

	8. Update: Dark-Sky Weekend (DSW) Date (August 7-9, 2026)	Discussion Approve	Peter Hurley	n/a
	9. SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance & Development Plan Key Holder Fees 	Discussion	Tony McGrath	n/a
NEW BUSINESS				
	10. Status of Centre Library	Discussion Decision	Tony McGrath Judy Black	
	11. NS Archives	Discussion Decision	Judy Black	Refer to Agenda Notes #5: NS Archives
	12. Reflect Orbital	Discussion Decision	Judy Black	Refer to RASCals post Aug 30/15 'Reflect Orbital mess' from Frank of Toronto Centre
Adjournment				
9:00 PM	Adjournment			(Next meeting: September 30, 2025)

RASC, Halifax Centre – Public Meeting
Saturday, September 6, 2025: 1:00 PM – 4:30 PM
Via Zoom - Meeting ID 860 2914 0362

Time	<i>Member & Public Meeting</i>		
1:00 PM	Item		
	1. Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photo Montage 	Information	David Hoskin
	2. Special Presentation: <i>David Hoskin – All-in-One Smart Telescopes</i>	Presentation	David Hoskin
	3. Outreach Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food for the Soul: 	Information	David Hoskin Paul Heath
	4. Update from the Board	Information	Tony McGrath
	6. What's Up in September?	Information	David Hoskin
4:00 PM	Adjournment Next meeting: October 4, 2025 – Dr. Sara Seager		

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for Board of Director information only and for informing presenters of the length of their presentations; they will not be published on the Halifax Centre website.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

Halifax Centre Board of Directors - Minutes of Meeting
September 2, 2025 - 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
held via Zoom - Meeting ID 828 0534 0071

Present: Tony McGrath (President), Peter Hurley (Vice-President), Gregg Dill (Treasurer), Judy Black (Secretary), David Hoskin, David McMullin (arrived 7:35 PM), Matt Dyer, Vincent Vallee.

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

1. Welcome & Introductions

Tony called the meeting to order at 7:03pm with a quorum. Judy noted that David McMullin had sent regrets for a 30-minute late arrival.

a) Approval of Agenda

Judy suggested adding Item 12 Reflect Orbital for under *New Business*. She also noted there were two action items arising from the National Council Report that need addressing.

250602MN-Mot01

It was moved by Peter Hurley and seconded by Matt Dyer to approve the September 3, 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 restated 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 later this Fall.

From April 29, 2025

Action 1: Closed. Tony will forward the plan to all members through the Announce list. It was noted that all Board members are included in that list.

Action 4: Closed.

250902MN-Act01

Peter Hurley will contact the RASC regarding Dave Robertson as an LP Trainer for our Centre and for access to the LP database.

From June 2, 2025

Action 1: Open.

Action 2: Closed. The link to Laser Pointer training is on the front page of the website but it is lower in the column and may be confusing for readers.

250902MN-Act02

Judy Black will ask Jerry Black to reorganize the News column to make the laser pointer training link more visible.

Action 3, 4, 5, 6: Closed.

From June 16, 2025

Action 2: Open. Gregg will do that soon.

Action 1, 3: Closed.

No errors or omissions in the June 3, 2025 minutes were noted.

250902MN-Mot02

It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Vincent Vallee to approve the June 3, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated.
CARRIED.

No errors or omissions in the June 16, 2025 minutes were noted.

250902MN-Mot03

It was moved by Gregg Dill and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the June 16, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated.
CARRIED.

ONGOING ITEMS

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates & Guest Speakers

The list of presentations was reviewed. The Public Meeting agenda was reviewed; Tony noted that Dr. David Turner had recommended David Baron of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) Historical Astronomy Division (HAD). Dr. Baron would do a presentation about his book *The Martians* regarding Percival Lowell and the canals on Mars. January was the suggested timeframe for this presentation. John Badowski did a presentation on Lowell in the recent past but not necessarily focusing on the canals.

Dates have not been confirmed by the Board but the tentative dates would be January 10 or February 7, 2026.

250902MN-Act03

Tony McGrath to contact Dr. David Baron to clarify the topic and confirm the date of his in-person presentation.

We now know the special speaker for the October meeting is Dr. Sara Saeger; Paul Gray has agreed to introduce her. It was questioned whether AT101 would be large enough given Dr. Saeger may draw more people to her presentation. It was questioned whether a larger room was required and therefore assistance with audiovisual and recording the session.

250902MN-Act04

Judy Black to contact Tiffany Fields to request her opinion on requiring a larger venue.

