RASC WINNIPEG CENTRE COUNCIL

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

PRESENT: Stan Runge, Dennis Lyons, Marc Sarrasin, Ed Wright, Scott Young, Mike Karakas, Kamala Kodi, Daemon Nightshade

REGRETS: Judy Anderson, Mark Irvine, Bryan Stach, Michelle Boyce,

1. Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement — Dennis
2. Welcome and Introductions — All
3. Adoption of Agenda — Dennis
    - Dennis: will focus on the Observatory Committee, finance committee budget, second observatory site. Quilak aware that Wilfred won.
4. Adoption of previous minutes — Ed

Scott: Only thing is in the discussion on Observatory Committee, should take the Michelle's mom. Take that out. (Not voted)

5. Financial Report — Mark
    - Mark not in attendance.
    - Dennis: Is everybody okay with the budget? Kamala: $500 for outreach next year, would like to talk to council about revenue ideas, can talk about ways to generate revenue, they approached us. Dennis: Yes, once the fundraising committee is in place can be stood up. Scott: This would be a school willing to pay us. Dennis: Would be revenue neutral, money in and money out. Everybody okay with a few hundred dollars deficit. If okay, Mark would get prepared and would go to the members for information. Then would share for information.

MOTION Marc moved / Stan seconded to approve the budget. PASSED

6. Committee Work Reports
    a. Policies and Procedures Manual — Dennis
    b. Observatory Committee — Michelle/Scott
        - Scott: A lot of interest by people, lots of ideas, but all over the place. Want to get more functionality. Also comments about how much repair to do with flooding. Cannot do all of them at the same time. Maybe take a lesson from the strategic plan. Why do we have these observing resources? Are we there to do outreach or for members. Based on objective for the observatory. Does not make sense for them to do a bunch of work without that. Is it a training place. Are we there to have outreach? The Committee is all over the map. I would like to know Council's consensus. I would like to know what the loaner scope and observatory objectives are. Should we have an in-city site for outreach? If don't know why doing it we will have a bunch of gear that sits there.
        - (Ed displayed strategic plan.) Scott: There is a manifesto in the strategic plan. Scott: The strategic plan happened during COVID. All of our expectations based on pre-COVID experiences have been worthless. Reset for what people want to do with leisure. It is probably worth refreshing this. The recommendations there form a good short-term plan. We cannot share and use remotely, it won't work for a shared facility. Therefore, should focus on the onsite use. Training facilities were a good idea. Need site for observing and photography. Back then photography was a little less important. Putting

a camera on a scope is common now. Automating the scope cannot be done without taling away the on site thing. Glenlea is on the edge of Bortle 4. The proposed new site is a Bortle 4,, but better than Glenlea but no river 200' away. Having a second site would split our volunteer resources. We are having a hard time making our existing site functional and making sure they get used. I don't think that we want to split the existing site, but we should make existing site as useful as possible. We should plan for what is next. As volunteer core grows it should be possible, but not now. For the next part, I would like Council to articulate what we want. Should we sell the loaner scopes.

