

Denver Astronomical Society
Minutes of March 13, 2015 E-Board Meeting

Officers Present: Ron Hranac - President, Stuart Hutchins - Vice President, Jeff Tropeano - Secretary

Board Members Present: Ken Sturrock, Joe Gafford, Johnny O. Barela, Dan Wray, Sorin, Ron Pearson, Chuck Habenicht, Jack Eastman

Observatory Representative: Ron Mickle

Absent: Ed Scholes, Luis Uribe

Other Members and Guests: Hugh Davidson - Public Night Coordinator, Eileen Barela, Dennis Cochran

The meeting was called to order with a quorum present at 7:30 PM.

Honoring the Outgoing Board and Officers: Ron Hranac honored the outgoing board members and officers. Lisa Judd, Digby Kirby, Dena McClung, and Luis Uribe have served as members of the previous board and officership. Ron also welcomed the new board members: Johnny O. Barela, and Ken Sturrock.

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

DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory Business: Ron Mickle presented Chamberlin Observatory business as described following.

A list of names was provided to Ron Hranac of callers who left messages on the Chamberlin Observatory voicemail line. Ron Hranac will deliver to Hugh Davidson for follow-up. Some of the messages were from Public Night attendees requesting a refund or reschedule for missed public nights. It was suggested by Ron Mickle that the e-Board resolve the outstanding question of issuing related to pre-paid public night customers.

Ron Mickle would like to remind telescope operators to provide SQM readings and enter the results into the logbook.

It was also reminded that only DU students and faculty be given free admission to Public Nights, **not** students of other schools, or DU alumni. A DU student ID card should be provided to confirm status and free admission. Ron Pearson suggested that this policy be clearly written on the Denver Astronomical Society website.

Treasurer's Report and Treasurer Vacancy: Luis Uribe was not present for the meeting, and informed the e-Board that the Treasurers report will be delivered at the next meeting. Jack Eastman asked for confirmation if his check for the banquet was received. Stuart Hutchins will follow up with Luis on its receipt.

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer – Open: Ron Hranac mentioned the vacancy of the Treasurer position at the spring banquet, and has a concern that its vacancy could jeopardize the legal 501(3)(c) status of the organization. The vacancy has been mentioned at Olin Hall, the Spring Banquet, the DAS Listserv, and in an upcoming article in The Denver Observer newsletter. Ron Hranac will coordinate with Darrell Dodge for another Constant Contact mailing regarding the vacancy. It will also be posted on Social Media sites by Jeff Tropeano. Stuart Hutchins and Jack Eastman expressed concern of advertising the vacancy on public sites like Social Media and the Denver Astronomical Society website, but it was agreed that the vacancy should be posted to help fill the position.

Luis Uribe sent a list of Treasurer duties and activities to the e-Board listserv, categorized by the skillsets required to perform the duties. Dena McClung will continue to take deposits, check the post office box, and maintain the membership roster. Ron Hranac suggested that we simplify the Treasurer position by removing the responsibility of organizing the magazine subscription discounts, possibly by asking members to call magazines themselves, or posting the instructions on the Denver Astronomical Society website. Ron Hranac believes there are approximately 40 members that take advantage of the magazine discount membership benefit. Ron Pearson confirmed that Sky & Telescope could support the process of members processing their discount on their own. Astronomy magazine is still in question, and Dan Wray believes that Astronomy magazine **does** require the club's confirmation for a discount.

Ron Hranac reminded the group that Luis Uribe has agreed to continue the duties until a new treasurer is found. Luis Uribe will need to provide clarification if he would like to continue serving as treasurer if he has bookkeeping support, or if he would prefer to be the bookkeeper for the treasurer.

DAS spring banquet recap: Stuart Hutchins provided a recap of the Spring Banquet as described following:

The spring banquet was easier to organize than the holiday party. The Embassy Suites in DTC was easier to work with than the previous location. There were 60 ordered meals, and 2 were comp'd by the club (for Roger Clark and his wife). 57 was the minimum number of ordered meals to cover the minimum. The banquet normally gets 60-70 attendees, so this banquet was a bit lighter than others. It was mentioned that the bar was a bit expensive. Ron Hranac has mailed the plaques for those who were not in attendance to receive them, except for the Bill Ormsby award David Shouldice, which he will deliver when David Shouldice return from his cruise. Stuart Hutchins offered to provide a written report to the e-Board listserv.