3. National Council (NC)

Tony raised concerns of the current RASC financial situation. He also raised concerns concerning new membership and retention. General membership is reduced. Our Centre has decreased to an average of 136. A method of identifying new members is a challenge. Tony would like to see the National Council address membership, especially acquiring new members.

Two actions were included in the NC Minutes.

- 1- One was a request for local media contacts and to clarify the @rasc.ca email usage by our Centre.

250902MN-Act05

Judy Black to contact Dave Chapman and Paul Gray to determine who our media contacts might be.

- 2- Randy Attwood had raised concerns at the NC meeting regarding attendance and accountability at the Committee level. Committee work plans were suggested and could be used as an evaluation tool by the Committee and the Board as to what has been achieved. Keeping active members and removing non-active members was also brought forward. The Board was asked to provide input by Saturday.

Arrival of David McMullin at 7:35 PM.

The next NC meeting is September 7, 2025 (the day after our upcoming Public meeting).

4. RASC Halifax Centre Website and YouTube

Judy apologized for not updating what has been done to the website over the summer. Jerry did update the information regarding the upcoming Public meeting, and posted David Hoskin's *What's Up?* on July 1, August 1 and September 1. He also updated the Nova East website as appropriate.

5. Financial Update

Gregg Dill stated we have \$34,000 to \$35,000 in the bank.

a) SCOPE Fund

Gregg raised his concerns regarding PayPal and wondered whether Jerry or Blair had seen the questions he sent in an email. The bank has confirmed they do have measures in place to reduce security risk. Several concerns were raised about the process; Gregg felt Jerry Black may have the answer to this. The communication process during ordering photos and the payment process of who receives the order payment needs to be understood.

250902MN-Act06

Tony McGrath to host a Zoom session with five attendees – himself, Gregg Dill, Vincent Vallee, Blair MacDonald and Jerry Black – to clarify process and to move the project along.

Investment of the principle potentially as GICs was deferred to the next meeting.

RASC Halifax Centre – Goals and Objectives

6. Goals and Objectives

Tony McGrath had a conversation at Nova East with Paul Gray about membership strategies used by New Brunswick Centre. The Centre paid half of the Youth membership and had a mentorship program in place. Paul Gray said it was a hugely successful program; it was how he started as a member. The Centre would require mentors and topic specialists whom the youth could approach.

250902MN-Act07

Tony McGrath to talk to Paul Gray for details about the New Brunswick Centre youth recruitment program and report the details at the next Board meeting.

Vincent Valle wondered if the Canadian Tire program *Jump Start* was only for sports or whether it could be used for membership. It had been used for Scouting. Perhaps national RASc could investigate the feasibility of using it for youth membership.

250902MN-Act08

Vincent Vallee to investigate if we qualify for the *Jump Start* program.

Peter Hurley noted that Judy and Tony were to attend the Driven training session; neither could attend. Peter wondered if it had been recorded for viewing now.

250902MN-Act09

Judy Black to contact the RASC office to request access to the recording of the Driven training session.

Updates/Reports

7. Nova East

Judy thought Nova East was quite successful given the comments received. It attracted campers of all ages at Smileys. The combined Sky Tour – Binocular – Telescope program was a huge success as participants got to see the change in detail of the DSOs from viewing naked eye to use of technologies. All the speakers should be thanked for the great job they all did. There will be a post-event meeting in late September to early October; a report will be produced following that meeting. The Task Chart does specify the final report would be received by the Board at their October 28 meeting (in time for inclusion in the Annual Report).

David Hoskin stated we should make sure the Park is aware that many of these events are open to the

public, not just the evening observing program. This year, the full agenda was posted; next year the list should include only those events in which they can participate. Another recommendation would be to specially post the information of the *Walk the Solar System*. A recommendation could be made to contact earlier with NS Parks Promotion Officer.

The level of excitement of the general public was palpable, and the young people just reinvigorated you. It was wonderful to see their enthusiasm when you showed them what they could see if they just looked up. Also in attendance were members from Okanagan Centre and Ottawa Centre. Our member in Massachusetts, Matt Paine, was also in attendance and agreed to address radio astronomy at the 2026 Nova East.

John Read should be commended for giving up the door prize the way he did. John did not need the scope but if someone could be identified who needed the scope, he would give it to them. The 12-year-old granddaughter of the Ottawa member was identified and John included a signed copy of his book *110 Things to see with a Telescope*. Her grandfather helped her identify some of the objects that evening.

8. Dark-Sky Weekend (DSW)

Peter Hurley noted it was a success. Two of the three nights were clear for slated programs to proceed. Sunday night had the forecast of rain and thunder showers so it was agreed with Park staff to cancel. Attendance will be clarified. The tentative attendance numbers at Merrymakedge afternoon sessions were 100 on Saturday and 75 on Sunday; evenings at the Sky Circle were 330 on Friday night and 300 on Saturday night.