- Ed: I agree with Scott. Also, I think that if Glenlea is not bursting at the seams and no major issues, we should stay with Glenlea. It is adequate although needs some maintenance. Scott: The log books says since the training the observatory has been sued a lot, but mostly for the pad. But I agree Ed, not that much effort into another spot until we have determined Glenlea one way or another.
- Dennis: Yes the DSS is a long way away. But the spot that Gord suggested is that it has facilities for a warm room. Another option is to build a better relationship with Birds Hill, but it is not a dark site and part of it is the exclusion zone for green lasers. Trevor puts events on out at SWPP. Might ask Birds Hill to coordinate events for us. If there is someone who can take people great. The Committee can look at this. Darren has moved on, but James Fast has expressed interest, however.
- Scott: The gun club has potential but does not guarantee snow clearing, so just 3 seasons. The gun fire is typically done before night. Would have to work out in a MOU. Think that we just need to go out there and have a conversation. Having a site up north with a warm room would be great, but they might not know about the need for a warm room. It is an impediment driving that far up north.
- Dennis: If the Committee thought that Glenlea was worthwhile, the other thing is the pad, runs out of room quickly. Looking at something there would be expanding the pad. Scott: We would have to negotiate something with the U of M. When we negotiated that lease it was a different world. We might have obstacles for expanding. Would have to negotiate. We might need to spend more on that. Not sure how to do that. Have not heard from Danielle Pahud on that. Dennis: Judy has made quite an in-road for example with letter for the Disaster Financial Assistance. Scott: Did the Dean of Science make it out to the BBQ? Dennis: Don't believe so. An impediment could be if the pad is not big enough. Scott: So far on the members observatory night there was Dennis signed up, and me for the eclipse, sent to the Observatory Committee. Will send the spreadsheet around again. Just having a person there with a set of keys is good and can be there is good. To do training there are people on the Observatory Committee that can come out as well to do with you or for you.
- Dennis: Other thing is do we do public outreach at Glenlea. Insurance would be covered by RASC public liability insurance. Scott: Other issue is how public do you want to make it that there is $50K of equipment behind paper thin door. The U of M does not do public events out there. The U of M does not do public stuff out there. Might not have permission to do that. The old agreement was for RASC members only.
- Ed: Do we have a list of the questions? (Scott shared a document Glenlea Observatory renewal Ideas.) Scott: New mount head for $600 is okay but not the $10K pier until the plan is done. We have a new booking email system. Ignore the other site improvements. Collimation. Manual for the 14.5" dob. Could make more tables for the

pad. Dustin Hartel took some great pics of the ring nebula with the loaner C8 and his phone. We have the gear. Let's make it more useable by members.

- Scott: Internet – we need to hear back from the U of M. Let's hear back from U of M. They have fibre there now. Jay had the question do we stay at Glenlea or not. It has disadvantages but no cost. They don't send ut the hydro bill. Just for the flood repair. If we are going to have a remote telescope put it elsewhere. This was an attempt to get everything into a document. Council needs to weigh in on why we have Glenlea. For example, do we need a training site. Glenlea is good for that. Or is it an outreach site. Can pick any that we want. Ed: Yes, the environment has changed a wee bit since the strategic plan, especially COVID. Bunch of ideas. The observatory is a part of the mission of the organization. Good point about the U of M. Dennis: I like Glenlea, keep it, could put scopes out there. Good for me to go out and not drag out my equipment. For me it would be good as a training centre for members. Could resurrect the mentorship program. Would want a public outreach program, could do at Birds Hill Park, then working with the park they ask us to put on. Third thing is the committee should look at north of city observing site. So three things: 1) Glenlea ties us to the U of M, 2) public outreach site , 3) northern site. Stay away from working with the City.
- Stan: I agree with you Dennis, can get out there without equipment, if could put the C8 on the wedge would be great, what imaging equipment do we need so people can try imaging? Excited to hear someone to regenerate the use of the LX1200. Would like to get that going and the revised training going right away. Would like to get that going asap. Another idea is the members' night. Would be good to see how to mount a camera on the back something simple so that they could do beginner imaging. The third thing is the shooting range where people can go set up and feel secure. Was something Darren was doing. Before doing a bunch of public outreach stuff we need a bunch of people interested in doing it. James Fast would help. Also, Wing is always talking about videos, so once mount for the LX1200, then would show in video how to get it going. They could use the computer downstairs to connect. I got excited about these ideas based on work Scott did.
- Kamala: Like the idea of Glenlea for members, having something inside the city would help, for example the solar eclipse at the Leaf, we cannot expect them to travel too far, having something in the city would help, especially for schools. Scott: Good point Kamala. Mike and Mark shepherded it and now that Assiniboine Park Conservancy has become part of the eclipse day and it is free. From a school point of view, it is a great place to make it interesting for them, in city is useful.
- Mike: Getting the U of M to give permission on improvements, it puts brakes on things, it becomes a member resource, apart from expanding it, also for the SCT in the winter will not be doable with the grease of the focuser will freeze up in the cold. Like the idea of the north end site because it is secure. It is hard to find a site that is secured. When invest in a building, don't want vandalism. Applaud Scott for making Assiniboine Park Conservancy available for the eclipse. Until we get permission from the University, that is the deal for Glenlea.
- (Daemon joined) Dennis: To Daemen, background on this discussion. Mike just talked about idea of observing site like Birds Hill. We talked about a northern site. Taking this back to the Observatory Committee through Scott. The Committee has a huge amount of ideas.

