Refer to Agenda Notes #3</i>
	4. RASC Halifax Centre Website & YouTube	Discussion	Judy Black	<i>n/a</i>
	5. Financial Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Status 	Discussion	Gregg Dill	<i>n/a</i>
	6. Member Welcome Package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status Update: Survey review 	Discussion	Tony McGrath	<i>n/a</i>
	7. Education & Public Outreach (EPO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Requests Update: Distribution of eclipse glasses Eclipse plans 	Discussion	David Hoskin	<i>n/a</i>
RASC HALIFAX CENTRE – GOALS & OBJECTIVES				
	8. 2024 Goals & Objectives	Ongoing Discussion	Tony McGrath	
UPDATES / REPORTS				
	9. SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access – gate and key Members observing night Maintenance 	Discussion	John Liddard	

	10. GLP certificates and training	Discussion	Judy Black	n/a
NEW BUSINESS				
	11. Annual Reports: Webmaster, Dark-Sky Preserve	Discussion Decision	Judy Black Lisa Ann Fanning	n/a
Adjournment				
9:00 PM	11. Adjournment (Next meeting: Mar 26, 2024)			

RASC, Halifax Centre – Member’s Meeting
Saturday, March 2, 2024 – 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Via Zoom – Meeting ID 870 8615 4999

Agenda Items		
Time*	Item	Responsibility
1:00 PM	Welcome & Introductions Photo Montage EtU guides for sale - Lisa has requested that the members be asked to forward to her any eclipse stories, sketches or anecdotes for inclusion in Nova Notes. She included in her email to the board a Wanted Poster. Let's give this as much visibility with the membership as possible.	(emcee) David Hoskin
	Presentation: Student Spectrography at BGO	Dr. Ian Short, SMU
	Social Break	
	Food for the Soul:	Paul Heath
	What's Up? (March)	David Hoskin
	News from the Board	Tony McGrath Judy Black
	Astroimaging Contest	Judy Black
4:00 PM	Adjournment	

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

AGENDA NOTES

Agenda Item, Proposed By, & Date Proposed	Description Received (& Proposed Motion, if Applicable)
Agenda Note #1 re: Speakers & 2024 Member Meeting Dates	<p>2024 Approved Members Meeting Dates and Events Members' Meeting dates were approved at the November 2023 Board of Directors meeting. They have been posted on the RASC(HC) website.</p> <p>Confirmed Speakers March 2, 2024 – Ian Short (<i>Student Spectrography at the BGO</i>) - Mary Lou requested she introduce the speaker.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 6, 2024 – CANCELLED, eclipse chasing • May 4, 2024 – <i>Members' eclipse stories</i> – Members are to bring a selection of telescopes to the meeting and revise the meeting agenda to provide plenty of time for people to

