

Denver Astronomical Society
Minutes of June 28, 2013 E-Board Meeting

Officers Present:

President	Ron Hranac
Vice President	Lisa Judd
Treasurer	Brad Gilman
Secretary	Dena McClung

Board Members Present:

Johnny Barela	Jack Eastman	Joe Gafford	Chuck Habenicht
Ron Pearson	Scott Leach	Ed Scholes	Dan Wray

Absent:

Digby Kirby

Observatory Representative:

Dr. Robert Stencel

Other Members and Guests:

Hugh Davidson, Volunteer Coordinator
Eileen Barela
Dennis Cochran

The meeting was called to order with a quorum present.

The Previous Meeting's Minutes were read, amended and approved.

Chamberlin Business: Dr. Stencel mentioned the Mt. Evans Star Party scheduled for this evening and noted the severe weather that was likely to have resulted in cancellation. He reported that the new dome is in place and leveled with the wheels deployed at the damaged Meyer-Womble Observatory on Mt. Evans. It still lacks a motor and a weather cover. Before welding can be accomplished, some sort of scaffold will have to be put in place. The telescope's optics have been sent to an optics coating company in the Chicago area.

Dr. Stencel noted that Xcel Energy has launched a "Light Up The Night" campaign and asked members to file complaints with them, specifically asking for Xcel to promote "smart lighting." He also reported that he has spoken with the contractor who is working on the new residence being built just south of Observatory Park about the type of exterior lighting that should be installed.

Dr. Stencel reported that a grad student, Richard Pearson, will be picking up some of the DU Astronomy Department's duties, so we may see him around Chamberlin.

An alteration made by DU to the north-facing entry door at Chamberlin has resulted in that lock only accepting DU master keys. DAS keyholders are unable to access the building and are having to call Campus Security in order to lock up when they leave. Dr. Stencel reported that the problem is being addressed. He also noted that Scott Leach has been given a key, as he is now a Public Night team lead.

During a discussion about the non-working status of the laptop in the dome room, Scott recommended using the former library laptop to fill that need. Dr. Stencel asked the board to consider placing a chiller pad under the laptop to assist in cooling the unit.

Dr. Stencel stated that Aaron is exploring other employment opportunities, and asked the board to consider raising the cost of Open House tickets to \$2 (from \$1) to raise Aaron's compensation. Lisa suggested that DAS hold periodic work parties to accomplish needed maintenance, but Dr. Stencel responded that many of those things are best (and most cost-effectively)

done by campus maintenance personnel.

In light of the upcoming loss of the parking lot east of Olin Hall on DU to new construction, Dr. Stencel reported that parking spaces in adjacent parking garages will be reallocated for people using Olin Hall. He suggested that the board consider looking for alternate meeting space. A discussion of the pros and cons of suggested locations (DU International House, the Methodist Church) was held.

Dr. Stencel noted that observations of Comet ISON have shown it to be below predictions. He also asked that Joe produce a DAS schedule for 2014.

Treasurer's Report: Brad reported that total club funds are approximately \$108,000. The General Fund contains \$18,000, with an additional \$15,600 in CDs. The DSS account balance is \$4,200, and the two Van Nattan Hansen accounts have totals of \$57,300 and \$12,800. He reported that he has not received a reply from attorney Covell regarding Terms of Service and privacy concerns; he agreed to attempt to contact her again. He reported that the insurance bill, the Astronomical League dues (\$1,780), and DU's first quarter fees have been paid.

Brad also reported that no one has applied for the Van Nattan-Hansen scholarship. It was discussed that the scholarship has not been advertised, and it was agreed to bring this up on a future agenda.

Committee Reports

Dark Sky Site: The oil/gas well is reported to be nearing completion.

Public Night Teams: Hugh reported that Team Four is still in need of one or two solid, reliable volunteers. He noted that Team Six is a little light as well. He is still refining the advertisement to be placed in The Observer.