Judy noted that a husband and wife that she and David Hoskin talked to at Merrymakedge did attend Nova East. Peter noted we could be more proactive regarding recruitment. Business cards were used but something more directed at recruitment could be developed. David and Judy suggested Nova East flyers should be made available at the DSW.

9. SCO Maintenance

Tony McGrath requested clarification of the process for payment of supplies needed for SCO maintenance using the maintenance fund. There is interest accrued from money deposited into the SCOPE Fund but that will take time to build. There are no immediate funds for use at SCO. Judy noted the profits from Nova East and from the Flea Market were going into the SCO Maintenance Fund not the SCOPE Fund.

One of the things coming up is the re-keying of SCO. We are fundamentally at a point where we have lost control of the keys. Sixty-one keys have been issued and are currently held by 23 current members, 9 expired members and 29 by people we have no record of. It was noted that each key does cost the Centre to produce with no recuperation for it. The door of the Warm Room also needs replacement. Various alternatives to keys were discussed, such as an electronic box with codes members were reminded that because SCO is in Hants County, the woods bans prohibits accessing SCO for now.

250902MN-Act10

Vincent Vallee and Tony McGrath to investigate costs of re-keying the 3 buildings plus the entrance to SCO and the comparative cost of an electronic solution.

The keyholder has several responsibilities when using SCO – to open and close it, to ensure SCO equipment is stored safely, and to confirm all the equipment (such as eyepieces) is there. The process for keyholder to do this needs to be revised. It was suggested that a fee be charged for orientation and acquiring a key; perhaps the fee could be seen as a deposit and returned when the key was returned.

A cost estimate of the repairs needs to be submitted to the Board for consideration and approval by Board motion. It was suggested the repairs be listed in priority

New Business

10. Status of Centre Library

The library is now closed. A task team packed and removed all books in the library cart and transported

them to SCO. Thank you to Judy and Jerry Black, David McMullin, Tony McGrath, Matt Dyer, and Peter Hurley for their help in this endeavour. Because of the continuing provincial woods ban, we do not have SCO access to review the books and determine which can be sold at a couple of public meetings, given away, or recycled. Books in the Nova East flea market were sorted and some were kept for sale at a public meeting. A task team comprising Judy Black, David Hoskin and Chris Young will sort the books at SCO once the woods ban is lifted. The sale might not happen until the November meeting.

Jerry posted the cart on Facebook and Kijiji for \$75 as was suggested by the Board. It was sold within 2 hours on Kijiji and was picked up the same day. The room is now empty except the empty filing cabinet and the mirror grinder. Perhaps the cabinet can be brought to SCO for storage; this can be discussed at a later meeting.

11. NS Archives

Judy Black noted that our records have not been sent to the NS Archives since February 2016 by Ian Anderson; she noted this was the timeframe in which she became Secretary and that piece of the puzzle was not followed through. Judy noted she has electronic records of all Board meetings that could be passed along electronically. Peter offered to provide Board minutes produced while he was Secretary.

One thing not to be passed along to the Archives is our Board list and any documentation that contains personal information.

250902MN-Act11

Judy Black to send RASC Halifax Centre documentation to the NS Archives.

12. Reflect Orbital

An email was sent August 30, 2025 via the national RASC discussion list:

Here is a mess which RASC members might want to take action on, and forward to their various other astronomy clubs and organizations, to discourage a proposed project which would use satellites to reflect sunlight to earth at night for ground illumination.

Reflect Orbital <https://www.reflectorbital.com/> is a company planning to launch giant mirrors into orbit, and have people pay them to shine reflected light down from orbit. Each satellite is expected to be about 4x as bright as a full moon, and they eventually want to launch 4000 of them. Amateur astronomers would probably see why this would be devastating for astronomy. Reflect Orbital has just filed with the FCC to launch their first satellite.

The American Astronomical Society (AAS) has started a questionnaire to gather a list of people who do NOT want Reflect Orbital to shine light on them or on their astronomy research facilities. Please fill in the form here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfYW7dw2oGU0y8wyFu-6IA1_aG8o5CiCPUyw8fVWn5uD8x76A/viewform?usp=header

The main question to answer is how the proposed satellite constellation would affect your involvement in astronomy. (My response is that it may brighten night skies in circumstances where I expect dark skies.)

It is voluntary and I bring it to your attention in case you feel strongly about this and want to take action by accessing and filling in the form on Google Docs. Many RASC members are not subscribed to this forum, so please forward to anyone who may be interested in filling out the AAS survey form.

This is of global concern. They are attempting to reflect sunlight on solar arrays. Members were invited to respond.

Adjournment

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

250902MN-Mot04

It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by Vincent Vallee to adjourn.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm. Our next meeting is September 30, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Black, Secretary

ACTION LIST (September 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-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
From June 16, 2025		
250616MN-Act02	Gregg Dill to obtain and share the GIC investment options with the TD Bank options with Tony McGrath prior to taking action.	Open
From September 2, 2025		
250902MN-Act01	Peter Hurley will contact the RASC regarding Dave Robertson as an LP Trainer for our Centre and for access to the LP database.	Open
250902MN-Act02	Judy Black will ask Jerry Black to reorganize the News column to make the laser pointer training link more visible.	Open
250902MN-Act03	Tony McGrath to contact Dr. David Baron to clarify the topic and confirm the date of his in-person presentation.	Open
250902MN-Act04	Judy Black to contact Tiffany Fields to request her opinion on requiring a larger venue.	Open
250902MN-Act05	Judy Black to contact Dave Chapman and Paul Gray to determine who our media contacts might be.	Open
250902MN-Act06	Tony McGrath to host a Zoom session with five attendees – himself, Gregg Dill, Vincent Vallee, Blair MacDonald and Jerry Black – to clarify process and to move the project along.	Open
250902MN-Act07	Tony McGrath to talk to Paul Gray for details about the New Brunswick Centre youth recruitment program and report the details at the next Board meeting.	Open
250902MN-Act08	Vincent Vallee to investigate if we qualify for the <i>Jump Start</i> program.	Open

250902MN-Act09	Judy Black to contact the RASC office to request access to the recording of the Driven training session.	Open
250902MN-Act10	Vincent Vallee and Tony McGrath to investigate costs of re-keying the 3 buildings plus the entrance to SCO and the comparative cost of an electronic solution.	Open
250902MN-Act11	Judy Black to send RASC Halifax Centre documentation to the NS Archives.	Open

MOTION LIST (September 2, 2025):

250902MN-Mot01	It was moved by Peter Hurley and seconded by Matt Dyer to approve the September 3, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting agenda as circulated with the amendment. CARRIED.
250902MN-Mot02	It was moved by David Hoskin and seconded by Vincent Vallee to approve the June 3, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated. CARRIED.
250902MN-Mot03	It was moved by Gregg Dill and seconded by David Hoskin to approve the June 16, 2025 RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors meeting minutes, as circulated. CARRIED.
250902MN-Mot04	It was moved by David McMullin and seconded by Vincent Vallee to adjourn.

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-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><u>June 2, 2025</u> 250602MN-Act01: The Governance Review Committee will change <i>Policy PD6: Position Description (appointed) – RASC National Council Representative</i> before the</p>

	<p>2025 AGM the term limits to June 1-May 31 each calendar year and remove the lapse of one year.</p> <p>250602MN-Act02: Judy Black to ask Jerry Black to include a quick link to the LP Training page on the website Home page.</p> <p>250602MN-Act03: Judy Black will contact Gregg Dill to determine if he is available June 16, 17, 23 or 24.</p> <p>250602MN-Act04: Peter Hurley to contact Kejimikujik National Park & National Historic Site to determine when information will be posted to their website.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>250602MN-Act06: Judy Black will contact Paul Gray about his availability for a few of the members to go out for dinner with him.</p> <p>June 16, 2025 250616MN-Act01: Tiffany Fields and David McMullin to provide bankers boxes for packing books.</p> <p>250616MN-Act02: Gregg Dill to obtain and share the GIC investment options with the TD Bank with Tony McGrath prior to taking action.</p> <p>250616MN-Act03: Judy Black to order 15 RASC Observer's Calendars from the RASC.</p>
<p>Agenda Note #2 re: Speakers & 2025 Public Meeting Dates</p>	<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) September 6 – David Hoskin (All-in-One Smart Telescopes) • (AT101) October 4 – Special Guest IN PERSON Dr. Sara Seager • (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 • 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	Board Meeting Dates (no meetings July/August): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2 • September 30 • October 28 • December 2
Agenda Notes #4: Website Updates	Updates on the Halifax Website: July, August & September 1, 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jerry uploaded <i>What's Up?</i> (June) from David Hoskin <u>Updates to Nova East Website</u> As appropriate
Agenda Notes #5: NS Archives	From: The Reference Team, Nova Scotia Archives: Thank you for thinking of Nova Scotia Archives for your organization's historical records. 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. 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 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. 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 events, activities if your organization does that; and any 'press releases' or similar messages to the public. 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. These records can be in any format, including digital. Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Halifax Centre fonds - Nova Scotia Archives 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 http://ns-archives.accesstomemory.net/