RASC WINNIPEG CENTRE COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the council of RASC Winnipeg Centre held via Zoom on Monday, April 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Dennis Lyons, Russell Brown, Scott Young, Mark Irvine, Marc Sarrasin, Bryan Stach, Kamala Kodi, Stan Runge, Ed Wright, Daemon Nightshade, Mike Karakas,

REGRETS: Judy Anderson, Michelle Boyce

1. Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement — Dennis
2. Welcome and Introductions — All
3. Adoption of Agenda — Dennis
    - None
4. Adoption of previous minutes — Ed

Ed Moved. Carried.

5. Financial Report — Mark
    - Mark: Included spreadsheet and analysis comparison to budget. We are one quarter through, member fees on track, expenses lower due to early in the year. In good shape, up $600 to $700. Council is active with their involvement.

MOTION Mark moved to accept the financial report, Russell seconded. PASSED

MOTION Mark Moved and Russell seconded, *That the Bank balance of the Spruce Weeds Star Party, which is currently on deposit with the Bank of Montreal and managed by the Spruce Woods Star Party Committee, with Cliff Levi as Treasurer, be consolidated with the bank account balance of the Royal Astronomical Society, Winnipeg Centre Inc at the Royal Bank of Canada, forthwith. The balance should be designated, in the Winnipeg Centre's financial statements to support the efforts of the Spruce Woods Star party Committee, with requests for disbursement to originate from that committee and be approved in accordance with the financial policy of the RASC Winnipeg Centre.* <u>Discussion</u> – Russell: Balance? Mark: Need to talk to Cliff Levi, but should be about $2,000. Ed: What does *consolidated* mean in this case? Mark: We have a budget item of $500 for the star party. Will set up a fund balance. Will keep cash in the same bank acct. Fund balance designated just for the SWSP. Only people from the committee can request. Disbursement according to the finance policy. CARRIED

6. Committee Work Reports
    a. Policies and Procedures Manual — Dennis
        - Nothing new.
    b. Observatory Committee/Cleanup — Michelle/Ed
        - Dennis: Postponing due to flood forecast. Is a bit of a plan. Did put out call on Groups. Got 3 people volunteering Jim Perch, Dale Buhler, Ian Dickson. Purpose of Council is not to do everything. So that is good news.
    c. Incorporation — Dennis
        - Dennis: Official, it is done. Last time on here. We got a business number. Russell: How to get GST off a purchase. Dennis: It is submitted to the CRA. Mark: Must file a GST return. Dennis: Must keep the receipt now no matter what.
    d. Member Meeting — Judy

- Dennis: Judy did send out just before this meeting. The next two meetings are taken care of.

e. Finance Committee Budget — Mark Irvine
   - Mark: Was all in the financial report. This might be redundant item. Dennis: Will delete this for now and keep with financial report.

f. Star Parties — Russell/Dennis
   - Russell: Not sat down as a committee yet, in contact with Ann Stout, chair Friends of Spruce Woods. Later in agenda is item for the event she proposed. Trying to contact the park interpreter. New one starting in April. Trying to watch for prizes that we hand out for the draw. Looking for scopes on sale. If you see a good deal, forward to me. Will ask for assistance for the committee and council, must talk about speakers for this year. Will lean heavily on the council for planning this. Just talking with Anne Stout at SWPP. Will have more to report next month. Dennis: Who on the committee? Russell: Cliff is stepping down as treasurer, Kamala, Gail Wise, Silvia (participant), and Michelle. Dennis: If not enough volunteers put out a call on Groups.io. Kamala: Monday breakfast coordination she can do. I got one of the SWPP yards. Marc: Dates? Russell: Thurs Sep 14 – Sunday Sep 17.

g. Explore the Universe — Stan
   - Stan: Active prgm, 14 – 15 people in IO prgm, senior members assisting like Scott, messages to people about things to do and see. Stuff about recording the moon. Getting together with Scott about how to get people from outside the RASC.

