



Denver Astronomical Society

Minutes of September 28 2018 E-Board Meeting

Officers Present:

- Ron Hranac – President
- Scott Perrin - Treasurer

E-Board Trustees Present:

- July Candia
- Jack Eastman
- Joe Gafford
- Dena McClung
- Ed Scholes
- Sorin
- Chris Ubing
- Dan Wray

Observatory Representative:

- Dr. Bob Stencil (Absent)

Members and Guests:

- Ivan Geisler
- Darrell Dodge
- Eileen and Johnny Barela
- Hugh Davidson
- Lisa Judd
- Zach Singer

Excused Absent:

- Lindsey Shaw – Vice President
- Ed Ladner – Secretary

Absent:

- Chris Ubing

MINUTES:

1. Call to Order at 7:30p.
2. Roll Call
 - 2.1. Certify a quorum (Seven (7) E-Board officers/Members shall constitute a quorum).
 - 2.1.1. Certified quorum of seven (7) board members.

3. Review and approve the previous E-Board meeting minutes: Defer to next meeting (Ed on business trip).

 4. Additions to agenda
 - 4.1. Minutes and impact of our activities EGK meeting in mid-August (Item 7.4)
 - 4.2. Movie tickets (need to find out how many are ready to provide) (Item 7.5)

 5. Chamberlin business and DAS Treasurer's report
 - 5.1. Report from Dr. Bob
 - 5.1.1. Condition Green: The telescope, dome and bldg are working well so programs may continue.
 - 5.1.1.1. Greg Moreno has recommended some Dome Drive upgrades (to be appended below) - May involve some downtime. May be able to do work after Winter.
 - 5.1.1.2. Schedule notes: Member Inreach is scheduled for Saturday, Sept 29 and requested for October 20th.
 - 5.1.1.3. DAS assumes responsibility for safe operation of the Observatory, according to the usual rules for keyholders, scope operators and park use. Glad we have gotten cooperation from the city parks dept but still need to observe the vehicle limitations imposed
 - 5.1.1.4. Halloween! Auction and street parking at Chamberlin might be affected by a kiddie costume. Similarly, Tuesday October 30 may see unauthorized trick or treat activities in and around the park. Be advised.
 - 5.1.1.5. I welcome feedback Will be available for discussions at DU's historic Chamberlin .Observatory open house on October 13th.
 - 5.1.1.6. Thank you for your roles in astronomy outreach and light pollution solutions in and around Metro Denver.
 - 5.1.1.6.1.1. After sending first email stating Condition Green, found log book covered in messages: Dome Stuck. Help. Zero reports were called in. Protocol demands notification be made by all operators.
 - 5.1.1.7. Inspection reveals the leather belt to be overly stretched and beyond what current tensioners can accommodate: 2 Options:
 - Chop the angle iron, preventing expansion of the tensioner belt, augmented, and restretch the existing belt
 - Obtain a replacement leather belt of suitable dimensions and replace the worn belt (order being pursued as a back up)
 - Get serious about the suggestions from Greg Moreno (seen below)
 - Schedule does not allow much time until Tuesday morning to deal with this.
 - Comments? Dome may be out of commission until this has been fixed
 - 5.1.1.7.1.1. Temp related? Recent cold weather. Has been able to be fixed.
 - Might look at belt after meeting
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- 5.2. DAS Treasurer's Report

- 5.2.1. Treasurer's financial report for 3 months, see attached. Numbers speak for themselves.
- 5.2.2. Two statements include our activity by months, instead of last three months. Working in this format, making sure the costs go in the right buckets.
- 5.2.3. From an overall standpoint, going well. About \$9,200 cash ahead of where we were last year. Increase in last 9 months. Revenue approx \$1000 a month
- 5.2.4. We were going to put some of this cash into interest bearing accounts based on treasurer's discretion and the 3 month and 6 month CDs come due on the 22nd of October, looking to take about \$30,000. Treasurer recommends putting \$20K into a three month and \$10K into a six month CD and catch some direct interest rates. Will still leave \$26,000 cash until the CD's come through.
- 5.2.5. Now tracking the ins and outs of the scholarship fund. We reported this the last time, but we are going to show those as restricted assets available to the scholarship committee.
- 5.2.6. Status of the investment fund which was working for a while, couple years at least. Paperwork has been submitted to change the names, that got done on Monday of this week. The names of the signatory change should be this week (Was 6.6)
 - 5.2.6.1. Comment: Statement of financial position under assets. 1003 or 1005, but roughly \$10,000 is the amount the board decided a few years ago to set aside as a financial reserve. As determined after last financial crash, being a member of an astronomy club is definitely a discretionary thing. We want to have funds available if revenue does go down to cover basic spending. Question: Do you think that is enough?
 - "I think that should cover it, really. It's unlikely the revenue would go to zero." \$10,000 in a 6 month CD" Discussion about reserve funds set aside, due to be renewed in March. \$30K to be invested October 7th. Discussed treasurer's process, states will always have an up to date reference. Dates are self explanatory.
 - 5.2.6.1.1.1. Question on revenue breakdown: Do we need another line item here for contributions to the scholarship fund?
 - 5.2.6.1.1.1.1.1. Those are here. The answer is yes. Expenditures to catch up with scholarship fund. Is under restricted assets. Issue with we didn't have that account & weren't able to get that finish
 - 5.2.6.1.1.1.1.2. We need a restricted contributions fund.
 - 5.2.6.1.1.1.1.2.1. Louis only charged us \$140 for a large amount of work. Want to continue using Louis, pretty helpful.
 - 5.2.6.1.1.1.1.2.2. Thanks, Scott!

