RASC WINNIPEG CENTRE COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the council of RASC Winnipeg Centre held via Zoom on Monday, November 6, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Dennis Lyons, Stan Runge, Judy Anderson, Marc Sarrasin, Kamala Kodi, Bryan Stach, Ed Wright, Mike Karakas, Daemon Nightshade, Mark Irvine,

REGRETS: Scott Young, Michelle Boyce

1. Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement — Dennis
2. Welcome and Introductions — All
3. Adoption of Agenda — Dennis
   - Adding T4K
4. Adoption of previous minutes — Ed

MOTION Ed Moved and Daemon seconded ADOPTED

5. Financial Report — Mark
   - Mark: Results are favourable for the month, but missing some anticipated larger expenses (big insurance payment). On track for deficit for year unless membership increases. Big ins payment coming due. Entry for solar glasses deferred to next year. The majority of bill could be deferred. (only 100/1000 were sold.) Still forecasting deficit to next year. Could be year-end entry. Likely should not do it to do an accrual to make it look like that. If surplus in Nov Dec could make it a lessor surplus.
   - Status of the credit card? Dennis: Yes, got in to sign.
   - Also looking at a capital budget. So far just the observatory committee for acquisition of the mount. It's a fairly small endeavour to get the new mount for the LX600 this year. We should have a list of projects to fund. Could come out of savings or fund raising. If part of a budget should have it in place this year. Not talked with finance committee yet. We have a feel now for when things get paid. Can work with s/s s and normalize it throughout the month. It would be a cycled budget by quarter. We are pretty stable with cash. The Finance Committee has plans to make the expenditures more predictable on the calendar, to bring an overall and a month-by-month budget plan. We will have two GICs, a 9,000 (5%) and 2,000 (securing for our credit card) and the other two will become cash (one is in an account and needs to be transferred into the main account; the second when it matures). We are owed money. Got the amount paid to Russell. Also cleaned up outstanding cheques. One payment for Sky News from last Nov timeframe, was for 2022. Issued a cheque for $48 and then an expense cheque for Judy. Judy: Reason for the deficit? Mark: plus additional fees in the account and banking charges ($220 while the budget was $120), plus incorporation charges.. Another category was talking to the public with outreach. We also had some windfalls, e.g., $500 for glasses sales. Stan: Was part of the observatory committee meeting, we are just starting, aside from this $600 fix other projects will start up, so be prepared. Currently no guidance. Mark: I think ideally we would want these thoughts in Sep Oct time, but understandable since we are just starting. Gather the material as a plan and then bring to Council. Dennis: Treat them as a project, associate with a fund-raising activity. Once we get a list from the Observatory Committee, we can address.

6. Committee Work Reports
    a. Policies and Procedures Manual — Dennis
        - No update
    b. Observatory Committee — Michelle/Scott
        - Dennis: Scott mentioned training workshops beyond Glenlea. Judy: For image processing, already spoken to Richard Konrad on an image processing workshop. Could have people gather for a chunk of a day. Not sure on the money to charge. Agree with Scott on programming. Stan: Two senses from the observatory committee meeting:
            i. On members observing night possible to still have people come out and do sessions (training on loaner scopes or main scope). I will be going out there so a small training course.
            ii. Bigger sessions similar to what Darren held last spring, bigger and more major subjects. Could do 3-4 of those per year on major subjects. We did not have to pay last year. The location for the observatory committee meeting was downtown, Wing can get that for free. James Fast can get the church in the north end for free. Michelle got excited about doing a first session on solar imaging. She wants to do something in January. Dennis: Before take something on like this, we need to have somebody willing to coordinate it. Stan: Michelle, Scott, or I could coordinate it. We could let Michelle proceed with that. Dennis: Recommend that we let people know there could be a nominal cost to put the program on due to the room. Judy: Wanted to ask if the observatory committee could do it. Stan could connect Richard Konrad. Might have a meteorite go to those people.
        - Dennis: Anything else? Stan: Getting the scope updated with new mount and then the processes. Repair scheduled for Nov 18. Once done then revised training for that scope. Also the training videos. Wing has the opportunity to do the videos. Kevin said he has people to do the videos. Describe how to get to Glenlea, rules, bathroom. The scope would be a separate video. The 14" Dobsonian would be separate.
        - Mike: Dark-sky site sites. This is part of the umbrella, Stan, Mike, Scott, heading down this Thursday to look at the gun range site to see about the possibility of use. Will be cloudy unfortunately. The NCC site should the app be successful. Silvia said the park interpreter at SWPP is trying to get an urban dark sky in the City of Winnipeg. That gets us up to speed. Dennis: Keep us up to date on the urban one. Ed: More info on Richard Konrad? Judy: Can say he uses remote scopes, can talk about what he does, he is a member.
    c. Member Meeting — Judy
        - Judy: Scott – Beginner Session; Bryan Stach – What's Up; Michelle Boyce – What's New; Richard Konrad – Remote Imaging. Now booked main speakers for December and January.
    d. Finance Committee — Mark Irvine
    e. SWSP — Dennis
        - Dennis: Will have to firm up with the park, need to look at recruiting for the SWSP. Should have 2 dates one for public and one for club. Judy: Jerry replied to someone about the date for SWSP. Marc: Could be the long weekend because is close to new moon.
    f. Explore the Universe — Stan
        - Stan: Nothing new

