



RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 2025: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Via Zoom – Meeting 832 7978 4896, Passcode 182898

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: June 3, 2025 Refer to Agenda Notes #1: Open Action List Previous Minutes: April 29, 2025
ONGOING ITEMS				
	2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 2025 Board Meeting Dates b. Confirm Member's Meeting agenda c. Zoom/SMU Bookings d. Guest Speakers & Ideas for Future Presentations 	Ongoing Discussion Approval	Tony McGrath	Refer to Agenda Notes #2: Speakers & Approved 2025 Public Meeting Dates Refer to Agenda Notes #3: Approved 2025 Board Meeting Dates
	3. Report from National Council Representative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre NC Rep 	Information Discussion	Judy Black	Next NC Meeting: June 8, 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 GIC Reinvestment SCOPE Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Astro-Image Sales Investment of Principle 	Discussion	Gregg Dill Tony McGrath	n/a
RASC HALIFAX CENTRE – GOALS & OBJECTIVES				
	6. 2025 Goals & Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritized: Membership Centre Membership Status 	Ongoing Discussion	Tony McGrath	
UPDATES / REPORTS				
	7. Update: Nova East	Information	Judy Black	n/a
	8. Update: Dark-Sky Weekend (DSW) Date (August 7-9, 2026)	Discussion Approve	Peter Hurley	n/a
	9. Report: International Astronomy Day (May 3, 2025)	Discussion	David Hoskin	n/a
	10. SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance & Development Plan 	Discussion	Tony McGrath	n/a
NEW BUSINESS				
	11. Status of Centre Library	Discussion Decision	Tony McGrath	n/a
	12. NS Archives	Discussion Decision	Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #5: NS Archives
Adjournment				
9:00 PM	Adjournment			(Next meeting: September 6, 2025)

RASC, Halifax Centre – Public Meeting
 Saturday, June 7, 2025: 1:00 PM – 4:30 PM
 Via Zoom - Meeting ID 896 9005 5645, Passcode 031997

Time	<i>Member & Public Meeting</i>		
1:00 PM	Item		
	1. Welcome & Introductions • Photo Montage	Information	David Hoskin
	2. Special Presentation: <i>Tony Schellinck – Women in Astronomy</i>	Presentation	Tony Schellinck
	3. Outreach Opportunities • Food for the Soul:	Information	David Hoskin Paul Heath
	4. Update from the Board	Information	Tony McGrath / ??
	6. What's Up in May?	Information	David Hoskin
4:00 PM	Adjournment Next meeting: September 6, 2025		

Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting
June 2, 2025 - 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
held via Zoom - Meeting ID 832 7978 4896

Present: Tony McGrath (President), Peter Hurley (Vice-President), Judy Black (Secretary), David Hoskin, David McMullin, Matt Dyer, Lisa Ann Fanning,

Regrets: Patrick Kelly (Hon. President), Jeff Donaldson.

Absent: Gregg Dill (Treasurer), Vincent Vallee.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Tony called the meeting to order at 7:03pm with a quorum.

a) Approval of Agenda

Judy Suggested adding Item 12 FRASC Plaque for Paul Gray to the agenda under *New Business*.

250602MN-Mot01

It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the June 2, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda as circulated with the amendment.
 CARRIED.

b) Review of Action List

From September 3, 2024

Action 11: Open. Tony has gone through the documentation and he stated he was impressed with the work Jerry Black did with K-Stars.

From January 28, 2025

Action 11: Open. Judy noted this would not be accomplished until the Fall.

From February 25, 2025

Action 8: Open. Gregg is not in attendance to confirm this has been done.

From April 29, 2025

Action 1: Open. Documentation almost complete.

Action 2, 3: Closed.

Action 4: Open. This will remain open until they are ready to announce the training.

Action 5, 6: Closed.

Action 7: Closed. Judy sent a thank you card to Jon Chappell and Tony sent a get well card to David Turner.

No errors or omissions in the April 29, 2025 minutes were noted.

250602MN-Mot02

It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by Tony McGrath to approve the April 29, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated.
CARRIED.