- Stan: Are we getting the new part for the Meade? Scott: It is in the 2024 budget. Would make sense to do asap due to winter but will take $600. The mount has winter grease. Stan: I would cover the $600. Scott: Should not rely on individual donors. I know that we are in deficit position but the bank account has money in it.
- Scott: What format should the direction to the Observatory Committee be? Then we have a $600 equatorial mount, 3 people have volunteered to foot the bill for this,
- Dennis: Does anyone think that we should not keep Glenlea for five years out? (all no)

MOTION Dennis moved, Scott moved to send back to Observatory Committee that: 1) the Glenlea site be developed as a training facility for the members use and to make recommendations based on that. 2) The Observatory Committee is to research a public outreach to develop a pub outreach site. 3) last part is research and report back on a northern city outreach site. -- CARRIED

- Discussion: Kamala: Include Birds Hill and St Vital. Scott: Yes would talk about the most useful ones.

MOTION Scott: Observatory committee to replace the equatorial mount for the LX200 <= $650 including taxes. Mike: Also, it is not the mount it is the focuser of the OTA for cold weather observing. Scott: Yes that is going to be an issue. – CARRIED

- Scott: That is enough for what we needed.
- Dennis: The priorities for tonight were the Observatory Committee, the budget, and then the telescope for sale, and the award for Wilfred.

c. Member Meeting — Judy (Friday 13)

- Judy: Dennis, I am still following up on the possibility of having St. John's keep their coffee outlet open for an extra half hour (and other options) … will let you know.
- We have typically given St. John's a $200 annual donation toward scholarships (I may not have remembered this in time for the budget, but if it's too late, I will donate that myself. Hopefully that gives us some good will.

Oct 13, 2023	gAIL Wise	Bryan Stach	Danielle Pahud	**Dr. Marc Buie**	Title: Studying the past with shadows and changing lives along the way	buie@boulder.swri.edu

- Dennis: Did everybody see. Scott can pre-record his. Dennis: Judy cafeteria to be available. Let people know cafetria to be available in the little room. Ed: Judy's link was not working.

d. Finance Committee — Mark Irvine

e. SWSP — Dennis

- Dennis: 73 people there, which was great. Saturday was damp but clear. The plan for next year is to spend some of the money on a stove, people will cook, so that we have a hot breakfast. Would be a pancake breakfast. Has to come back to Council because not comm right now. There was $500 in the budget. Mark said that he has not touched the SWSP on the budget for now, is in a separate account.

f. Explore the Universe — Stan

- Stan: Not done anything. I have been away between my and Lorraine's surgery. Scott got the Observatory Committee rolling which is a great thing.

g. Eclipse 2023 — Scott

- Scott: Have 4 volunteers, but could use more. The Park can provide traffic control people. Kamala: Will try to bring sun filter. Mike: The PST loaner scope is available.

Scott: We have scopes for people. Daemon: Are the goggles to be there? Dennis: Mark has them. Will bring them to the meeting and the outreach event. Scott: The Museum shop is understaffed. Working on a way to have the Museum ones for sale. Need to know how many we have. Would need 1,000 pairs for this. For Mars 2003 in Birds Hill park, don't want to carry $15K in Toonies. Dennis: Judy says the cafeteria will be open during our meeting. Ed to let people know.