g. Eclipse 2024 Scott
   - Dennis: Scott asked whether anyone to coordinate. Judy: Stan, Mike, me, Daemon, will not be here. Kamala: What is the plan, but there is no plan yet, except it would likely be Assiniboine Park. Dennis: Should we ask the membership? Judy: Yes, I think so. Dennis: Majority of people are going away to see the eclipse. Dennis: Needed to book ahead. I will put something out.

h. Fundraising Daemon
   - Daemon: Did okay for the sale of the glasses but it was clouded over. Raised about $500 pretax, so have almost paid for the purchase entirely. Still 859 pairs for the spring.

7. Business Arising
   a. Seasonal potluck
      - Dennis: Must pick a date and a location. Normally this is a wet event. Judy: Usually mid to late January on a Saturday. No charges so no license. AGM is Jan 12. Judy: Can check with Wing. The Chevrier location is reasonable. Dennis: JA to check with Wing on whether the Chevrier facility is available on those dates and if they are okay with an event like that.
   b. Meetings and "holidays"
      - Dennis: Discussion about that. Hard to change due to the University being booked in. The question is it gets challenging, when meeting falls on a holiday, we acknowledge it in the beginning of the meeting. Ed: agree that a very diverse workforce would make a huge number of scheduling challenges. So yes, acknowledging at the beginning of a meeting is nicely respectful. Dennis: When we book for next year, we do look at the statutory holidays, and book around them. We will let the membership know if there is a holiday coming up they can let us know. Okay that is how we will deal with that moving forward.
   c. Telescopes for Kids
      - Dennis: We have been doing at end of the year. Stay or change? Suggested to do in the New Year, easier to avoid the holiday so it's not a present. Would give us more time (this year) to publicize and select the winner(s).
      - Mark: Steer away from Christmastime, might make sense not to emphasize one particular calendar. Kids would be able to use some time away from school for the essays and videos.
      - -Dennis – Go back to Scott and plan for next year submission. We'll deal with the other details when we get there (winners outside City of Winnipeg, will be asked to pay for shipping unless we get a donor to cover it).
   d. NCC Dennis/Silvia
      - Dennis: They did get out and got the sky pictures. Hopefully presentation in soon. They want a presentation to the local rural municipal council soon (about 8 people). Sounds like other initiatives are going on around us. They are on board. They see this as a huge tourism opportunity. Mike: That sounds really encouraging. Is there an expectation for RASC to use their site? Dennis: We talked about two events, one for public and one for members. But none of that we fleshed out. There might be a graveled area for people to set up. Dennis: The Interpretive Centre has washrooms, it is the old farm house. And there is power.
   e. Glenlea, cleanup, damage repair Ed
      - Ed: Just automated acknowledgement when I sent the last two items to the EMO.
   f. Spruce Woods gift to casino $180 plus tax Dennis

- Dennis: Will follow up.

g. Website – Marc
   - Marc: Didn't work on the login and redirect yet. Instead updated the members list in groups.io. Looking at members who have paid. Looking at people's access to the website for internal documents. Looking at who is there. Judy: The access to docs in the website, I did some correcting to that when people had problems, Jay was looking into getting docs for the observatory committee. Can we get PDFs? People are saying they have put docs in Google Drive. People seem to be left with access for quite a while. Also, I get notices that so and so is no longer on the list in groups.io. Marc: I am not sure if people decided to leave. Two weeks ago, I added everybody who is a member. Have not looked at people expired yet.
h. Strategic Plan/Bylaws Dennis
   - Dennis: Time to start looking at a few things. Wanted to look at page 7 – 10. Mike: Agreed with Scott's comments but not looked at it. Kamala: Not looked. Mark: No comments. Ed: Scott's comments suggest that there are changes since pandemic, then and now, about how people want to spend their leisure time, technology, amateur astronomy initiatives. These could all be taken into account. People doing different recreational activities. I-telescope.
   - Stan: Scott was right that quite a few things have been driven over the past few years. I still have difficultly sending out a message to the whole club. Also, the mentorship program is got going. But you couldn't meet with people. Perhaps can improve people's skill set, things with telescopes would help for getting volunteers. For now, people don't feel they are good enough. Judy: I agree with Stan and Scott, we made quite a bit of progress, but now it seems a bit outdated. Need to be more specific, resources at Glenlea are for what. Also, the agreement with U of M is outdated but the relationship is ongoing. Think we should make an appointment now with the Dean of Science and their Legal Services, should make a plan with Council that it might flood occasionally, we could say we would like to renew the agreement, could say here is what we would like to add to it like the pad and the washroom. Did enquire with the IT people at the University about the flags. It was not to connect the U of M to the internet. It was because there is a company now running the internet in the area. It is possible we could plug into it for $1,200 per year. They are not planning on doing a remote scope. I think it would be good to go as a group to the U of M with Dennis and the head of the observatory committee. For Southwood Golf course, if they think of those sorts of things, we should be able to approach them. Dennis: Okay I think we should look at with the University. For the next meeting do we want Judy to plant the seeds that we will want to meet with them in the new year. For the next meeting, read through the whole of the strategic plan, review as to which on track and look at other things that need a review or change. If you have time read it and review so more time to discuss in next meeting. It can be refreshed (can put in an addendum that x, y, z are no longer being pursued). Dennis says the link on the website does work.
i. Scope for sale Judy
   - Judy: No nibbles yet (Facebook Marketplace, a number of Winnipeg Buy/Sell groups).
j. Quilak award Wilfred Buck Dennis
   - Dennis: Spoke with Jenna at National. Silvia's and Wilfred's award will be mailed to Dennis by Jenna. Silvia knows where Wilfred lives. Will try to do in person.
k. NC Feedback Dennis