VNH Committee: Ron Pearson raised on the listserv that the transfer of the 2014 and early 2015 donations must be transferred to the VNH account, and that has not yet been done. Luis Uribe must complete this account transfer, and it will likely be done this weekend with Luis processes the financial transactions outstanding. Ron Hranac and Stuart Hutchins confirmed that VNH donations have been made, but these donations have not yet been transferred into the VNH fund.

Public Night Reservations, fees: Ron Hranac read the online update from Hugh Davidson with outstanding questions on the reservation system (included below in “Online Updates”). The reservation currently states that Denver Astronomical Society will not provide any refunds. A discussion about the Public Night refund policy is described below:

Stuart Hutchins mentioned that most organizations allow a reschedule if the change is made within a certain time allowance, such as 24 hours, and suggested that the DAS follow a similar policy. Sorin recommended that if someone cancels prior to the event, the Denver Astronomical Society should provide a refund of his or her pre-payment. Hugh reminded the group that The Public Night teams recommended and agreed upon the “no refunds” policy that is in place today. Ron Hranac suggested that we retain a policy of no refunds (unless cancelled by Denver Astronomical Society), and to allow a reschedule instead of a refund of payment.

Ron Hranac and Stuart Hutchins confirmed that reminder e-mails are not being sent to those who have made a reservation, and that Scott Leach is waiting for approval to do this task. The e-Board approved Scott’s request for approval for sending e-mail reminders.

Ron Pearson, Jack Eastman and Sorin feel strongly that refunds are appropriate for cancellations. Jeff Tropeano will follow up with Scott to provide the approval and designs necessary – rescheduling, refunds, and automated e-mails. Stuart Hutchins asked e-Board members if anyone objects to issuing refunds via PayPal if it is technically possible. Johnny O. Barela was the only one to object to issuing refunds via Paypal.

Technical membership: Ron Hranac explained to the group that there is an “Honorary Membership” in the by-laws, but there is not a “Technical Membership” listed in the by-laws. Stuart Hutchins explained that there is a group of people in the membership roster, such as libraries or space organizations, which receive a copy of The Denver Observer, which is where the “Technical Membership” discussion was raised. There is currently no way to provide a Complimentary Membership for those people that the organization believes deserves membership, but are not able to pay. Patti Kurtz received a Complimentary Membership while editor of The Observer. Honorary Members cannot vote or serve in a leadership position. **Jack Eastman made a motion to make Patti Kurtz an Honorary Member, and Dan Wray seconded the motion.** Discussion: Ron Pearson and Sorin suggested that the board does not give this Honorary Membership out too lightly, but did not formally object to the motion. Stuart Hutchins believes that Patti deserves Honorary Membership due to her lengthy time as Observer Editor. The motion passed. Sorin suggested that the Membership Roster be updated to use a different term, or a notation be added, clarifying that the people on the list are only provided a complimentary copy of The Denver Observer. Jeff Tropeano will update the file to reflect this.

Budget discussion for FY2015: Ron Hranac asked the e-Board to review the 2015 DAS Proposed Budget, as well as the DAS Programmatic Based Budget Proposal provided by Ron Pearson (attached in Appendix A). Ron Pearson elaborated on the plan as described following. The budget should be categorized in such a way that it is possible to easily track which functions and programs bring in revenue, and which functions and programs cost money. Seven functions and programs are listed on the DAS Programmatic Based Budget Proposal. Unrestricted and restricted fund category details are listed on the document as well. Each category’s revenue and cost should be accounted for separately

