



## RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2024: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Via Zoom - Meeting ID: 853 8844 8393

Agenda Items				
Time	Item	Purpose	Responsibility	Support Documents / Notes
7:00 PM	1. Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of Agenda</li> <li>Review Action List</li> <li>Approval of Previous Minutes of Meeting</li> </ul>	Information Approval	Tony McGrath	Pre-circulated: Agenda: June 18, 2024 Minutes: May 28, 2024
<b>ONGOING ITEMS</b>				
	2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 Member's Meeting Date Confirmation and Format</li> <li>Confirm Member's Meeting agenda</li> <li>Zoom/SMU Bookings</li> <li>Guest Speakers &amp; Ideas for Future Presentations</li> </ol>	Ongoing Discussion Approval	Tony McGrath  Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #1: Speakers & Approved 2024 Member Meeting Dates  Refer to Agenda Notes #2: 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Dates  September 7 BBQ plans
	3. Report from National Council Representative	Information Discussion	Judy Black	Documents pre-circulated by Judy on June 13, 2024
	4. RASC Halifax Centre Website & YouTube	Discussion	Judy Black	n/a
	5. Financial Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Status</li> </ul>	Discussion	Gregg Dill	n/a
	6. Member Welcome Package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership Changes</li> </ul>	Discussion	Tony McGrath	n/a
	7. Education & Public Outreach (EPO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach Requests</li> </ul>	Discussion	David Hoskin	n/a
<b>RASC HALIFAX CENTRE – GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b>				
	8. 2024 Goals & Objectives	Discussion	Tony McGrath	n/a
<b>UPDATES / REPORTS</b>				
	9. Governance Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update</li> </ul>	Discussion Decision Approval	Judy Black	Document pre-circulated by Judy on May 22, 2024
	10. SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update</li> <li>Members Observing night</li> </ul>	Discussion	John Liddard	Members Observing night schedule?
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>				
	11. Kejimikujik Dark-Sky Weekend update	Discussion	Peter Hurley	
	12. Nova East update		Chris Young	
<b>Adjournment</b>				

9:00 PM	13. Adjournment <b>(Next meeting: September 3, 2024)</b>			
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**RASC, Halifax Centre – Member’s Meeting**  
 Saturday, October 5, 2024 – 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM  
 Via Zoom – Meeting ID **897-5810-0253**

Agenda Items		
Time*	Item	Responsibility
1:00 PM	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	David Hoskin (MC)
	Photo Montage	
	EtU guides for sale Astroimaging Contest	
	<b>Presentation: JAXA’s XRISM satellite</b>	Luigi Gallo
	Social Break	
	<b>Food for the Soul:</b>	Paul Heath
	<b>What’s Up? (October)</b>	David Hoskin
	<b>News from the Board</b>	Tony McGrath
	<b>Telescope display</b>	
4:00 PM	<b>Adjournment</b>	

\* 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)
<b>Agenda Note #1 re: Speakers &amp; 2024 Member Meeting Dates</b>	<p><b>2024 Approved Members Meeting Dates and Events</b>            Members’ Meeting dates were approved at the November 2023 Board of Directors meeting. They have been posted on the RASC(HC) website.</p> <p><b>Confirmed Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">September 7, 2024</a> - BBQ in lieu of meeting</li> <li>• <a href="#">October 5, 2024</a> – Luigi Gallo (<i>JAXA’s XRISM satellite</i>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">November 2, 2024</a> – Charles Ennis (World Asterism Project)</li> <li>• <a href="#">AGM December 7, 2024</a> – Lisa Ann Fanning (Stereoscopy)</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggested Speakers / Special Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>John Badowski</b></li> <li>• <b>Dave Chapman</b></li> <li>• <b>Kaja Rotermund</b> (formation of a high-redshift galaxy cluster)</li> <li>• SMU Astronomy and Physics               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grad students</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Tiffany Fields</b></li> <li>• <b>Rob Thacker</b></li> <li>• <a href="https://rasc.ca/find-speaker">https://rasc.ca/find-speaker</a></li> </ul>
<b>Agenda Note #2 re: Approved 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Dates</b>	<p><b>2024 Approved Board Meeting Dates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 3</li> <li>• October 1</li> <li>• October 29</li> <li>• December 3</li> </ul>

**Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting**  
**June 18, 2024 - 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

## held via Zoom - Meeting ID 853 8844 8393

**Present:** Tony McGrath (President), Judy Black, Gregg Dill, Jeff Donaldson, Matt Dyer, David Hoskin, Peter Hurley, John Liddard, Dave Robertson, Chris Young (until 7:41pm)

**Regrets:** Lisa Ann Fanning, Mary Lou Whitehorne

**Absent:** John Nangreaves

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Tony called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed Board members. He asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda which had been circulated by email by Peter earlier in the day. He indicated that there was information regarding the celebration of life for Dave Lane to be discussed under the SCO update.