- Dennis: the board gave an update on fin sustainability. Goal is to breakeven for end of 2024. Getting the last $400K from the estate. Now looking at how to generate more revenue. Talking about a fee increase. The RASC fees are really low. There was a dip in membership but back to 4,833. On average they lose 1,000 per year and then gain 1,000. Loss of SkyNews had negligible effect. Increase of $10 is an additional $50,000 with no additional costs. Budget out to end of the year. Will save money next year with the company doing payroll. They have looked at the cost of servicing membership. They make $35 off the membership fee. They are looking at electronic observer's handbook. There is a concern about copyright problems with digital only. Costs $3 to print and $8 to mail. For people to donate, e.g., $120 per year is a free calendar. The policy for financial controls is being updated significantly. One of the steps for recovery is looking at what happened and how to prevent it. Policy C11 for the national council, some parts are the same, quorum, for every 200 members get one member on National Council. Will be some minor changes in the bylaw. I have to come up with a question. The $400K does not help for next year. The reserve is not gone but only $300K to $400K left. There are 3 full-time office staff: Jenna, finance manager, and part time member services. Focus is on membership services. The current Board and Jenna are really doing a good job. Several people have commented that the member services person is really working well with very expedited responses/fixes. Ed: Any risk of the fees to Centres changing? Dennis: National's fee is $75 (and could rise), and on top of that, the Centre adds their own fee (Winnipeg sits in about the middle range of fees).

l. Officers and Directors Insurance — Dennis

- Dennis: Still waiting for a quote.

8. Round table — All

- Kamala: How to report outreach events to National? Dennis: They have probably not looked at that yet. January event might be too cold for me.
- Mike: Just to let you know not at next meeting in December and will have limited time in January.
- Mark: The mount for the observatory committee. Will somebody request the funds. We should pay Dustin for his mount. He needs an invoice for this. Stan: We can arrange to do that. Mark: Could be an email with the amount and his name in it. Have a response from Dustin with the agreement to the amount.
- Kamala: Nothing
- Bryan: Nothing
- Marc: Regarding the access to Google Drive, do you want me to check access. Judy: Yes please ensure people are on the right committees. Winnicentrics is a month old. Dennis: Winnicentrics should go out in general email. Marc: Is Russell still part of Council? Dennis: No.
- Ed: usual question about upcoming membership meeting. Will need to get the invitation out. Remind Judy about bio/info on Richard Konrad's talk.
- Daemon: The outreach request from Judy. Judy: This was a request from Wild Outside Youth leadership group with Canadian Wildlife Federation., for something this coming weekend. I said 'no' but I suggested something as Kamala had done after dark. They said 8 to 15 people, open to any day of the week. It is the Wild Outside Leadership Group. Might be okay for an event in January even if is cold. Daemon: I could help.
- Judy: The scope for sale. What to do with it? Mark: Was it on Canada Wide? Judy: Did not know how to do that. Jay has done the Astro Buy and Sell. Mark: Not sure want to

ship it. Dennis: Get the info to Daemon to let him try. If not sold by next meeting then Telescopes for Kids.

- Stan: At the meeting on Friday will talk with Michelle about first training session. She says she can do the solar scope. Will talk with Wing. You want these approved by council? Dennis: Council has approved the concept. Is our Council full? Dennis: There is one spot left. Stan: Wing would like to get more involved. He would like to get more involved with fundraising. Judy: He would only be on Council until AGM. He could be elected in January. Check which email Wing wants to use for this function and give him access to Google Drive, etc.

MOTION Stan moved and Mark seconded. Need Wing to understand he must run in that election. CARRIED

- Dennis: I will not be there Friday but will provide the PPT file.

9. Next Meeting, Monday December 4, 2023, 7 PM
10. Adjourn 8:55 PM

	Name	Signature	Date
Secretary	Ed Wright		