	<p>congregate and chat about the various instruments. In effect use the telescopes as a focal point :) to prompt more social interaction. This needs to be discussed, and if approved, we could do a bit of an advertising campaign to try and get a good physical turnout to the May meeting. We could encourage new members, or any interested in learning a little about telescopes to attend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 1, 2024 – Tiffany Fields (What it's like to be a BGO Astronomy Technician) – Blair MacDonald (Changes in Astroimaging) • September 7, 2024 - BBQ in lieu of meeting • October 5, 2024 – Luigi Gallo (<i>JAXA's XRISM satellite</i>) • November 2, 2024 – TBD • AGM December 7, 2024 – TBD <p>Suggested Speakers / Special Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Badowski • Dave Chapman • Kaja Rotermund (formation of a high-redshift galaxy cluster) • SMU Grad students • Tiffany Fields • Dr. Rob Thacker • https://rasc.ca/find-speaker
<p>Agenda Note #2 re: Approved 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Dates</p>	<p>2024 Approved Board Meeting Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 26 • April 30 • May 28 • June 25 (if required) • September 3 • October 1 • October 29 • December 3
<p>Agenda Note #3 re: Report of February 11, 2024 NC Meeting</p>	<p>From Judy Black, NC Representative:</p> <p>47 Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Council Officers: Judy Black (Chair), Jim Fairles of KW Centre (Vice-Chair), Eric Klaszus of Calgary Centre (Recording Secretary) • 26 NC Reps from 24 of 30 Centres (this included the Officers) – a record! • 11 Presidents from 30 Centres (this included Tony McGrath) • 2 Committee Chairs: Chris Gainor (Publications), Lauri Roche (EPO) • 7 of 9 RASC Board of Directors: Michael Watson (President), Brendon Roy (1st VP), Betty Robinson (2nd VP), Eric Briggs (Secretary), Katherine Dulong (Director), Stuart Heggie (Director), Randy Attwood (Director). • Staff: Jenna Hinds (RASC Exec. Dir.) <p>Purpose of Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a forum for the Centre Representatives to National Council and their Centre's Presidents to see and hear the update of the draft of the 2023 RASC budget vs. actual and the proposed draft 2024 budget. • To provide the opportunity for positive feedback to the Board regarding the plan of action presented. <p>Meeting Structure & Ground Rules – Members were provided an overview/review.</p> <p>Relationships & the Pillars of Trust</p> <p>The Pillars of Trust were introduced in Summer of 2022 following the AGM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication between the 5 entities within the RASC is improving (Members, Centres, National Council, Board of Directors, National Office). The simplistic diagram showed the main communication lines between them, but it is much more complicated than depicted. There must be recognition that communication is improving across the RASC and through RASC newsletters and bulletins. - Collaboration between the Board and National Council has greatly improved in the past year. For example, before the Board provides final approval of the budget, they came to the NC for advice and approval on numerous items throughout the year, such as member fee increases.

- **Transparency** is evidenced by the sharing of the detailed budgets provided prior to this meeting and by the very fact the meeting held on February 11, 2024, to hear about and question the budget and its development process.

2023 / 2024 Budgets

Michael Watson explained the *Year-End 2023 Revenues and Expenses*; the detailed sheets were provided but he did not go line by line. Jenna Hinds was noted there were 4,986 current plus 2-month grace period members; without the 2-month grace members, there are 4500 members.

He then explained the *Income and Expense (Profit/Loss) Budget for the Year 2024*. The Board provided a month-by-month breakdown of income and expenses. He noted that expenses from publications, etc., were incurred before income arrived from their sales and membership fees. They included a zero increase in membership numbers, explaining it was preferred to gain members and therefore dollars in the coffers than to have a predicted increase not be realized. The total value of income-producing investments predicts a 2.00% loss versus gain should investments take a downturn.

By and large, the NC membership was generally pleased to see the conservative 2024 budget. Concerns and suggestions brought forward at this meeting will be considered by the Board. The Assumptions for 2024 Budget will be edited.

Centre Operations Manual

Lauri Roche (Chair, RASC EPO Committee) explained the history of development and briefly described the contents of the manual. The Manual was originally developed as a resource for communities thinking about starting a Centre and for new Centres. There are some minor edits to be made. Members will be notified when its posted on the RASC Centre Support (<https://www.rasc.ca/centre-support>).

NC Rep Welcome Package

Judy Black, Victor Abraham (Hamilton), Tom Sobocan (Windsor), and Ellen Papenburg (Kitchener-Waterloo) comprised the task team formed to develop the list of contents for the welcome package. That has been completed. Judy requested volunteers who would be willing to flesh out the document and present it at the April 21st meeting. Charles Ennis (Sunshine Coast), Joelle Sheard-Patrick (Saskatoon) and Rob Woods (Prince George) volunteered.

Adjournment

Judy Black thanked the NC Representatives, Centre Presidents and the members of the Board in attendance for their participation in the budget discussions. She again reminded Centres to submit their annual Centre report and Treasurer report by the end of February.

Important Dates

RASC GA: weekend of May 4-5, 2024

RASC AGM: June 23, 2024

Next NC Meeting: Sunday, April 21, 2024

Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting
February 27, 2024 - 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
held via Zoom - Meeting ID 811 4153 0840

Present: Judy Black, Matt Dyer, Lisa Ann Fanning, David Hoskin, Peter Hurley, John Liddard, Dave Robertson (until 7:56pm), Mary Lou Whitehorne

Regrets: Gregg Dill, Tony McGrath, John Nangreaves, Jaime Whynot

1. Welcome & Introductions

Judy called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and welcomed members. She asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda, which had been circulated by email by Peter on February 26, 2024. Judy indicated she wanted to add Annual Reports under New Business, after a discussion with Lisa about inclusion of late reports into the next edition of Nova Notes. No other changes were requested.

240227MN-Mot01

It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Dave Robertson to approve the February 27, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as amended.
CARRIED.

The Action List, which was attached to the minutes of the previous meeting circulated by Peter on February 26, 2024, was reviewed.

From November 29, 2022

Action 9: Closed.

From January 10, 2023

Action 10: Open.

From May 2, 2023

Action 4: Open. Jenna is going to schedule a training session.

From September 5, 2023

Action 1: Closed. Now part of the SCO Maintenance and Development plan

Action 4,5: Open.

From January 2, 2024

Action 6,7: Closed.

Action 10: Open.

From January 30, 2024

Action 1: Open. Contacted but no response yet.

Action 2-7: Closed.

Judy indicated that there are two sets of minutes to be approved, the minutes from the Special Meeting of Requisition held on February 20, 2024, which had been circulated by email by Judy on February 26, 2024 and the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on January 30, 2024 that had been circulated by email by Peter on February 26, 2024.

Peter asked for clarification regarding the status of Action 1 from the September 5, 2023 meeting and it was agreed that this item should remain open, and the January 30, 2024 minutes should be changed to reflect this. It was agreed that the Goals and Objectives document circulated by Tony for discussion at our last meeting didn't need to be attached to the minutes because the minutes as presented summarized that document adequately. Judy had also emailed Peter with a list of grammatical and spelling errors. Matt corrected the date of the next meeting under Adjournment.

240130MN-Mot02

It was moved by Matt Dyer and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the January 30, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as amended.
CARRIED

ONGOING ITEMS

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

Judy reminded us that the Members meetings dates and tentative speakers list are presented in Agenda Note #1. She reviewed the list and indicated we still needed speakers for November 2 and December 7, 2024.

The agenda for the March 2, 2024 Members meeting was reviewed. Mary Lou had proposed in an email that she would introduce Ian Short, our speaker at the next meeting but indicated that she might do that remotely and she would send speaking notes to David (MC) in case she wasn't able to attend remotely. Judy indicated she likely wouldn't be able to attend and that she would pass on notes to Tony or David for *News from the Board*. Judy hadn't received a response yet from Paul Heath whether he would have a poem for *Food for the Soul*. David will have *What's Up in March* ready. David agreed to handle the reminder of the *Astroimaging Contest* and the reminder of the deadline for submission of eclipse stories to Lisa for inclusion in Nova Notes. It was agreed that we would have a break but that beverages or snacks wouldn't be provided. Judy reminded us that the April 6, 2024 Members meeting was cancelled to accommodate travel associated with the April 8 eclipse. The May 4, 2024 Members meeting was reserved for presentation of Members' eclipse stories. Peter indicated that he and Tony had been discussing the idea of asking members to bring in a selection of telescopes to be displayed at the break or at the end of the meeting to help encourage member interaction, to follow up on points made in the Members survey. It was agreed that it was a good idea but that it would require some coordination and would require that a point of contact be identified.

Judy pointed out that Tiffany Fields has agreed to present at the June 1, 2024 Members meeting and that Tony had discussed with Blair MacDonald about a second presentation for the June meeting reviewing changes to astroimaging over time.

Judy suggested that Charles Ennis might present on the asterisms project and it was agreed that would be of interest. Lisa volunteered to present on stereoscopy at our December Members / AGM meeting.