#### **240528MN-Mot01**

It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the June 18, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as circulated.

CARRIED.

The Action List, which was attached to the minutes of the previous meeting circulated by Peter on June 17, 2024, was reviewed.

From January 10, 2023

**Action 10:** Open.

From September 5, 2023

**Action 5:** Open.

From January 2, 2024

**Action 10:** Open.

From April 30, 2024

**Action 6:** Open.

From May 28, 2024

**Action 1:** Closed. To be presented at Nova East.

**Action 2:** Open.

**Action 3:** Closed.

**Action 4:** Open.

**Action 5:** Closed.

Tony asked if there were any changes or corrections that needed to be made to the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on May 28, 2024 which had been circulated by email by Peter on June 17, 2024.

#### **240618MN-Mot02**

It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by Jeff Donaldson to approve the May 28, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as presented.

CARRIED

### ONGOING ITEMS

#### 2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

Tony observed that we seem to have speakers in hand until the end of the year. Judy suggested inviting Robyn Foret to speak about the RASC Awards Program at our January Members meeting.

#### **240618MN-Act01**

Judy Black to invite Robyn Foret to speak about the RASC Awards Program at the January 4, 2025, RASC Halifax Centre Members meeting.

Tony reminded us that we had agreed to schedule the Fall BBQ in place of the September Members meeting.

There was discussion about the telescope display sessions at the last 2 meetings and whether we should schedule one again for the October meeting. David suggested that perhaps every second meeting or quarterly might ensure interest. He also suggested that we could have a telescope medic session at the October meeting and there was

agreement to do that.

Judy suggested that since Chris Young was present, we move the Nova East Update next on the agenda.

### **3. Nova East Update**

Chris explained that the speakers for Nova East were Dave Chapman presenting on *Stars and Celestial Birds* and on Friday evening, Tony Schellinck presenting on *Women in Astronomy* and David Hoskin presenting on *Smart Telescopes*. He indicated that there would be no Astronomers lounge this year at Blomidon because of the distance to the building but that the plan was that we would return to Smileys next year. There was sale of some of Dave Lane's equipment and books, with the proceeds going toward a SCO development fund. Peter had circulated an email he had received from Chris just before the meeting that contained revised costs for camp sites at Blomidon and Chris explained why this had occurred. There was considerable discussion of the costs. Tony suggested that they needed to review some details with the Park. It was agreed that due to the deadline to announce registration, that the campsite cost would be increased by \$3, and that the announcement that registration was open should go out as soon as possible. Registration will be by e-transfer to the Registrar, Pat Kelly. The Board all thanked Chris for the update and all his efforts.

#### **240618MN-Act02**

Jerry Black to increase the per night campsite fee on the Nova East online registration form.

#### **240618MN-Act03**

Judy Black to draft an announcement of that registration for Nova East was open for Chris Young to send out to the membership as soon as possible.

### **3. Report from National Council Representative**

Judy had distributed minutes from the last National Council meeting held June 9 to the Centre Board by email on June 13. She explained that the minutes were essentially verbatim from the Zoom recording of the meeting as the NC recorder hadn't been able to attend the meeting. The main topic of discussion was the budget and documents had been circulated on the overall RASC financial statement and membership (these were attached to Judy's email). Judy reported that there would be a proposal made at the AGM to increase membership fees by \$10; the cost of servicing the membership is much more than the fee being charged but they're not willing to increase the fees any more than the proposed increase. She explained that since 2022, the focus of the National Board has been on reducing expenses. They are now going to be more strategic and are going to focus on revenue generation from external sources. She urged Board members to read the NC minutes and to attend the AGM. She also indicated that she would be NC Chairperson for the next year, Charles Ennis is Vice-Chair, and NC is still looking for a recorder. There were some serious concerns expressed about the progress made by the National Board at addressing the budget deficit and the limitations that they are working against. Significant discussion ensued and Tony indicated that he would draft a summary of the situation to inform our membership through an article to appear in a future issue of Nova Notes.

### **4. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube**

Judy reported that Jerry has been updating the website regarding Nova East. She will ask him to update the Members meeting to reflect the Annual BBQ in place of the September Members meeting and the October Members meeting speaker.

### **5. Financial Update**

Gregg reported that there was presently \$9500 in the bank account with no pending expenses that he is aware of. The expectation is that Nova East will generate some revenue. Judy reminded us that there was \$247 due on June 12 for our Zoom account renewal. Peter asked about the earlier discussion about moving to MS Teams for charitable organizations if we were about to renew with Zoom. Judy suggested we could look into whether there would be a refund if we were to cancel with Zoom. Jeff and John outlined some of the benefits of using MS Teams for charitable organizations which is provided by TechSoup and which also provides technical support and technological tools to nonprofits. Access to SharePoint for file management and to an alternative to our current list server were attractive features. It was agreed that Jeff, John and Tony would discuss details further offline and report back to the Board.

#### **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.

### **6. Member Welcome Package**

Tony indicated that Peter had provided an update on Centre membership numbers and changes during the review of action items. Peter indicated that, as discussed at a previous Board meeting, he had started to send email reminders to individuals who were in the "lapsed" membership category but didn't have any results to report to date.

### **7. Education and Public Outreach**

David reported that he had bookings to do a solar observing session and Walk-the-Solar-System at the Women in

Science camp at Acadia University on June 15. A group observing session is scheduled at the campground in Berwick; David McMullen had offered to help out. A talk about the sun and solar observing session is scheduled at Blockhouse on August 25. Dark-Sky Weekend and Nova East are scheduled for the first two weekends of August.

## **RASC Halifax Centre Goals and Objectives**

### **8. 2024 Goals and Objectives**

Tony reported that he hadn't received much uptake yet; a couple of people had indicated an interest in helping out with observing activities, but he felt we needed a core of at least 5-6 people particularly to help out with ad hoc observing events at other sites. David asked if there was a SCO members observing night scheduled for July. Judy pointed out that July 5/6 and Aug 2/3 are advertised on our website now and it was pointed out that Aug 2/3 was also DSW, and many folks would be engaged in that event. There was discussion about the difficulty of getting someone to commit to lead those summer sessions at SCO and Tony pointed out that was why we needed a broader list of those willing and able to lead SCO observing sessions. After considerable discussion, it was agreed to cancel both the July and August SCO events and to advertise a first-quarter lunar observing event at York Redoubt on July 12/13, with David, Matt and Tony participating, meeting just outside the gate. It was agreed it was easier and probably better not to request access to the Park for the evening.

#### **240618MN-Act05**

Jerry Black to change dates on the Observing page of our Centre website to cancel the SCO Members observing nights of July 5/6 and Aug 2/3 and to add a first-quarter lunar observing event at York Redoubt on July 12/13.

## **Updates/Reports**

### **9. Governance Review**

Judy reminded Board members that she had circulated a compilation document that outlined all the proposed changes to the Centre Position Descriptions and had asked members to review the documents and provide any questions and to be ready to approve the changes at this meeting. She asked if there were any questions and David asked if helping out with other activities should just be in the Observing Chair PD or should appear in all PDs. It was agreed that it should be included in all PDs. Judy pointed out that most of the changes were just in wording not in intent but would still have to go to the Registry of Joint Stocks for their approval. An example was that the President's PD had previously said that the President presided over all Centre meetings, which isn't the case, so there was now a list of specific meetings. In the Vice-President PD, it used to read that the VP assisted the President in the discharge of his or her duties and it was now proposed to read in the discharge of the President's duties, so that there was no gender bias. She indicated that the remainder were just minor wording. She explained that changes, if any, to the Bylaw No. 1 would need to go before the Membership at the AGM as a special resolution for approval.

#### **240618MN-Mot03**

It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the suggested changes to the Centre Position Descriptions, as outlined in the compilation document, for implementation.  
CARRIED.

Judy then explained that she was thinking of timelines required for approvals. We just approved the PD changes and next she will send out the policy amendments in a compilation document and where titles are hot links to the current existing file. The timelines suggested are as follows:

- Mid-August: A reminder sent to the Board to review the amendments
- September 3 BoD meeting: Approval of the Centre's Policies; receive suggested By-Law No. 1 amendments
- Oct 1 BoD: Discuss/Approve suggested By-Law No. 1 amendments
- Oct 29 BoD: Approve By-Law No. 1 Amendments & and wording of Special Resolution
- Oct 29 or 30: Notification to members via Announce List regarding By-Law No. 1 changes and the Special Resolution
- Nov 2 Members Meeting: Reminder of Special Resolution
- Dec 7 AGM: Approval of By-Law No. 1 amendments by Special Resolution
- Dec/Jan: Letter to RJSC with the revised By-Law No. 1 for their consideration, a copy of the Special Resolution, the explanation of the changes, and the rationale for change.

### **10. SCO**

John reported that he had been out to SCO the previous weekend and found that a GFCI outlet on the south wall of the observatory had failed again. He had taken it apart and it was full of ants which had caused it to fail, consistent with the observation that there were many ants in that corner of the observatory. He was looking for an insect-proof cover for the box but was having difficulty finding one that would fit because the box is a quad box not a regular single

duplex. There was discussion whether it would be better to install a GFCI breaker in the panel instead and the cost associated with that decision.

**240618MN-Mot04**

It was moved by Matt Dyer and seconded by Peter Hurley to approve the purchase and installation of a GFCI breaker in the main power panel at SCO.  
CARRIED.

John had been working on the SCO inventory while he was there and noted some issues. The blue 4" Skywatcher telescope on the inventory that Judy had completed had been re-gifted and would need to be removed. He had initially thought that there was an issue with the contents of one of the boxes of eyepieces but then realized there had been a transcription error and that there was no issue after he corrected the transcription error. He had noted that the Thurlow binoculars and the surveyor's tripod were missing but had learned that Chris Young had taken them for the Members meeting telescope display. He indicated that he would send the updated inventory list to Judy, Greg and Tony when he was finished. John asked Tony to assist help him with installing the CGFI breaker when he went to SCO to pick up the Nova East signs.

Tony indicated that he had been in contact with Michelle Lane, and she is planning a Celebration of Life for Dave Lane at SCO on July 27 with a small group of Dave's close friends, by invitation. Tony agreed to post a notice to the Announce List that SCO would be unavailable for viewing that evening.

**240618MN-Act06**

Tony McGrath will post to the Announce List that SCO would be unavailable for observing the evening of July 27, 2024 due to a private event being held.

**11. Kejimkujik Dark-Sky Weekend and Nova East**

Chris had already provided an update on Nova East.

Peter provided a brief summary of preparations for Dark-Sky Weekend. Everything seems pretty much in hand for a 3-day program, very much like the previous 2 years. There are 12 volunteers at this time; the Park has provided 8 campsites to us for the weekend and some sharing of campsites will be necessary. Solar observing will occur again at both Merrymakedge during the afternoons and this year after Walk the Solar System on the Sky Circle field.

**New Business**

There was none brought forward.

**Adjournment**

There being no other business, Tony adjourned the meeting at 9:00pm. He reminded us that our next meeting is scheduled for September 3, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Hurley, Secretary

**ACTION LIST (June 18, 2024):**

<b>From January 10, 2023</b>		
230110MN-Act10	<b>Peter Hurley</b> 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
<b>From September 5, 2023</b>		
230905MN-Act05	<b>The Governance Committee</b> to provide a recommendation to the Board regarding retention and disposal of historical documents.	Open
<b>From January 2, 2024</b>		
240102MN-Act010	<b>Peter Hurley</b> and <b>Tony McGrath</b> to put together a proposal how to proceed with training and certifying other members for GLP use.	Open

<b>From April 30, 2024</b>		
240430MN-Act06	<b>John Liddard</b> to draft a new breaker shut-off checklist for SCO, circulate it to the Board for comment, and then send it to the SCO keyholders email list and affix a copy to the wall in the warm room at SCO.	Open
<b>From May 28, 2024</b>		
240528MN-Act02	<b>Tony McGrath</b> to discuss problems with the Centre email distribution lists with Tiffany Fields.	Open
240528MN-Act04	<b>Peter Hurley</b> to provide an update on the number of new members and number of members that didn't renew at each Board meeting.	Open
<b>From June 18, 2024</b>		
240618MN-Act01	<b>Judy Black</b> to invite Robyn Foret to speak about the RASC Awards Program at the January 4, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Members meeting.	Open
240618MN-Act02	<b>Jerry Black</b> to increase the per night campsite fee on the Nova East online registration form.	Open
240618MN-Act03	<b>Judy Black</b> to draft an announcement of that registration for Nova East was open for Chris Young to send out to the membership as soon as possible.	Open
240618MN-Act04	<b>Jeff Donaldson, John Liddard and Tony McGrath</b> to explore the possible benefits of using tech tools available to nonprofit organizations through TechSoup and report back to the Board.	Open
240618MN-Act05	<b>Jerry Black</b> to change dates on the Observing page of our Centre website to cancel the SCO Members observing nights on July 5/6 and Aug 2/3 and add a first-quarter lunar observing event at York Redoubt on July 12/13.	Open
240618MN-Act06	<b>Tony McGrath</b> will post to the Announce List that SCO would be unavailable for observing the evening of July 27, 2024 due to a private event being held.	Open

**MOTION LIST (June 18, 2024):**

240618MN-Mot01	It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the June 18, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda, as circulated. CARRIED.
240618MN-Mot02	It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by Jeff Donaldson to approve the May 28, 2024 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as presented. CARRIED.
240618MN-Mot03	It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the suggested changes to the Centre Position Descriptions, as outlined in the compilation document, for implementation. CARRIED.
240618MN-Mot04	It was moved by Matt Dyer and seconded by Peter Hurley to approve the purchase and installation of a GFCI breaker in the main power panel at SCO. CARRIED.