ONGOING ITEMS

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

There are no issues with SMU Room bookings. The list of presentations was reviewed. Paul Gray agreed to do a presentation regarding Starmus at the AGM. Pat Kelly wrote that now that he knows the date of his presentation regarding time in Scotland, he would begin preparing it. We are still waiting to hear about the special speaker for the October meeting. The Public Meeting agenda was reviewed; Tony Schellinck is the guest speaker and will address "Women in Astronomy". Judy noted that Devin Williams who had been contacted for Nova East has agreed to speak to our Centre early in 2026 about the JWST. Members agreed to postpone the suggestion for David Baron's Mars presentation given John Badowski's presentation in the recent past.

Judy noted that the next Board meeting date was circulated with an incorrect date; it should be September 2, 2025

3. National Council (NC)

The next NC meeting is June 8th (the day after our upcoming Public meeting).

Judy had emailed three options to the Board regarding her NC tenure:

Choice A: The NC is informed ASAP they will require a new NC Chair as of the June 8 meeting as my 5-year term as our Centre's NC Rep has expired and I cannot be reappointed until after a 1-year leave. (This is why I ask for a quick response - to allow time for my fellow NC Reps to consider who to elect to this role.)

Choice B: I am elected as the NC Chair for the coming year (June 2025-June 2026) but as of December 2025 I am no longer Halifax Centre Rep. The Centre would need to appoint a new Centre NC Representative for 2026 calendar year. Assuming the By-Law amendment is approved, this means that as of January 1, 2026, I would continue to be the NC Chair but with no voting privileges; our new Centre Rep as of January 1 would represent the Centre and would have voting privileges on our behalf.

Choice C: The Board will have to decide what should happen if no one wants this position for 2025-2026 - have no one represent the Centre for 1 year or make a motion for an exception.

The rationale for the one-year leave is to allow for other members to step up to represent our Centre. Only three of eight members responded. Extension of the tenure for another 12 months was discussed.

Two things were noted in national RASC documentation regarding the RASC NC Representative:

- a- In the NC Representative Position Description, there were no specific time frames for NC Representative. This was due to the varying times of year when the reps were chosen by the Centres at their AGM
- b- The NC is the only committee cited in the RASC By-Law No. 1. In the revisions proposed at the upcoming Annual Meeting, the officers are to be elected from among the NC Reps at the last meeting of the NC before June 30 in each year. The term is effective as of the election.

To avoid the 6-month overlap, Judy suggested that the term limit be changed from January 1–December 31 to June 1–May 31 to match the election process held at the NC.

250602MN-Mot03

It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to extend the term of office of the NC Representative to May 31, 2026.
CARRIED.

250602MN-Act01

The Governance Review Committee will change *Policy PD6: Position Description (appointed) – RASC National Council Representative* before the 2025 AGM the term limits to June 1-May 31 each calendar year and remove the lapse of one year.

4. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube

Judy stated the list of website updates is noted in Agenda Notes #4. Meeting information and the Nova East website have been changed as needed.

a) Laser Pointer Training:

Peter and Dave Robertson discussed LP Laser training; Jerry now has provided an alias email address for LP inquiries to go to Peter and Dave. The DSP email link be found on the *Laser Pointer (LP) Training* page in *Activities* on our website, and the email address is also located in *Contact Us*. A second alias that includes all those currently trained to inform them of updates of information (such as the Transport Canada agreement), requests for users/spotters, training dates, etc.

250602MN-Act02

Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to include a quick link to the LP Training page on the website Home page.

Peter has been discussing with Jenna Hinds and Dennis Lyons on how to get laser pointer training into the Parks Canada programs. Several options are being pursued. One option being discussed: because the RASC TC authorization expires this year, it may be suggested the Parks Canada authorization be included with the one provided to RASC Canada. This would allow RASC members to train Parks Canada staff. Another option was to provide Parks Canada with their own authorization to conduct their own training.

5. Financial Update

Gregg is not present to address the financial statements. Tony noted that the Centre does not spend much at this point. Gregg had confirmed the Centre's GICs have been reinvested.

a) SCOPE Fund

Tony stated the balance was somewhere around \$1500 in the SCOPE Fund but. He had not confirmed the amount with Gregg. Majority of the details regarding the astroimage sale has been set up and he felt it could launch in the next week or so. PayPal has been set up and the images are on the site, but it probably cannot be announced at the Saturday Public meeting.

Because Gregg is not here, we cannot discuss investment of the principle potentially as GICs. It was suggested this be deferred to the next meeting. Matt noted that in years past, we held an additional meeting. Members agreed to an additional meeting at the end of June.

250602MN-Act03

Judy Black will contact Gregg Dill to determine if he is available June 16, 17, 23 or 24.