6. Old Business

- 6.1. Membership management software/services (Sorin) Review and vote on go live plan
 - 6.1.1. Everyone on the E-Board was invited to test software. We will walk through what the committee has done.
 - 6.1.2. Committee started in February of 2018.
 - 6.1.3. Where we were
 - 6.1.3.1. Dealing with a lot of data spread out between a lot of people with potential for a lot of human error between the different systems and a lot of volunteer hours required

to manage the membership and the organization: Over 500 hours performed by generous volunteers, which would cost into the thousands of dollars.

What we promised:

6.1.3.1.1.1. prevent burnout, reduce errors, and simplify the lives of everyone involved, including our members. Committee was put together to come up with a solution

What we delivered:

In April 2018, Approval process - looked at processes being done by volunteers, how long they took and what requirements we would have for a software package that we selected to alleviate burden. Looked in depth at three software packages and a cursory view of 6.

In June, settled on Wild Apricot platform and set up a test account & tested limitations, how it would work for us, etc. Favorable opinion of that platform. All of board was invited into the test environment of what will become the final membership portal.

We are ready to move forward and are looking for E-Board approval

6.1.4. Walk through our recommended solution, which is Wild Apricot

6.1.4.1. Wild Apricot is a cloud hosted solution, fully supported by that company, they have been in business over 15 years. Supporting thousands of non-profit orgs through the platform. Tailored for the needs of a non-profit organization. Complete system for maintaining the membership rosters and records. Is a self service platform so members may update their own profile. Supports automatic renewals and automatic renewal reminders - saving ppl time over the holidays.

Also allows us to get away from January "bump" and we will see revenue throughout the year. Prorating will no longer be necessary. Integration with quickbooks and PayPal. Not ideal, but good enough per Treasurer. Plug ins for wordpress. Does not replace DAS webpage, but plugs into it.

User forms and email capabilities (will replace constant contact). Can also serve as an alternative to the admin groups through the forum systems.

6.1.4.1.1.1. Clarification: When do we terminate the Yahoo groups? Yahoo does not really support those anymore. Wild Apricot has these forums that can serve this purpose for us without having to manage another 3rd party system and third party system.

Members can set their own level of privacy.

Limitations: Forums are basic. It's not Cloudy Nights, it will never be. But we believe it will be sufficient for our organization.

no bulk import of events and calendars. Interim will continue using the calendar system on the DAS website. Intent with Connor's help to

develop a script to integrate to import events in a more automated fashion & integrate into the Wild Apricot system

WA has a mobile app, limited. Website very mobile responsive. Works on phones, devices, tablets. App doesn't expose the forums.

WA does not replace the DAS public website. Member supplement -

Provides the private part of membership management and the

management of membership interaction. The DAS website will remain

the public face of DAS, with integrations between the

6.1.4.2. Cost: WA has various pricing tiers based on the number of member. Previous tier to the 2000 members is 500 members, which we have surpassed this year. Cost would be \$160 a month, discounts for paying ahead for 1-2 year agreements.

6.1.4.2.1. We can realize some savings from what we pay to Constant Contact and eventually to Peek Pro. Pricing is extremely competitive and the system is built for 501c3s.

6.1.4.2.2. Other software platforms were more expensive and harder to manage.

6.1.4.3. Next steps and approvals: We have done the testing, we have done the groundwork and we are ready to take this ad-hoc committee and change to standing committee with ongoing responsibility for updating and maintaining this membership platform, along with related systems.

6.1.4.3.1. Assuming board approves requests, the implementation schedule would actually be communicating this upcoming change to the membership over the next coming weeks and go live October 15th.