h. Eclipse 2024
   - Dennis: Added this to the list as a starter. National not sure what's happening with the eclipse glasses right now. Bryan: They did talk about them, we do have to purchase them. Two versions of the glasses. Up to Centres to purchase now. Dennis: I will contact Randy Atwood about this and let everybody know. Stan: Price per? There are two eclipses occurring, this October coming up. Scott: Museums is ordering 8,000 for Oct eclipse at about $1 each so not much cheaper than that. For the 2017 eclipse had lineups around the block for 2 days before the event. We do not have the distribution for this but is a good revenue source if want to sell. Russell: Could we make our own glasses? Scott: There would be liability issues. The ones we get are optometrist certified. Could do a workshop for bino and scope users. Dennis: How many to buy? Ed: What was the Planetarium price? We sold for $3 per pair. We had to hire someone to sell glasses for 3 days. Had custom ones made so was a Marketing expense. Dennis: How many to order? Mark: We could sell on our e-Commerce site. Dennis: Is there any reason for us to run on our own, or partner with the museum. Scott: Could pitch to the museum store a partnership to sell these. Stan: I like the idea of through the museum, but offer a pair to a member through the household. Bryan: What if you don't sell all of them. Scott: Never happened. Usually sell out. Also is another eclipse 6 months later. Dennis: Hearing that for the most part we say people go to museum then Stan suggested one per household. Would be 250 to 300 for the members. If that is where we are going. Any more we say go to the Museum. Daemon: Giving away to members or charging? Agree with Scott going to move them. Stan: I thought to give to the membership because they are losing stuff. Just get someone in to give away. Ed: Dates? Scott: Oct this year and then April 2024. Russell: Timing is good. SWSP could hand out. Dennis: Or at the meeting. Consensus is one per member, member benefit, try to procure before October, admin to track and ensure one per member.

Ed: Would need someone to track. Dennis: Should we ask Scott to see if can buy 250 from Museum at reduced rate. Scott: Will ask and say for admin purposes. Dennis: Once have a price can put motion out. Willing to pay for them.

7. Appointed Positions Recruitment — Dennis -- Nothing new
   a. Volunteer Coordinator
   b. Mentor Coordinator
   c. Meeting Coordinator
   d. Youth Outreach
8. Business Arising
   a. National financial situation — Dennis
      - Dennis: National Council (NC) was yesterday. The actual quarterly financials were not ready for that meeting. Once ready will send to NC members and presidents. Finance committee working on a budget. No reduction in member fees. Randy Atwood is acting E.D. and he is also nominated for a BOD position. I appreciate that Randy is there. He laid it bare. He said it is awful. At least he was willing to say. There were 15 people on staff, went from 3 – 15, he needs to get an office mgr. Publications and membership lady stayed, but leaving for master's program. He needs those two positions in place. Without Office Manager acctg is done by acctg firm (lots of money). He is trying to shrink expenses. He did not know how there was no oversight of the BOD on the ED. There were cred card fees not turned off. He blasted the Board. He is prioritizing his plan. Trying to get it all under control. Dennis asked what is the BOD doing for oversight. It went quiet. Then whether RASC is financially viable. Quiet. Then is there an exit plan? Only answer was we think will be neutral in 2024. That is where Randy laid it bare. Then is BOD reviewing what RASC is to be. That was good, had an answer– services to members or the Centres. Anything not doing that is on the chopping block. Another thing taking time is shutting down SkyNews there is a whole legal process to go through. He is trying to reduce the burn rate. He is trying to recruit volunteers to reduce costs. Bryan: We talked about the hybrid meeting and the eclipse glasses. I will post it about hybrid meetings. Dennis: Situation still critical. They will likely have to go into reserves, the $400K and then the investments they will likely have to dip into.
   b. Enn Tant — Daemon
      - Daemon: Last spoke on Mar 6, she is portraying as not for profit business, offering any member mileage to Spruce Woods, plus $180 facilitator fee, plus overnight accommodations at group use lot at Spruce Woods. Does not have exact dates yet. She is speaking with organizer. Enn Tant is a Metis run org whose goal is to connect indigenous families with camping, they book site, set everything up and provide equipment and firewood. Family just brings food. A lot of these families cannot afford equipment. Doing theme excursions including astronomy with a refractor scope for family to use. Waiting for dates from them. Dennis: Until we get a date won't be able to ask for volunteers. Talk to them a bit more. Everyone seems to be on board. Need to have a person volunteer who can show the sky. It is nice that the council wants to support and that they are willing to cover costs.
   c. Workshop for Children — Kamala
      - Kamala: Thought will get more info about that. Was I supposed to check with who requested? Not done anything yet. Do I need to enquire on summer workshop? Dennis: Yes please, find out what they need.
      - Kamala: Second one is recommendation to MB Education for Physics and Astronomy, meeting April 12. Scott to be there as well. Did contact Andrea Misner, high school

physics teacher, and fwded … she mentioned that is some curriculum in 7 -9 but not in high school. I found a doc and will fwd. Also about including groups like the indigenous astronomy. If they come back to RASC for curriculum support, can we support it? Dennis: Could use the Nova program for that. The content is on National website. Kamala: Have seen that. Also would suggest hands on. Good idea if schools can facilitate, if they can facilitate, under CSA (Canadian Space Agency) if can include for the students, is a good systematic way with resources available. If anyone wants to be part of that meeting let me know, can forward. Dennis: Yes but notify the host if that is planned. Kamala: Did ask Andrea but she likely will not be able to attend. The CSA has a good program for the summer. A few kids will be selected for 2 week program in CSA. Moon machine was running. Dennis: Canada had their astronaut announced today, Jeremy Hansen. Kamala: Last year he was here.