RASC Halifax Centre – Goals and Objectives

6. Goals and Objectives

Tony confirmed that membership is the priority of the Board. Is overall impression in examining the numbers over the past year it appears we are in a slight decline. He stated that the complicators in determining our numbers include members who have paid their dues on time so it's considered a member lost, when they do pay their fees, they are considered a new member, so that the challenge is determining who is truly a 'new' member versus someone late paying fees. Peter had gone back to 2020 (the beginning of the pandemic) and since 2021 our numbers have declined since then, but he did not go back further to see earlier cycles.

Tony wants to conduct an exit survey but not sure of the member is truly expired or just forgetful, and removal of the grace period has complicated things. It was also noted that outreach can increase membership by inspiring interest in astronomy. Generally, it was felt the exit survey was important to conduct. When Peter was secretary, he had been sending reminders to members in the grace period. Tony will try sending a reminder of membership renewal to those whose membership has expired along with the option to complete the survey.

Updates/Reports

7. Nova East

The Nova East website now contains accurate information but our planning team is proof reading. Jerry had updated the promo video and Judy attempted to provide a preview of it. It will be on the RASC Halifax YouTube site and potentially Facebook and other social media. She then showed the various components of the website and explained some of the presentations. John Read agreed to be our keynote speaker to address *Stories in Space* where he tells the stories "behind the amazing fleet of telescopes that deliver the amazing science we come to expect from the frontier of astronomy." The astronomer breakfasts and lounge will be returning.

The 3-colour logo (grey, white, yellow) on the sapphire blue t-shirt colour of the shirt was developed by Lisa Ann Fanning. It shows two children looking up at the stars and an outline of the Summer Triangle is evident. The comet is to show the element of excitement.

The go-live date for registration is Friday, June 6. Members will be apprised the day before. The registration fee of \$40 and T-shirt price of \$25 have not increased since last year; however, the per night camping has increased from

\$13 to \$15. David Hoskin stated some members of the Dalhousie retirees may be attending; a note is going out to the members about Nova East and the DSW.

8. Dark-Sky Weekend (DSW)

Peter Hurley noted the program was provided at the previous public meeting, and it's pretty well in hand. It should be noted at the Public meeting that volunteers are still needed; they can contact Peter or Tony to volunteer.

250602MN-Act04

Peter Hurley to contact Kejimikujik National Park & National Historic Site to determine when information will be posted to their website.

9. International Astronomy Day (IAD)

Despite the weather, IAD went fairly well. On the Thursday before, Jerry took video at the Discovery Centre of solar observing conducted by David Hoskin, Peter Hurley and himself. This was edited and forwarded to Karim Jaffer for presentation on the cross-Canada IAD tour. On the actual Saturday, we had a good turnout, about a couple hundred in attendance. With the weather clearing, Peter Hurley, Matt Dyer and Ryan (staff member) did solar observing at the entrance. Judy and Jerry Black, Michael Boschat, and Wayne Harasimovitch also assisted with the display inside the Centre.

Last week, David Hoskin and Dave Chapman did some solar observing with students at Woodlawn High School that was well received. The students were really keen and interested in purchasing telescopes. David did tell one of the teachers about the RASC school astronomy clubs; the *Starfinder* program for teachers should also assist in this.

10. SCO

Tony has taken a physical check of evaluation of the equipment at SCO and is now doing a cost of replacement for insurance. Following a physical examination of SCO, he also made a list of the work to be done, such as the Warm Room door. He also determined a new cover for the 16" SkyWatcher is needed; the current cover is keeping moisture inside the tube and the tube shows signs of rusting. There needs to be a decision made on how to dispose of unused items. Also need to determine what to do with the 12V system that at this point has no purpose. The full report will be completed before the next meeting in September.

New Business

11. Status of Centre Library

Judy noted this has been ongoing for a time and we have no access to our library cart, mirror polisher and shelving unit due to challenges of removing the mini-Ralph in front of it. There is also the possibility the University may want us out of the space. A decision has to be made about retaining or getting rid of the Library. It was noted that when Wayne Harasimovitch stepped down this past March Jerry Black retained the position. Having newer books at SCO was discussed; shelving would be required. There are also some signed editions we may want to retain. Perhaps Stargaze NS might be interested.

It was decided that we needed to clarify with Tiffany about the storage space access to the cart, books, and storage shelves going forward.

With the books in the library, the following was determined:

- Inventory the books in the Library
- Bring author-signed books to the Nova East Flea Market
- What's left bring to the September 13 Public meeting for sale
- What's left will be donated to the Dal and /or Astronomy clubs, *Stargaze Nova Scotia*.

In June and July, the value of the books needs to be assessed. Jerry Black has the complete library inventory on our website. However, the books will have to be sorted according to how they are to be sold as noted above.

250602MN-Act05

Judy Black will contact Tiffany Field as to the status of the space and how we can access it month to month at our meetings.

12. Presentation of Paul Gray's FRASC Plaque

Jenna Hinds mailed his plaque to Judy Black for presentation this Saturday. Paul may not be at Saturday's meeting because of an orienteering race he is attending. A formal presentation should be made in some form. Nova East is too far out and the RASC members at the DSW is only a small group.

250602MN-Act06

Judy Black will contact Paul Gray about his availability for a few of the members to go out for dinner with him.

Adjournment

No further business to conduct. Tony thanked everyone for their time.

250602MN-Mot04

It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to adjourn.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm. Our next meeting is September 2, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Black, Secretary

AGENDA NOTES

Agenda Item, Proposed By, & Date Proposed	Description Received (& Proposed Motion, if Applicable)
Agenda Note #1 re: Open Action List	<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>January 28, 2025</u> 250128MN-Act11: The Governance Review Committee is to develop a policy regarding travel expenses for Centre activities.</p> <p><u>April 29, 2025</u> 250429MN-Act01: Tony McGrath will forward his SCO maintenance & development plan for the Board to consider.</p> <p>250429MN-Act02: Judy Black to contact Paul Gray regarding a presentation about Starmus for the December 6 AGM.</p> <p>250429MN-Act03: David Hoskin will contact Karim whether he wants the video as an MP3 or on a server.</p> <p>250429MN-Act04: Peter Hurley will approach Dave Robertson regarding the Announce List message regarding the need for Laser Pointer training and the Transport Canada Agreement with the RASC</p> <p>250429MN-Act05: Judy Black will forward the list of 15 potential NE taglines to the Board for their consideration.</p> <p>250429MN-Act06: Peter Hurley will inform Chris Beckett (Editor, <i>RASC Observer's Calendar</i>) and James Edgar (Editor, <i>RASC Observer's Handbook</i>) of the 2026 DSW date.</p> <p>250429MN-Act07: Judy Black to forward a thank you card to Jon Chappell for the donation of the solar glasses.</p>
Agenda Note #2 re: Speakers & 2025 Public Meeting Dates	<p>2025 Approved Members Meeting Dates and Events Members' Meeting dates and known speakers are posted on the RASC(HC) website.</p> <p>Confirmed Location & Speakers for 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (AT101) June 7 – Tony Schellinck (Women in Astronomy)• (AT101) September 6 – David Hoskin (All-in-One Smart Telescopes)• (AT101) October 4 – (Special Guest)• (AT101) November 1 – Patrick Kelly (Telling Time in Scotland: from stones to sundials)• (AT101) December 6 – Paul Gray (Starmus 2026) <p>Speakers/Topics for 2026 (Room & Date TBD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Devin Williams, PhD (JWST) – agreed to speak