240227MN-Act01

Judy Black to contact Charles Ennis about presenting on the asterisms project at our November 2, 2024 Members meeting.

3. Minutes of Special Meeting by Requisition

Judy asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes of the February 20, 2024 Special Meeting of Requisition. She provided a summary of an interesting meeting and indicated that she had sent on the recommendations included at the end of the minutes.

240130MN-Mot03

It was moved by Dave Robertson and seconded by Peter Hurley to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Special Meeting of Requisition, as presented.
CARRIED

4. Report from National Council Representative

Judy asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes of the February 20, 2024 Special Meeting of Requisition. She provided a summary of an interesting meeting and indicated that she had sent on the recommendations included at the end of the minutes.

240130MN-Mot03

It was moved by Dave Robertson and seconded by Peter Hurley to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Special Meeting of Requisition, as presented.
CARRIED

Judy indicated that the Report of the National Council meeting held on February 11, 2024 was presented as Agenda Note #3. There were no questions. She indicated that it was the best attended NC meeting with just over one-half of the Centre Presidents in attendance. She pointed out that, in response to a question from our President Tony McGrath, the budget had been reviewed again and that led to a revised budget that now showed a deficit. There is a task team working on completing the NC Welcome Package. She reported that the Centre Operations Manual is quite exciting and almost done and that it would be of use to both small and large Centres.

5. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube

Judy indicated that Jerry had updated *What's Up* and *Nova Notes* on the website and had provided a link to Paul Gray's talk on *Eclipse Planning*, as we had requested.

6. Financial Update

It was agreed that we would wait for Gregg to join the meeting.

7. Member Welcome Package

Judy reminded us that Tony had distributed the Members Welcome Package by email on February 16, 2024 to members who had joined the Centre in the last three years.

Tony had asked the Board for volunteers to help him develop an action plan to follow up on comments received from the Members Survey. Dave and Peter indicated that they were willing to help.

8. Education and Public Outreach

David reported that the event at Benjamin Bridge Winery had gone well. He thought that the organizer's donation might have been sent to RASC National office. It was agreed we should confirm with Gregg whether he has received the donation by e-transfer before we ask National office. David reported that the Parrisboro Young Naturalists event had been postponed to later in the month because of weather. He had made a presentation on Monday evening to a Dartmouth Cub group.

Upcoming events include David and Peter presenting at Space Camp at the Discovery Centre on March 18. They are planning an Astronomy Day event on May 18, 2024 with the Discovery Centre, with public observing from the waterfront planned in the evening. David will ask for volunteers for Astronomy Day at the next Members meeting.

David indicated that we still had lots of eclipse glasses and that he would be bringing them to the Members meeting for purchase, \$2 each max 10. He offered to distribute them to members from his home if anyone couldn't make the Members meeting, to be arranged by email. He indicated that National office now indicated they were out of stock, but both Tim Doucette at Deep Eye Sky Observatory and Astronomy Plus in Montreal still had stock. There was discussion of whether we might end up with surplus eclipse glasses and whether they would be useful for solar/sunspot outreach events and it was decided that they would still be useful.

David reported that both SMU and the Discovery Centre had inquired about volunteers from our Centre to help them out on the day of the eclipse. It was agreed to announce this at the Members meeting.

Dave Robertson had to leave the meeting at 7:56pm for a previous commitment. Judy thanked Dave for attending and explained that we no longer had quorum and the remainder of the meeting would be recorded as discussion only but all the agenda items requiring decisions had been dealt with already.

RASC Halifax Centre Goals and Objectives

9. 2024 Goals and Objectives

Judy reported that Tony had indicated to her that he would have a plan to circulate in the next few weeks for review and discussion at the next Board meeting on March 26, 2024.

Updates/Reports

10. SCO

John reported that the lock on the SCO driveway cable has been replaced with a combination lock and the lock box for the key to the Minas Energy gate has been re-located to the post next to the gate. The inventory conducted by Judy and Chris Young in 2019 will be updated when the weather improves in March/April and will be submitted to Gregg.

Tony had suggested that the inventory might be homogenized (eyepieces for example) and indicated he and John will put together a regular maintenance plan for the facility and the equipment on site (such as the generator). Judy suggested that a reminder of events such as payment of the SCO lease and SCO insurance should be added to the list. John also indicated that comments in the Auditor's report by Dave Chapman would also be dealt with. Peter indicated that he and Tony had encountered some difficulties with the power supply for the 16" Dob during the Members observing night in January and asked John for clarification. John indicated he would try to check the battery before the next Members observing night on March 8/9 but indicated that maintenance of the telescope wouldn't happen before then and would be part of the spring site maintenance.

11. GLP certificates and training

Judy asked Peter to explain what he was proposing with regard to GLP training. Peter explained that he would go through the training, exam and certification with Tony (and with David) one on one to get a better idea of what was required and that then he and Tony would propose a plan to move forward to offer GLP training to all Centre members who wanted it. Judy indicated that she and Peter had been working on a Centre GLP certificate and letter acknowledging successful completion of the training and exam, to include a list as a reminder of what is required in order to use a GLP in compliance with the Transport Canada Authorization for RASC members to use GLPs. Judy had been in touch with others at the National office and they were also working on this and how to report GLP use to Transport Canada on an annual basis. Judy reported that Jenna Hinds has organized a National GLP task team of herself, Judy, Don Town and Dennis Lyons on March 4.

New Business

12. Annual Reports

Judy pointed out that annual reports from the Webmaster and the Dark-Sky Preserve Committee hadn't been ready for the AGM. Jerry and Peter/Tony provided reports to Lisa for inclusion in the upcoming edition of *Nova Notes*, but she asked if these reports required review and approval before being published. Judy pointed out that we don't have a policy in place to provide guidance on this. In the last few years, publication of Annual Reports has been delayed until the January/February issue of *Nova Notes* so that they are all in one issue, something Judy is sensitive to, having spent significant time in the past trying to track down historical reports, in particular financial reports. There was discussion of the requirement for review and approval of the reports which occurs by the membership at the AGM. It was agreed that these late reports would be included in the January/February issue of *Nova Notes* without further review or approval.

13. Adjournment

There being no other business, Judy adjourned the meeting at 8:31pm. She reminded us that our next meeting was scheduled for March 26, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Hurley, Secretary

ACTION LIST (February 27, 2024):

From January 10, 2023		
230110MN-Act10	Peter Hurley to work with David Hoskin to create a list of volunteers to help with observing and outreach requests that are remote to the HRM area.	Open
From May 2, 2023		
230502MN-Act04	Peter Hurley to explore with National office how member statistics are generated from the Driven database.	Open
From September 5, 2023		
230905MN-Act01	Gregg Dill and John Liddard to review SCO inventory and confirm items still exist and assign value to assets.	Open
230905MN-Act04	Gregg Dill to provide an update on SCO upgrade fundraising budget.	Open
230905MN-Act05	The Governance Committee to provide a recommendation to the Board regarding retention and disposal of historical documents.	Open
From January 2, 2024		
240102MN-Act010	Peter Hurley and Tony McGrath to put together a proposal how to proceed with training and certifying other members for GLP use.	Open
From January 30, 2024		
240130MN-Act01	Judy Black to inquire if Dr. Samantha Lawler of U of Regina was available as a guest speaker for a RASC Halifax Centre Members meeting.	Open
From February 27, 2024		
240227MN-Act01	Judy Black to contact Charles Ennis about presenting on the asterisms project at our November 2, 2024 Members meeting.	Open

MOTION LIST (February 27, 2024):

240227MN-Mot01	It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Dave Robertson to approve the February 27, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as amended. CARRIED
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240227MN-Mot02	It was moved by Matt Dyer and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the January 30, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as amended. CARRIED.
240227MN-Mot03	It was moved by Dave Robertson and seconded by Peter Hurley to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Special Meeting of Requisition meeting, as presented. CARRIED.

Approved March 26, 2024