d. Name tags — Scott
   - Scott: Talked to the volunteer coordinator. We do not have the machine, so need to go to Staples. I will get a quote on what this would cost. Do we want names and position, or just position. Russell: Personalized. Dennis: People saying personalized.
e. NCC — Dennis
f. Glenlea, cleanup, damage repair — Ed
   - Ed: For the DFA app, still hung up a bit. Judy working on it. Background, info from U of M outstanding. One is the tax stmt. She got the letter of support. Once have all of that we should finalize application to the EMO. Should be a group effort.
   - Russell: We are still paying for the porta-potty, $226 per month, due to potential flood, maybe cancel that. Dennis: Leave for one more month because the ice has not come off yet. Stan: Usually the floods hit in first week May. Before that roads poor to get in and out. Need to do it while road is frozen. Maybe say take out on May 1. Dennis: Could send them email to take out May 1. Russell: Okay will send email to them on that. Dennis: Get receipts to Mark. Russell: Will have receipts for groups.io coming as well.
g. Spruce Woods gift to casino — $180 plus tax — Dennis
   - No change. Will reach out to the casino and get the print done.
h. NC Report — Dennis/Bryan
   - (above)
i. Science Rendezvous — Stan, Daemon, Kamla
   - Stan: Sent in the application form, asked for a table, said inside and outside, if weather bad then just inside, grabbing individuals, white light and Ha scope. Table with info about astronomy on it. Dennis: Have enough volunteers? Stan: Still hitting up people. Scott: Date? Stan: May 13. 3 days, first 2 kids and then 1 day for public. Ed: Wondering if I should volunteer. Stan: Will put you down as tentative. Could get Gail's with solar plus club's Corona. When showing the sun might be nice to have a sign board that says come see the sun with info on what to see on the board. Dennis: Need to know how much cost and who doing it. Likely support for that but need to know how much. Stan: Would get a few prints done. Russell: If doing that the standing boards, put a digital montage poster together, can get deals on dry mounted boards, hinge with rope. Mike: Great idea, need to be aware of the construction of the boards, must be aware of the winds, be cognizant of that. Russell: I have couple of dry mounted images that are solid and can weigh down with sandbags. Dennis: Getting a cost for this? Russell: Size? Scott: Maybe 2x3 is std. Russell: Okay will get a quote for one with moon and one with sun. Russell: Yes, could put weights on to hold it down. To Scott how big to be? Scott:

2x3 is probably big enough. Needs to be the invitation for public to see. Russell: 2x3 also fits on a table Dennis: and any volunteer can use it. Stan: Was thinking of a wooden stand for this. 2x3 is minimum. Size? Scott: 2x3 is big enough, people need to know is public. Dennis: And need to be able to fit in back of a car.

j. Bino/telescope day Darren Hennig Stan

- Dennis: There was discussion, there was request by group that put on, they approached me about a bulk order for cleaning supplies. No cost event, $ in and out. Stan to talk about how event went. Stan: Overall about 30 people total, well attended, invited ETU people, asked Darren, he was working one and one on cleaning but we brought the whole crowd together so individuals could see him doing it. He uses a lot of material doing cleaning, very strict. Jerry was there helping collimate a scope. There was one with a filter problem. Was quite successful. Someone said you guys doing Astro photo, got option to hold the same session at a school, learning Astro photography. Option through James Fast to get the room in the future. We got the room for free. Scott: When I got there, there were two guys outside with their scopes, I almost left not realizing there was a presentation going on so we need one of those folding boards. Dennis: Absolutely, member services.

k. Nova Program do we do it? Dennis

- Dennis: Did put out an ad. Two people resp. Just Ed Rajfur volunteered. Not a great turnout. Is this something that we want to pursue. Russell: How many people to run? If not the volunteer base. Scott: Nova prgm is fairly in depth. The day workshop that Stan put on is more appropriate. It is maybe a bit more in-depth. You cannot do it for people. Dennis: Could refer to the Nova as something that people request. When have the volunteers will consider. Okay will park that for now.