6.1.4.3.2. We can quickly import the membership roster. We want to do this for the October so people can learn about system and updating their profiles. And then we'd like to actually have the holiday banquet, which opens for reservations Nov 1, all be done through Wild Apricot.

6.1.4.3.3. Will still check the mail for those who insist on sending a check

6.1.5. Questions & Discussed

6.1.5.1. 2 gb memory limit, how they apply and to whom they apply.

6.1.5.1.1. WA acts at all levels have a 2 gb administrative files limit.

6.1.5.1.1.1. Admin users and standard users

6.1.5.1.1.1.1. Standard users not subject to limit accounts

6.1.5.1.1.1.2. Administrators face limits on what they may upload on that website. Given that we want to migrate off of Yahoo groups for the E-Board and general membership, and that has been the file store for us as well as communication. This committee would be tasked with determining an appropriate alternative solution for long term storage of our digital assets: letterheads, logos, board meeting minutes long term storage.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3. Discount for one year paid in advance is \$16 a month, Discount for 2 years paid in advance is 15%. Especially when we subtract the cost of Constant Contact(\$40 month) and Peek Pro, pending the

events migration piece. That will save another \$40 plus the 5% transaction fee.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.1.1. Net cost long term is half of what we have currently paid, including factoring in early payment discounts

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.2. Outreach forum that members can subscribe to and be a two way communication systems. Must be subscribed.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.3. If July wanted to manage an event online, we could create events, make her a limited administrator of outreach and external. And could manage an event and volunteers online. Can generate an email to the entire membership.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.4. Is there an Eboard forum that is only for Eboard members. Yes.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.5. Can the E-board Test the forum, and use it pretty much exclusively at this point. First, this body has to embrace it.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6. Need to make body of note agree with the subject

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6.1. As moderators and administrators is move those topics in the wrong forum and move them to the correct forum. Moderators will be able to easily go in and correct abuses.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6.2. Admin accounts must be separate from members accounts, because of the 2gb limit

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6.3. Fully searchable member directory, any member can see all the forums and subscribe to those forums.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6.4. Only 6 or 7 members do not have an email address. Those few people can have copies printed.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6.5. In regard to support: one of the things that we are going to have available when the members come on, we will have an FAQ page. Tech support questions should go to the FAQ and if answer is not helpful, can escalate to admin member.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.6.6. For new members, this system is very nice. It's what they expect. Be able to get in and reach resources right away.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.7. When you renew your membership, can it be so that someone can write a check? Yes.

6.1.5.1.1.1.3.8. Question about cost and tiers.

6.1.5.1.1.1.4. Motion to approve and roll out Wild Apricot (All in favor - unanimous- motion carried)

6.1.5.1.1.1.5. Second motion

6.1.5.1.1.1.6. Vote unanimous. Motion carried

6.1.6. Ron will add a note to the President's note on yahoo.

- 6.1.7. Paper states E-board member will represent the committee on the E-board. Have to have the committee head working closely with the whole E-board.
 - 6.1.8. This will require a change to bylaws, not a big deal, will be handled later.
 - 6.1.8.1. Interim Chairman is Dena.
 - 6.2. Denver Parks and Recreation Open House outside activities
 - 6.2.1. September Open House went very well. Parking went very well with very few problems.
 - 6.2.2. Will put rules out for group on Constant Contact.
 - 6.2.3. Dena - Word on letter expected Parks & Rec, no response to VM or Email.
 - 6.2.4. Having a drought in terms of Open House Volunteers. Barely have people to open the dome. Scrounged for ticket taker, need to put out a call for that. Team 7 is very short of volunteers.
 - 6.2.5. Thanks to Darrell, we have a working email: volunteers@denverastro.org - emails go to Hugh.
 - 6.2.5.1. Hugh will be gone the entire month of October. Need 2 scope operators for October Open House. Ticket Taker, Traffic Cop
 - 6.2.5.2. Next note: Public Nights will be starting at 7:30 PM in October
 - 6.3. *The Denver Observer* (survey)
 - 6.3.1. Results of survey (Ed Ladner to talk about survey).
 - 6.3.2. What to do about the newsletter? Large time commitment. Moving to online format will help.
 - 6.3.2.1. Possible to have a forum on WA that submits to newsletter.
 - 6.4. Holiday Party Update (Ed S)
 - 6.4.1. Committed - will start sign up and ticket sales on Nov 1
 - 6.4.2. Waiting on menu selection
 - 6.4.3. Speakers lined up.
 - 6.4.4. Price \$25 per person, DAS will absorb the rest. Drink minimum is always met.
 - 6.5. 2019 Calendar (Joe)
 - 6.5.1. Will start printing in November, so whoever is putting the calendar on the web can pull it of the file
 - 6.6. DAS and third party businesses (Placeholder)
 - 6.6.1. Bonding individuals (or positions) with bank account signing authority
 - 6.6.2. Scott: Not aware of how to get individuals bonded vs getting the position bonded.
 - 6.7. SWOT analysis (Placeholder)
 - 6.8. DAS Shirts
 - 6.9. DAS brochure holders for Chamberlin
 - 6.10. Observatory stickers/cards for kids
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- 7. New Business
 - 7.1. Loaner program membership program requirement (Ed S.)
 - 7.1.1. Currently a member has to be a member for at least 3 months. Require \$100 check be written and will be deposited if item not returned.
 - 7.1.2. "We've lost a lot of scopes over the years." Previous policy was pretty loose.