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allan McCue (Calgary Centre) – Willing to provide a Stellarium Course, especially if we invite members from NB and St. John's Centres to participate • Michelle Lane & Andrea Misner re "Starfinder" program – perhaps in May/June or September time frame to allow for teachers to use the program and for evaluation. • Astronomy Humour – favourite astro cartoons from members and they would provide a brief explanation • (As suggested by David Turner) David Baron of the American Astronomical Society's Historical Astronomy Division (HAD) – presentation about his book The Martians, regarding Percival Lowell and the "canals" on Mars <p>Suggested Speakers / Special Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Falk (Edmond Halley) • John Badowski • SMU Astronomy and Physics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiffany Fields • Rob Thacker • https://rasc.ca/find-speaker
Agenda Notes #3: 2025 Board Meeting Dates	<p>Board Meeting Dates (no meetings July/August):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 3 • September 2 • September 30 • October 28 • December 2
Agenda Notes #4: Website Updates	<p>Updates on the Halifax Website:</p> <p>May 11, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated meeting information in "Upcoming Events". • Uploaded May 10 public meeting video to YouTube site <p>May 26, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated meeting information in "RASC Events" <p>June 1, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jerry uploaded <i>What's Up?</i> (June) from David Hoskin <p>Updates to Nova East Website (goes live on June 6, 2025)</p> <p>May 7, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judy updated Nova East website: Home, Schedule, Registration info, Camping, Contact Info, Links • Jerry updated Registration Form • Updates being made as information is provided from Speakers
Agenda Notes #5: NS Archives	<p>From: The Reference Team, Nova Scotia Archives:</p> <p>Thank you for thinking of Nova Scotia Archives for your organization's historical records.</p> <p>Yes, our last donation of records from you was in February 2016 by Ian Anderson. He brought in 99 issues of the "Nova Notes" newsletter covering June 1995 to April 2013. Prior to that, the last donation was in 2009 and included minutes of the Executive Council for 2008, and minutes of the annual general meeting 2007.</p> <p>We have described the records in our database of archival descriptions on our website, for researcher discovery. You can view it at this link: https://ns-archives.accesstomemory.net/royal-astronomical-society-of-canada-halifax-centre-fonds</p> <p>Our purpose in preserving RASC-Halifax Centre records is to support evidence-based historical research about Nova Scotia and its people. To do this, we are interested in your organization's documents giving evidence of decisions and activities, as well as who belonged to your group and how/what you communicated about.</p> <p>The types of records or documents we seek would include meeting minutes of the Executive and of annual general meetings; annual reports to members including annual financial statements; correspondence to and from the decision-makers, usually the Executive or maybe just the President, depending on your organization; lists of members; your constitution, by-laws, and policies which guide your activities; any publications you produce such as handbooks and newsletters; photographs of members, activities, executive, etc.; sound and/or video recordings of</p>

	<p>events, activities if your organization does that; and any 'press releases' or similar messages to the public.</p> <p>The dates of the records you send us are important. We don't want records that your group continues to use or consult, even if it's only once per year. We only want records that are older in date and are no longer used by your Executive or general members. For example, if you need to look at annual reports from 2 years ago to write this year's report or assist in making decisions at the next Executive meeting, it should stay with you. Once your group no longer needs the document(s), they can be donated to us.</p> <p>These records can be in any format, including digital.</p> <p>Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Halifax Centre fonds - Nova Scotia Archives</p> <p>Fonds MG 20 - Vols. 1585-1589, Accession nos. 1991-012, 1991-112, 1996-094, 1997-043, 1998-075, 2011-056. - Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Halifax Centre fonds</p> <p>http://ns-archives.accesstomemory.net/</p>
--	--

ACTION LIST (June 2, 2025):

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 January 28, 2025		
250128MN-Act11	The Governance Review Committee is to develop a policy regarding travel expenses for Centre activities.	Open
From April 29, 2025		
250429MN-Act01	Tony McGrath will forward his SCO maintenance & development plan for the Board to consider.	Open
250429MN-Act04	Peter Hurley will approach Dave Robertson regarding the Announce List message regarding the need for Laser Pointer training and the Transport Canada Agreement with the RASC	Open
From June 2 2025		
250602MN-Act01	The Governance Review Committee will change <i>Policy PD6: Position Description (appointed) – RASC National Council Representative</i> before the 2025 AGM the term limits to June 1-May 31 each calendar year and remove the lapse of one year.	Open
250602MN-Act02	Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to include a quick link to the LP Training page on the website Home page.	Open
250602MN-Act03	Judy Black will contact Gregg Dill to determine if he is available June 16, 17, 23 or 24.	Open
250602MN-Act04	Peter Hurley to contact Kejimikujik National Park & National Historic Site to determine when information will be posted to their website.	Open
250602MN-Act05	Judy Black will contact Tiffany Field as to the status of the space and how we can access it month to month at our meetings.	Open
250602MN-Act06	Judy Black will contact Paul Gray about his availability for a few of the members to go out for dinner with him.	Open

MOTION LIST (June 2, 2025):

250429MN-Mot01	It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the June 2, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda as circulated with the amendment.
-----------------------	---

	CARRIED.
250602MN-Mot02	It was moved by Judy Black and seconded by Tony McGrath to approve the April 29, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated. CARRIED.
250602MN-Mot03	It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to extend the term of office of the NC Representative to May 31, 2026. CARRIED.
250602MN-Mot04	It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by David Hoskin to adjourn.

Approved September 2, 2025