IT: Scott reported that the internet router is on order and should be delivered, installed and functioning by the end of the following week. He plans to move the old library laptop up to replace the dead laptop in the dome. He agreed to contact David Shouldice in order to get it up and running with all of the appropriate software and connections.

Scott reported that the DAS reservation system is in Gold status until July 3 and asked board members to play with it to find issues. The "zero balance due" issue was fixed without having to upgrade to gold. The issue of accepting Public Night payments online was tabled until an appropriate future meeting.

Loaner Scope Program: There is no change in the status of loaner scopes. It was mentioned that Chuck Carlson is having difficulty walking and a discussion about whether or not to ask him to resign as the overseer of the loaner program ensued without a conclusion being reached.

Newsletter: The Observer is being produced on schedule. A request was made to have Patti send pre-publication proofs sent to contributors for their review.

Outreach: It was noted that the Roundup Fellowship Fundraiser needs to be advertised on the listserve to solicit volunteers. The club has received no response from Valley Country Club. While no DAS members had apparently been able to sign up for the Mt. Evans star party, it was noted that telescopes being taken to the summit were required to be approved in advance. A discussion about the communications problems (internal and external) surrounding this event ensued, and a need to work out details for future Mt. Evans events was identified.

Dena gave a brief report on the outreach event at the Lincoln Hills Fly Fishing Camp, which she and John Anderson attended.

Members confirmed for the four Tesoro spots are Ron Pearson, Chuck Habenicht and Jack Eastman. Dr. Stencil asked to take the fourth spot and it was agreed that he should.

Old Business

Summer Picnic: Lisa reported that the beverages have been purchased and have already been stored in the basement and the barbecue delivery has been confirmed. The food provided will include three meats, buns, beans and barbecue sauce. All needed awnings have been confirmed. Set up will begin around 3:30 p.m. People bringing coolers need to include ice.

SWOT Analysis: A report on the top five items in each category was circulated. No action was taken. The results will be used to set goals, objectives and tasks going forward. Ron Hranac asked board members to give these items some thought and mentally prioritize them for discussion in future meetings.

DAS Brochures: It was suggested that information regarding the Paypal online membership application option be included. Scott recommended that we price the brochures at Vista Print. It was mentioned that the president has the latitude to approve expenditures of \$500 or less, and suggested that once the brochure design is complete and he has the pricing information, he place the order without board approval.

Missing Items: A discussion including storage options, the use of locking cables, replacing existing shelving with locking cabinets, and removing a desk in the upstairs office was conducted. Scott suggested installing cameras with recording equipment in storage areas, as this equipment is available at low cost. It was recommended that the door to the current storage area be closed during public events. It was brought up that DU personnel and DAS representatives need to jointly inventory all contents to ensure that both parties have a clear understanding of what belongs to whom. Dr. Stencil approved removal of the old shelves. Dan agreed to work up an estimate for replacing the shelving with lockable cabinets and Ron Hranac agreed to buy security cables for DAS laptops.

2017 ALCON: Ron Hranac and Darrell Dodge are in contact with Lowell Lyon about a role for the DAS at the convention in Casper. Lisa volunteered for the Vendor Committee, which is likely be the role that DAS takes. Several board members are interested in attending the planning meeting scheduled for mid-August at the venue property in Casper.

New Business

Family Memberships: The board decided not to pursue the issue of family memberships.

Outreach Coordinator: Lisa has already begun work on the Job Jar. It will be included in the August Observer and brought up at membership meetings. This position will be included. Dena volunteered to collect information about Castlewood Canyon State Park's monthly astronomy night.

Quartermaster: A discussion about including the Quartermaster position(s) in the Job Jar ensued. Dan agreed to ask Chuck Carlson about his desires, as he had taken the position of Loaner Scope Program coordinator. The board does not wish to have the quartermaster position be advertised without Chuck's foreknowledge and blessing. Lisa will start a list of possible volunteers for the position.

The next e-board meeting will be held on Friday July 26, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made and passed.