to be able to identify the income or loss of each function and program. The overall consensus is positive for this approach. As an example, the donation provided to DU last year would be accounted for in the Chamberlin Public Night category. Stuart Hutchins mentioned that to offset the donation, Denver Astronomical Society raised the fees, and questioned if this recuperation is being accounted for. After recuperation of the General Fund, the Denver Astronomical Society should continue to account the additional revenue to fund Public Outreach programs. Stuart Hutchins mentioned that having a budget means that accounting categories need to match the budget categories, and the existing categories may not match up. Ron Pearson suggested to Luis Uribe that it would be possible to organize the existing categories into the categories provided in the DAS Programmatic Based Budget Proposal. The 2015 DAS Proposed Budget sheet seems to have income and expenses missing, based on the fact that the computation on the budget sheet does not add. The e-Board agrees that the DAS Programmatic Based Budget Proposal is a good idea. **A motion was presented by Stuart Hutchins to adopt the DAS Programmatic Based Budget (seconded by Jack Eastman).** Discussion: Chuck Habenicht mentioned that the process must be flexible and open to modification, and everyone agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Miscellaneous: Ron Hranac passed around a Thank You card provided by students from East High School, as well as a Thank You card from St. Mary's academy.

Bernd Christensen sent an update (attached below in "Online Updates") regarding The Denver Observer that was read by Ron Hranac. The following items will be added to the Job Jar: The Treasurer position, the permanent editor position, and a person to assist AstroCon with their upcoming event in 2017. Lisa Judd is still assisting AstroCon on behalf of Denver Astronomical Society, and that additional assistance in the form of a committee could be helpful.

Dennis Cochran asked for clarification on Open House donations. The money collected during Open House is put into the DU cash box, which means that the donations are received by DU on behalf of Chamberlin Observatory.

The new procedure for handling cash for Public Nights was discussed. There is a sign in and sign out sheet in the cash box, and keys are accounted for. The new process was delivered and trained by Dena to Public Night cash box key holders.

Stuart Hutchins asked for clarification on Complimentary Memberships. For Complimentary Memberships, it was discussed that it may require a modification of the by-laws. Dan Wray suggested that Complimentary Memberships be approved by a vote of the e-Board, to keep it simple. Jeff Tropeano mentioned that Complimentary Memberships through e-Board vote runs the risk of being distributed too loosely. A concern was raised about liability insurance, specifically about having non-members represent the Denver Astronomical Society at public outreach events. For example, Eileen Barela works hard at Denver Astronomical Society events, but is technically not a member. Dan Wray suggested that the group consider Family Memberships to solve this issue, and Stuart Hutchins suggested making this change by altering the by-laws. Ron Hranac read Article VIII Section 1, Second 2, and Section 3 of the by-laws, describing the process by which the by-laws can be changed, which is

reprinted below.

ARTICLE VIII Amendments

- Section 1.0 The Bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote of the Executive Board at a meeting regularly called. Notice of amendments must be sent to each member of the Executive Board at his or her last known address at least fifteen (15) days before the meeting. The Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws may also be amended by a majority vote of more than fifty (50) percent of the membership of the Society by written ballot sent to each member at his or her last known address.*
- Section 2.0 Amendments to the bylaws may be proposed by an Executive Board member or by a petition signed by at least twenty-five (25) members of the Society and submitted to the Executive Board. In the event the members submit a petition, the Executive Board shall be required to submit the amendments to the membership for a vote, if the petition so demands.*
- Section 3.0 Amendments to the Article of Incorporation shall be made as follows: The Board of Trustees shall adopt a resolution setting forth the proposed amendment and directing that it be submitted to a vote at a meeting of members entitled to vote. The meeting may be either a Special meeting or a General meeting. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the members as described above whenever at least one- twentieth of the members entitled to vote thereon so request. A written notice setting forth the proposed amendment, or a summary of the changes to be effected thereby, shall be given to each member entitled to vote at such meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be given, as provided by law in the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws for notice of membership meetings. The proposed amendment shall be adopted upon receiving at least two-thirds (2/3) of the votes which members present at such meeting are entitled to cast.*

After the by-laws were read, no further action was taken.