l. Website – usability Marc/Russell

- Marc: Every time think is running it crashes again. Gord helped us a bit. He disabled the plugins and the themes and in maintenance mode now. Need someone to help. Web design is not my thing, I am network admin. Talked to a guy at Elite Designs, he could look at it, it would cost. Stan: Spoke to others on National, thinking they might have something through them. Discussion about nationally based site. Dennis: Nothing will come from them for a while. Scott: We inherited a website based on a particular individual's skills and not a common set of skills, Word Press here has a bunch of stuff added to it. Maybe should simplify to point where we can support. Russell: The website was built by Sam Giesbrecht, he has moved to Sunshine Coast Centre. Myself and Marc stepped up. Just maintaining. I think the website is a crucial tool. A lot of emails coming in. The public outreach is important. The cost of maintaining head banging and financial is up for debate. Marc: Also my cousin was going to approach. Do we want more expenses. Dennis: Need to get back on line asap. Let's put a request out to members. If no one then ask for a quote. Also, should have a subcommittee to determine what we need and then next steps. Is it usable and does it have longevity. Mark: That's good. Russell: The fact it is in place is hard part. Cannot skim down. Dennis: Need to go beyond the glitch. Need to review it. Scott: I don't think changing the underlying plugins necessarily means that it doesn't look as good as now. it does not look as good, if just WordPress .. Dennis: To Russell if you can put a request out to membership. To Marc please ask for a quote. Going back to Sam if websites are not maintained. Russell: Okay I will send out a request for volunteers. Then next meeting a small subcommittee. This was started 6 years ago. Russell: I will ask for a couple of volunteers.

m. Strategic Plan/Bylaws — Dennis
   - Dennis: Judy sent question in the bylaws about dealing with privacy. Planting that seed tonight. Should it be in Policy manual or in the Bylaws. Next meeting to discuss.

n. Manitoba Education — Kamala

o. Pinawa event — Daemon
   - Mike: Had 3 phone conversation with the Pinawa councilor who is a member, he is in loaner scope prgm, they are wanting us there on May 20 in long weekend with May 27 as rain date. They found accommodations for 8 people. Locations, one at need hwy 201 with great parking lot or close a street down. Would be sidewalk astronomy. Myself and whoever else would meet with their councilors. Anyone else, they are motivated to make this happen. We just should up with scopes and knowledge. Dennis: We need to put a request on groups.io. Mike: I can chair this and run with it. Daemon: Very interested in helping. Available both those weekends. Include me on the emails. Mike: Most though phone conversations but switching to email now. Russell: Have quite a few calls for volunteers. We should combine them. Russell: I can put everything into one message. Ed: Good idea, can overcommunicate. Dennis: Seeing support, Mike is the chair.

p. Friends of Spruce Woods event — Russell
   - Russell: I was contacted by Ann Stout, she was approached by Epic Rides MB, they do motorcycle tours throughout the province. They wanted the night in SWPP to be a star gazing event. They want our centre to provide a star gazing guide. Could tag onto their group sites. When I get more info on dates will send out emails on that.

q. Astronomy Day — All
   - Dennis: Is an email chain going around on this. Scott: This is April 29. Dennis: Just need a coordinator. I am away. That is coming up really fast. Scott: I can do some of the stuff, but I need to assign tasks to people. Mark: I can help with insurance, talk to venues, etc. Kamala: I did volunteer last time, one was in the Grant Park bookstore. Daemon: I can help. Hosting events not a big deal. Scott: Okay I will divvy up tasks. Mike: I can help as well.

r. Bulk purchase of cleaning supplies — Scott

s. Credit Card — Mark
   - Mark: Have had situations with council members putting stuff on their credit cards. In other orgs I have seen them have credit cards with small limit. Having cloud svcs or website fees critical to the operation, we just have a corp card with maybe $500 limit. Then I as treasurer make sure statement is appropriate and then the exec signs off. Don't want to do this without council agreement. Step into a more mature organization. Also making sure not burdening someone's credit card. Becomes part of the treasurer's duties and reduces the reimbursements to other people. Russell: I like that idea. I have a couple of recurring fees. I think having a Centre credit card would be good, like the porta-potty and the website fees. Dennis: Anybody opposed. Dennis: Seems to be general consensus. Okay we are giving Mark authority to go and get a $500 credit card for the centre. So Mark that is your go ahead to do that. Then once in place will move expenses over to that. Russell: Could have the Treasurer email go to you. You would have the account. Mark: Only me and a couple others would have the credit card number. Someone would send me a note and then I would phone the org to give them the credit card number. Then would not have a credit card number circling in the org. Dennis: Would have to add the credit card to the policy. Ed: Website email? Russell: Email is not affected by that website issue. Daemon: Is $500 high enough? Mark:

Would like to start at $500 on that and work. If too little would go to $1,000. Good to start low.

MOTION Mark moved, Marc seconded, for Marc to order a credit card for the org with a $500 limit. CARRIED

9. Round table All
    - Dennis: I have ordered the meteorites, see you at the meeting.
10. Next Meeting, Monday May 1, 2023, 7 PM
11. Adjourn PM

	Name	Signature	Date
Secretary	Ed Wright		