

Cleveland and Darlington Astronomical Society
Minutes of extraordinary committee meeting held on Thursday, March 11th, 2016 at 19:30.
Venue: 50 Garmondsway Road, West Cornforth, Ferryhill, DL17 9HD

Present: Jürgen Schmoll in the Chair (JS), Julia Goudge (JG), Sue Barnes (SB), Simon Gotch (SG), Peter Hanna (PH), David Lewis (DL), Jon Matthieson (JM)

Apologies: Neil Haggath (NH), Keith Johnson (KG), Ian Riach (IR)

Start 19:42

1. Review of the previous minutes March 10th, 2016

The minutes have been read out by the chairman and they were unanimously accepted after minor corrections.

2. Review of AGM minutes and future AGM format

The minutes have been read out by the chairman and accepted after minor corrections.

About the format of the AGM and the social gathering after, all changes made in the last year seem not to work to attract more members to attend the meeting. Apparently the old format with members giving short presentations worked better. Alternatively, a shorter scheduled talk may be offered. Various options like a re-make of the old “presidential address” has been discussed. JG proposed a planetarium show for the membership after the AGM.

It was agreed to have the AGM followed by two short slots of about 20 min duration each, filled with presentations as short talks or a planetarium show.

3. Treasurer’s report

SB reported a balance of £3908.53 in June. £31.10 got paid to NH for the social night. JG has some money outstanding from the social night adding to the balance.

ACTION [JM, JS]: Activate bank access.(STILL OPEN!)

About an insurance quotation for the assets, SB got a quotation of £440 per annum. PH compared this to about £220 TASC pays for their assets, so the quotation seems too high however the nature of the TASC cover is of different nature. The alternative is not to insure the telescopes and bear the risk in case they get lost, plus asking members to prove a liability insurance is in place if they want to lend telescopes.

ACTION[SB]: Prepare a draft telescope loan form.

ACTION[PH]: Get alternative quotation for CaDAS, using the TASC insurance company.

4. Situation of speakers and meeting format

All speaker slots for the coming season have been sorted.

It was suggested to do a 10 minute informal discussion after each meeting to increase the interaction within the membership. Very short practical things could be shown off, like how to align a telescope or the presentation of new equipment. Having something “to look at” will make members stay around and interact.

It was also discussed to attract new members by handouts that can be provided at TASC events for example.

The Friday slot for the meetings prevents TASC of putting an additional show on, but it was suggested that TASC

rather changes the week day for that weeks, offering another show on a week day more convenient for members of the public who cannot make Fridays. CaDAS is fixed to Fridays as some members cannot make other dates, in particular NH as programme manager.

5. Membership activities

- Yorkshire Astromind

JS volunteers to go into the competition for CaDAS if no other member comes forward. The trip remains financially supported by CaDAS not to put off members due to costs.

ACTION[IM]: Find out Astromind date and email membership for volunteers.

- Ex-TWT trophy quiz: JS spoke to the Hamilton Russell Pub and the room will be provided free of charge. The date is October 07th.

ACTION[DL]: Book the room at the HR pub for October 07th from 7:30pm on. Some small food shall be provided.

ACTION[JS]: Email NH to confirm date and get parties invited.

A new name for the quiz is required.

- Dark sky site: No news from the model aircraft club, so this possibility is given up. At the moment even the home site at the planetarium is not being used. It was discussed to set up a Facebook site to arrange observing events on short notice at the planetarium.
- No news about the Kettlewell star fest option. This possibility has been put on hold.
- Activating telescopes: No news here. TASC currently purchased two large gazebos which can be used as shelters for the telescopes during observing events. It is planned to reactivate the instruments at the beginning of the season.
- There is CaDAS equipment that is unused and it is in TASCs way. There is a list of CaDAS equipment that can be used to organise the various items.

ACTION[PH]: Circulate CaDAS asset list to the committee so everyone can get a picture of the nature of the assets.

- Security: The dome has a new lock with hasp, keeping the lock itself protected from tampering.

- Zetland FM radio interviews: JG and SG provided regular interviews in the last few months, resuming in September. The possibility of radio interviews has been mentioned to avoid travelling. Also other broadcasters as the BBC with a wider reach have been discussed.

ACTION[SG]: Discuss telephone link option with Nick of Zetland FM.

6. TRANSIT magazine

The basic problem is that members are not contributing. There is always a small bunch of the same authors and more stimulation of the membership is necessary to change this. SB suggested a goal frequency of at least one magazine every six months. She reminded the committee that the magazine is part of the current constitution.

7. Current TASC activities

PH reported a massive re-decoration of the planetarium and observatory. Dark, anti-reflective colours have been chosen inside to enhance the quality of the planetarium shows. The observatory telescope is awaiting redeployment on the EQ8 once the last parts arrive and get adapted by JS. The new planetarium system with the full dome digital projection gets good feedback, in particular the videos. The next show will be on September 07, using currently digital projection only.

8. Any other business

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9. Action list

Action	By	Status
Contact model aircraft club to discuss observing	SG	Closed
Review state of CaDAS portable telescopes for using them in events	DL, PH	open (discussed, planning to use by TASC volunteers after events).
Contact NH about communicating to speakers the needs of the membership and to try to get an abstract of a presentation beforehand.	JS	Closed
Contact FAS for asset insurance options	SB	Closed
Contact Kettlewell venue about star camp option	IR	Closed
Send committee meeting minutes of 20150217 to Don Martin.	JS	Closed
Activate bank access	JM, JS	Open
Provide accommodation for May speaker	PH	Closed
Find a solution to display the TWT trophy at the planetarium	PH, JS	Open
Communicate the security phone number to volunteers and integrate it into volunteer handbook.	PH	Open
Evaluate instruments and test function and portability with the help of other volunteers.	DL, PH	Open
Send SB electronic copy mileage form so this can be converted to a CaDAS claim form in the same format	PH	Open
New actions		
Prepare telescope loan form	SB	
Get alternative insurance quotation for CaDAS	PH	
Find out Astromind date and inform membership	IM	
Book room for October 07 at the HR pub	DL	

Contact NH to confirm quiz date and inform DAS and the students AS	JS	
Circulate CaDAS asset list within the committee	PH	
Discuss interview telephone link with Nick of Zetland FM	SG	

End of meeting: 21:52

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