Advertising in *The Denver Observer*: Patti Kurtz told Ron Hranac that she would be willing to be the editor of *The Denver Observer* if she could run advertising in the newsletter. *The Denver Observer* is a Denver Astronomical Society asset, and any revenue from advertising would be Denver Astronomical Society revenue. It is possible to use that advertising revenue to fund the editor's role. Ron Mickle questioned that the Denver Astronomical Society 501(c)(3) status could be in jeopardy generating revenue through advertising. Ron Hranac does not think advertising revenue would jeopardize the Denver Astronomical Society's 501(c)(3) status, since other 501(c)(3) organizations have advertising, such as *The Reflector*, or other organizations. Sorin reminded that group that the Denver Astronomical Society, in a previous meeting, decided that the Denver Astronomical Society, as a volunteer organization, would not pay for the newsletter editor position, and that advertising for the purposes of funding the position conflicts with this decision. Dennis Cochran believes that getting Patti to continue to be the editor the newsletter would be a positive move. In order to be legal with the IRS, the advertising revenue and editor compensation would need to be accounted for properly, which may be difficult. Stuart Hutchins and Dan Wray do not think that many organizations would

advertise in the newsletter. The consensus of the e-Board is to not pursue this request, and to continue the search for a new editor for The Denver Observer.

Next E-board Meeting: The next e-board meeting will be held on Friday, April 10 at 7:30 p.m. at DU's historic Chamberlin Observatory.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made and passed at 9:34 PM.

MOTIONS

- A motion to make Patti Kurtz an Honorary Member was made by Jack Eastman, and seconded by Dan Wray. **The motion passed**
 - A motion to adopt the DAS Programmatic Based Budget (attached in Appendix A) was made by Stuart Hutchins, and seconded by Jack Eastman. **The motion passed unanimously**
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SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

The follow Action Items are indicated in the meeting minute with underlined text, and are aggregated below:

- Ron Hranac will deliver voicemail follow-up list to Hugh Davidson.
 - Stuart Hutchins will follow up with Luis on the receipt of Jack Eastman's banquet check.
 - Ron Hranac will coordinate with Darrell Dodge another Constant Contact mailing regarding the treasurer vacancy.
 - The treasurer vacancy is to be posted on Social Media sites by Jeff Tropeano.
 - Stuart Hutchins will provide a written report of the Spring Banquet to the e-Board listserv.
 - Luis Uribe to complete the VNH donations account transfer.
 - Jeff Tropeano will follow up with Scott Leach to provide the approval and designs necessary to facilitate rescheduling, refunds, and automated e-mails related to the reservation and pre-payment system.
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ONLINE UPDATES

Subject: Public Night refunds

Reported by: Hugh Davidson

Report: There is continuing debate about the appropriateness of refunds, in this case when DAS cancels a public night. Scott was thinking, and atleast one of the PN team leads agrees with him, that there should be no refunds under any circumstances. I think that as a practical matter DAS cancellations will not occur frequently.

A couple of related questions have also been asked: what happens when a registrant wants to reduce the number of people or change their night, that is, change their reservation? How does the system handle that?

The intent of pre-pay was to address no-shows. Should changes to reservations prior to the public night event also be subject to no refunds?

E-Board action: none specifically but discussion is the point. Do we affirm that refunds should be given for DAS cancellations as was originally proposed? Assuming refunds for DAS cancellations are in order what will be the mechanism for doing so. Can the reservation system accommodate changes someone may want to make to their reservation? Changes to a reservation may exact a de facto penalty we don't intend – do we want this?

If pre-pay proves to be more onerous than the problem we are attempting to address perhaps we should consider dropping pre-pay.

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Subject: Yahoo Group Listserves

Reported by: Greg Marino9

Report: We had 3 new members join in the last month for a total of 179 members on the main Denverastro listserve as of 3/9/2015. New board members and support staff have been added to the E-Board listserve.

E-Board Action: None required

Thanks, Greg

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Subject: Quartermasters Report

Reported by: Ed Scholes

Report: No scopes are on loan at this time. No board action is required. Because of a scheduling conflict, I will be unable to make the meeting this week. I would like to add my thanks to all who helped make the Spring Banquet one of the best! It was great fun.