- 7.1.3. Ed: No scope has been lost since Ed took over. Ed would like newer members to have access to the cheaper scopes. Pulls more people to the Dark Site. Encourages learning. Keep 3 month requirement for more expensive items.
- 7.1.4. Looking forward to having access to the member rolls because traditionally he has not.
- 7.1.5. How much trouble it would be to make a photocopy of their driver's license? Not at all.
- 7.1.6. It is good to keep the enthusiasm going for new members.
- 7.1.7. Maybe have brand new members wait 2-3 weeks to check out scopes.
- 7.1.8. Motion made to accept Ed's motion to make the 8-inch dobsonian telescopes available to new members, to encourage enthusiasm. Require driver licenses for all scope loans.
 - 7.1.8.1. Motion seconded
 - 7.1.8.2. Motion passed unanimously.
- 7.2. Open House Brochure 2019
 - 7.2.1. Got the flyers that we pass out with our open house schedule - good through the end of 2018. Need new ones made and printed for 2019.
 - 7.2.1.1. made 3,000 last time, held out well, cost was under \$200 (Sorin)
 - 7.2.1.1.1. Request to differentiate public night vs open house.
- 7.3. Member Name Badges
 - 7.3.1. Joe did not receive an order. Need to set up POS links for badges. DAS gets \$3.00 per badge.
 - 7.3.1.1. Needed to order badges for several people. Joe made them and placed them in the drawer. - Needs to be automated
 - 7.3.1.1.1. Committee has been looking into this with the member portal.
 - 7.3.1.1.1.1. Needs to be done after membership migration, then would be moving on to things like this.
- 7.4. EGK Dark Site Committee Report (Darrell)
 - 7.4.1. Review copies from the August 18th
 - 7.4.2. Hail storm in July -Hail damage and wear and tear on structures. The main problem was breaking windows on the East Side of the Building and pulled the windows that were under the wall on the west and moved to East side. Difficult to get out there.
 - 7.4.2.1. Can we put in an insurance claim? Roofs will need to be replaced, there are large holes.
 - 7.4.2.2. Groundskeeping grass - with more people are coming out using a larger area not previously used. Will need a riding mower to mow the grass.
 - 7.4.2.2.1. Insurance is liability only. "might want to look into that."
 - 7.4.2.3. Hail damage of the cloth protecting the bottom of structures. Door will need to be replaced. Hard to open. Floor will need to be ripped up and checked underneath.
 - 7.4.2.4. People/members who were being nasty to people who had road lights. Info now posted online including pictures of flashlights they can buy
 - 7.4.2.5. Wildlife mgmt - had to kill a rattlesnake - An appendix indicates all the animals you can kill.
 - 7.4.2.6. Issue with the G11 from the observatory, isn't holding, clutches are slipping. Bought new pads for the clutches but Stuart Hutchens has collected a list of ideas he will implement if he is able.

- 7.4.2.7. How is the Dark Site fund? Great, I've only had to spend a few hundred dollars.
- 7.4.2.8. Discussion on different roofing replace/repair methods.
- 7.4.2.9. Didn't have a ladder - ladder available.
- 7.4.3. Opinions about the a few proposals that were mentioned - idea of a Das 444 scope.
Everybody agreed that was a good idea. Isn't totally made yet. Are not in the plans of the club, was Stuart's idea. That would be quite the expense and would increase the infrastructure at the Dark Site. Question is "will people use it?"
- 7.4.4. MSU proposal, No.
- 7.5. Movie Tickets (sent to 7-8 ppl) a new movie coming out about Neil Armstrong, First Man. showing Monday night. Ron will send an email about tickets.
- 7.6. Ensure Business Continuity. Asst Webmaster Zach

- 8. Next E-board meeting
 - 8.1. Friday, October 19th.

- 9. Adjourn meeting
 - 9.1. Motion to adjourn meeting. Motion seconded.
 - 9.2. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM