

Denver Astronomical Society
Minutes of June 24, 2016 E-Board Meeting

Officers Present: Ron Hranac – President,

Board Members Present: Joe Gafford, Dan Wray, Lindsey Shaw, Ed Scholes, Chuck Habenicht, Johnny Barela

Observatory Representative: None

Absent: Ron Pearson, Michael Nowak, Stuart Hutchins, Jeff Tropeano, Jack Eastman,

Members and Guests: Ivan Geisler, Mark Palmer, Hugh Davidson, Zach Singer, Eileen Barela, Brad Gillman, Ken Sturrock,

The meeting was called to order with a quorum present at 19:30.

The Previous Meeting's Minutes were read, amended, and approved. There are some corrections: Lindsey's name. Mike Nowak was actually present and change “be” to “is” second line from top.

New Agenda Items:

Item 7.5) Email from Lisa Judd Regarding Astrocon and solar eclipse

DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory Business:

Nobody from DU was present, Dr. Stencil sent three points by email: Happy that we have three new telescope operators (Joe, Ryan, Dave). Previewed 2017 Calendar and approved. Stencil expressed hope that we would continue to maintain AL membership.

Treasurer's Report:

Ron presented Treasurer's Report. Report was uploaded to Yahoo site by Mike Nowak.

Club Jackets: Ron requested a motion to formalize paying for the club jackets (organized by Dan Wray). It was approved.

Astronomy League Membership: Ron H. explained the Astronomy League membership for the benefit of new board members. It costs \$5 per member and has been considered worthwhile by most board members as well as the general member survey.

OLD BUSINESS

Ron asked for a motion by the board to authorize Mike to pay AL dues. The motion was approved

Space Day Followup: The day held little in the way of white light viewing, Ha was successful. Naomi sent a letter thanking DAS and mentioned that 7600+ guests participated in Museum events. Estimates were that a few hundred people made it to the 4th floor to look through DAS member telescopes. Umbrellas provided useful shade for volunteers and guests. Eileen said that her information table had over 300 visitors and that they handed out a lot of materials.

Open Positions:

The Vice President position is still open, and no volunteers have come forward. Efforts are underway to redefine the VP position to handle meeting speakers and, as needed, fill in for the president at meetings.

Discussion about the need to start planning for the end-of-year event starting in July.

Summer Picnic: Saturday, July 9 16:00 – just before open house. Lindsey and Greg are working this issue. Food vendor is still to be determined. Members will be reminded to bring a side dish.

July 15 meeting: Still need a speaker. Greg's originally proposed presentation fell through due to a family commitment. Roger Clark? Pluto investigation team in Boulder? Museum staff from “The Fort”?

NEW BUSINESS

5280 Magazine – Looking for advice about where to observe the Perseid Meteor Shower. After that, Cali Summer(spelling?) contacted Ron about fact checking for meteor shower article and wanted to know all about the dark site details. Reporter suggested that maybe the public could just “show up” and park along the road at the dark site. Ron tried to shut down this idea with the reporter. She promised that the dark site location would remain undisclosed.

2017 Calendar – Joe said that the 2017 calendar is just about done. It has been uploaded to the eboard yahoo site.

Loaner Equipment Program Mount – Ed brought up a proposal for a new GoTo (such as a small iOptron GEM & case - ~\$600) mount for the 5” Celestron CST in lieu of the old/small manual GEM that we currently have. He proposed that the same mount could be used for the solar telescope. He also proposed the possibility of a Celestron VX GEM (~\$800) that could be used to mount the 7” TEC Maksutov.

Grumpy also mentioned the idea of an iOptron cube alt-az instead of a GEM.

Dan Wray mentioned a possible line-item in budget for “public night” expenditures which may be useable for this kind of purchase.

OPT agreed to give us a 2% discount and free shipping on a mount.

Other than Grumpy's philosophical objection to a Beginner using GoTo, no board members had objections to the idea. Ed pointed out that we still had manual Dobsonians.

Ed agreed to further research the mount options.

Potential 14” Meade Donation & other DAS telescopes – Discussion ensued about the storage and disposition of the potential donation. Grumpy agreed to store the telescope until it could be sold to benefit the scholarship fund. Brad discussed need to inform IRS concerning value and disposition if donation is \$5k+ and not held for three years or more. Ron mentioned that if the funds were to be used for a charity, the rules were different. Ron also said that it was considered a conflict of interest for DAS to value the telescope for donation purposes.

Johnny mentioned the need to store other donations (including the 16” Dobsonian at Dennis' house) that have been made in the past. Chuck and Dan said that it was becoming critical to secure on-site storage at the Dark Sky Site.

Ron asked Grumpy to re-investigate the idea of a shipping container for the Dark Sky Site. Dan and Grumpy discussed various options for supporting and securing a large container at the site. Ron acknowledged that it was important for DAS to consolidate its “stuff” in one place and asked Grumpy to investigate options.

Dan discussed the idea that we could put another open-air pier out at the site so that we could setup a smaller telescope such as the 11” SCT that Ron Pearson had been storing, but is now at Chamberlin (mount at Dark Site).

Ivan brought up the status of conditions placed upon us for use at the Dark Sky Site. Dan replied that we simply needed to return it to its original state.

New Astronomer Pipeline – Leo Sack proposed a concept to recruit and mentor new amateur astronomers to cultivate the next generation. The following programs were proposed: Public – Beginners' star gazes (visitors would learn to operate Dobsonian Telescopes), members – telescope loaners (increase use of existing loaner telescopes as a possible outgrowth of the star gaze), members – learners' group / mentor ship (could be meetups or mentor programs). Leo has volunteered to lead/organize the effort so long as people (such as the quartermaster, Digby, etc...) are willing to support him. Dan mentioned that if we loan out our Dobsonians then they wouldn't be available for the teaching sessions.

The board concurred that this was a good idea. Ron mentioned that we need to brief Leo Sacks on the current status of our loaner program since Leo is new to the DAS. Lindsey suggested that Leo might be an excellent candidate for the vacant vice president position.

Astrocon 2017 Volunteers Needed - Lisa Judd sent Ron an email about Astrocon (AL's annual convention to be held during 2017 in Casper, WY). Lisa would like to solicit volunteers for the event (either as individuals or as DAS). A number of workshops have been proposed but each workshop needs coordinators. Need volunteers for the visitor's booth. Need document/brochure preparers. Lisa warned that cheap hotels were filling up fast – probably limited to 700 attendees at Alcon with about 500 spots already reserved.

The board expressed agreement that we should agree to solicit the membership for volunteers.

Eclipse Atlas – Ivan showed a specialized atlas that depicts the path of the 2017 eclipse and told a story about a 1970s eclipse with an AL convention in Perry, Florida which was clouded out. Ron regaled us with an eclipse spotting trip in Libya. Ivan countered with a story of an eclipse in the 1980s seen from the Black Sea. Grumpy and Ron mentioned that a similar atlas information was available online from different sources.

Mirror Blank Donation - A work colleague of Lindsey donated several mirror blanks for the mirror grinding workshop. Ron followed up with an offer from some sort of “nature organization” to donate some old telescopes for cleaning/refurbishment by Mark's mirror grinding group.

Next E-board Meeting: Friday, July 22 at 7:30 p.m. at Chamberlin Observatory.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed at 21:00.

MOTIONS

- Ron requested a motion to formalize paying for the club jackets (organized by Dan Wray). It was approved.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

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

- Hugh to send an email to all of the public night members.
- Michael will take a look at current interest rates on CDs to determine if transferring the funds into a CD or an online savings account would be preferred.
- Jeff needs to send VNH letters.
- Digby should reach out to Zach about the next “learn to use your telescope” talk that he’ll do.
- Eileen will find out if DMNS is planning another women’s STEM group that DAS could participate in, perhaps asking Naomi.
- Ron should follow up with Stuart to determine if there is a shortage of future speakers.
- Jeff will send Michael last year’s budget documents for review.

PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

- Michael will look into POS systems to do this, perhaps including Zozi, or Square.

- Ken will install skype on the presentation machine in preparation to test it an Olin overflow plan.

ONLINE UPDATES

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Subject: Membership Report

Reported by: Dena McClung

Report:

As of Thursday evening, June 23, the DAS has 372 members. There are 336 regular members, 24 student members, and 12 honorary members.

E-Board action: *None.*

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Subject: Public Outreach

Reported by: July

Report:

Subject: July 2016 Outreach Events:

Reported by: Julie Candia

Report:

July 12th (Tuesday), 8:00 PM: Star Party and astronomy lecture for members and their children, The Club at Pradera golf course, Parker, CO (charge of \$150)

July 15th (Friday), 8:00 PM: Moonlight Extravaganza and Science Night, Philip S. Miller Park, Castle Rock, CO

July 25th (Monday), 8:00 PM: Troop 506 (Arvada), Boy Scout Merit Badge, Camp at Easter Seals Facility, Empire, CO

No events scheduled for August yet

E-Board action: *None.*

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Subject: Quartermaster's Report

Reported by: Ed Scholes

Report:

I would like to consider the purchase of a simple go to mount that we could use with the C5 scope. The mount we have is awkward and difficult for beginners to use. I think a easy to use go-to mount would go a long way to get a beginner excited about astronomy. We could use the same mount for the PST and if we were to get one with a little more weight capacity, we could also use it for the 7' Mak. I've looked at a few, but would love input from anyone who knows about the new mounts that are currently available. Thanks.

Board action required.

Two scopes on loan right now and one to go out on Tuesday.

E-Board action: *None.*

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**Treasurer Report for May
2016**

**Standing Accounts May 31
2016**

1st Bank Accounts and Investment Fund

Type of Account	Ref No	Amount
General Fund Checking	X9663	\$38,467.25
Dark Site Checking	X1049	\$3,276.02
Premier Time Savings	X9213	\$10,567.34
Time Deposit Savings	X3552	\$5,180.16
Total		<u>\$57,490.77</u>

Deposits

Total

General Fund Checking Acct X9663

Deposits from mail, Open Houses, Public Nights, Zozi	\$2,691.57
Transfers from Paypal	<u>\$1,500.00</u>

TOTAL

\$4,191.57

PayPal

Transactions in May 2016	Number	Fee	Total
Regular Memberships	8	Renewals	\$288.00
Student Memberships	1	Renewals	\$12.00
Donations to VNH			\$50.00
Donations to Dark Site			\$0.00
Donations to General Fund			\$0.00
Balance of Reservations Paypal at May 31			\$2,254.16

Balance of Treasurer Paypal at May 31

\$144.88

Total Paypal Funds at May 31

\$2,399.04

Mail (May & June)	Number	Fee	Total
Mail-In Membership	0	Renewal & Reg	\$0.00
Mail-In Student Membership	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Donations to General Fund			\$0.00
Total			\$0.00

Public Night & Open House (May & June)	Number	Fee	Total
Public Night Guests	0	Various	\$0.00
Open House Guests	0	Various	\$0.00
Total Entry	0		\$0.00
Donations at Open House/Public Night	0	0	\$0.00
Total			\$0.00

Payments	Description	Amount
Signal Graphics	Newsletter Printing	\$130.00
Jeff Tropeano	VNH Mailbox	\$48.00
Signal Graphics	Newsletter Printing	\$130.00
Dena McClung	Newsletter Mailing	\$18.80
		\$326.80