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Subject: VanNatten Hansen (VNH) Scholarship Fund

Reported by: Ron Pearson

Nothing new since my email update to e-board and others on 2/25/15. Am still waiting on transfer of all 2014 and early 2015 donations to VNH Fund from past DAS Treasurer, Luis Uribe. Will be setting up a meeting with potential new and committee members in near future.

Board action req'd: past Treasurer needs to send a check for deposit in VNH account per discussions.

Subject: Social Media

Reported by: Jeff Tropeano

Report: *Quiet on the Social Media front recently. Facebook: 844 followers, Twitter: 220 followers.*

The last YouTube video uploaded to the DAS channel was Tristan Wolfe’s Polarimetry video. I have Jeff Bennett’s video, but need his slides and permission to post the video. Roger Clark’s presentation was recorded, and I have the footage, but Stewart was not able to obtain permission from Roger to post his material.

E-Board Action: *None required*

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Subject: Denver Observer Newsletter

Reported by: Bernd Christensen

Report: *I was able to finish the October to March issue of the Denver Observer and Darrell got it published on the website. 6 pages. However, I was not able to get it printed in time, because of e-mail issues to the printer from Europe. I am sorry for that. I will need help (local coordination) for the next issue, as I will be travelling again towards the end of the month.*

For the April issue, I already have the "April Skies" from Dennis and a "Fellow Observer" about me from Dena.

I would like to propose a report from the Spring banquet, maybe in the "President's message", and possibly 2 "Job Jars", one for the treasurer (updated job description) and one for the editor. The intent would be to advertise for both positions.

In addition, I will look for a NASA or ESO article on a recent space science topic.

My return date to Germany got more precise, I will leave by end of May, so the JUNE issue will be the last I can manage myself.

E-Board action: *OK with proposed articles?*

Proposals for photos incl descriptions?

Proposals/ volunteers for further articles?

Could Luis give a few lines for the treasurer job jar?

Is there a volunteer to coordinate with the printer for the April issue?

Restart the search for a Newsletter editor!

APPENDIX A – DAS PROGRAMMATIC BASED BUDGET PROPOSAL

Tuesday, February 17, 2015

DAS Programmatic Based Budget Proposal

Per discussions at last e-board re Budgeting and accounting, here is a proposed outline budgeting and accounting for DAS functions by program. Ron #1

Programmatic Based Budgeting & Accounting:

DAS Programs: (Income & Expenses put into 7 Programs)

Unrestricted Programs; Expenses paid from Member Dues or Program Income:

1. Chamberlin Public Night/Open House: PN income + OH income - PN Expenses (Payments to DU, Equip/Software, Paypal, Reserv.com subscrip, purchases) = Net
2. Member Events: Income=(prmts from members) - Expenses (venue costs, speaker costs, equipment, Paypal and misc. costs)

Holiday Party				= Net
Summer Picnic	"	"	"	= Net
Annual Banquet	"	"	"	
Any New Events e.g. Star Party, Special Astro' Events etc.	"	"	"	= Net
Monthly Meetings	"	"	"	= Net
3. DAS Communication: Newsletter costs: printing, postage, misc., + Internet social media costs; domain names, DSL & software subscriptions. = (Net expense)
4. DAS Operation: **Physical Assets, DSS Expenses, *Accounting, Banking Fees and assc. costs, + "office supplies" + Insurance Policy + Society Memberships (A.L./ ATS/ IDA etc.) = (Net expense)
5. DAS (External) Outreach: Income=Donations from Orgs for DAS Participation., - Expenses= banners, program materials, fees for attendance, misc. = Net

Annual Program Budget: **\$\$ Membership Dues** = Income from all Members Dues - All Net from Programs 1 though 5 = Annual Net Program Operating Budget (Surplus or Loss)

Restricted Funds/Programs: (Donations and Fund are restricted by IRS rules and cannot be used for other DAS purposes, therefore not in Annual Budget.)

6. Dark Sky Site: Dark Site Fund Earnings + Restricted Donations + Inc. from Gen'l Fund - Dark Site Operation Expenses; Lease, Electric, Up-Keep & Maintenance (mowing etc.)

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