- Scott: Working on a map and a timeline for the volunteers. Mentioned eclipse on CTV. Phone ringing off hook for glasses.

h. Fundraising — Daemon

- Daemon: Sent out the terms of reference. Dennis: Anybody

MOTION Daemon moved / Ed seconded to approve the terms of reference for the fundraising committee. PASSED

- Dennis: I will put into the notices, fundraising chair and committee.

7. Appointed Positions Recruitment — Dennis
   a. Volunteer Coordinator
   b. Mentor Coordinator
   c. Youth Outreach
8. Business Arising
   a. NCC — Dennis/Silvia
      - Dennis: They are going out again this weekend to do the sky shots. The previous application was lost. They just need a switch on their light. The NCC is willing to change out the light. Silvia and Jerry are going.
   b. Glenlea, cleanup, damage repair — Ed
      - Ed: Did send a note asking for an update. Sent message with evidence on August 7. No response. Scott: The election will slow things down.
   c. Spruce Woods gift to casino — $180 plus tax — Dennis
   d. Website – — Marc
      - Marc: Not much happening. Busy at work. Will check this weekend. Ed: What issues are there? Marc: It still is going to the personal profile setup page.
   e. Strategic Plan/Bylaws — Dennis
      - Dennis: For next month will just do a review to see if missing anything.
   f. Credit Card — Mark
      - Dennis: I just have to sign the document so that we have a credit card.
   g. Glenlea Public use (at Observatory Committee) — Dennis
      - Dennis: Scott has a signup sheet for members night. Easy to do. Just welcome people when arrive, open up the warm room. Just need key to lock up. Left at 10:00.
   h. Members Observing Night – sign up — Scott
   i. Glenlea Keys (at Observatory Committee) — All
   j. Second observing site (at Observatory Committee) — Denni
   k. Newsletter and AI — Scott
      - Scott: Did not come up with formal policy, but people were not interested in AI generated content. Judy mentioned that some of the image processing uses AI. Maybe not need to think about it too much until we get an issue. Cannot say AI free.
   l. Scope for sale — Judy
      - Dennis: Judy said nobody from Centre willing to make an offer. Minimum bid? Will tell Judy that this group is good with that and she can now advertise outside the centre.
   m. Quilak award Wilfred Buck — Dennis

- Dennis: Heard from National that none of the awards have been made up yet. Jenna says the plaques are being made. I offered to present Wilfred with the plaque to him in person. Would be cool to do in his home community (The Pas). I will follow up with Silvia on her service award as well. Jenna said the awards committee would be okay to present it to Wilfred. Dennis: I will make the effort to go to his home community.

n. NC Feedback — Dennis
   - Dennis: They have done everything they can to stop the bleeding. Trending to a $300K deficit next year hoping to balance next year. Not great news. Not changed the membership too much after the fee increase. They will know better by December. This is when people decide to renew.
   - Dennis: The NOVA program is approved. Minimum fee is $50 then National gets 20% of that, he mentioned to them that there is a cost for a room.

o. Officers and Directors Insurance — Dennis
   - Dennis: Gone to National. Rena has put the request into their insurers. They will give us a discounted rate for the officer and directors insurance. It is in the budget.

9. Round table — All
   - Kamala: Nothing for me
   - Mike: Nothing for me
   - Marc: Looking at the active 246 members, of which 209 are paid up, 9 due, and 28 lapsed. 52 have expired. Dennis: Ten people renewed to go to Spruce Woods.
   - Stan: Nothing
   - Daemon:
   - Ed:
     i. Lots of Facebook applications. Scott: There are a lot scammers. Putting people who joined Facebook recently on probation to notify for any of their postings.
     ii. Wing mentioned consider using Meetup for the future for scheduling events with our members.

1. Next Meeting, Tuesday November 6, 2023, 7 PM
2. Adjourn — 8:40 PM

	Name	Signature	Date
Secretary	Ed Wright		