

TAAA Board of Directors Open Meeting Minutes: January 8, 2025

The teleconference Zoom Board open meeting was called to order at 6:31PM, M. Smith, President, presiding. Board members present: B. Whitehead, Treasurer; E. Foley, Vice President; B. Reynolds, Secretary and Members-at-Large D. Rossetter, S. Ferris, J. Kalas. Members attending included: Doug Smith, Ben Bailey, Jim Knoll, John Mead, Ross Carnes, Bernie Stinger and Nelsey Toner.

Presidents Report:

- As a result a request to have additional discussion on the loaner program, B. Reynolds made a motion to delay the discussion of the loaner program to the February meeting. D. Rossetter seconded the motion and the motion passed by a vote of 7-0.
- Mae provided insight into the preparations for the Grand Canyon Star Party(GCSP). She also announced that Bernie Sanden will be leading the effort in the coming year. She also thanked Jim Knoll for stepping in to assist for the last two years. Requests were made to provide opportunities for other Board members to meet and get to know Bernie.
- Mae provided updates on her communication with the Park Service regarding additional camp grounds and parking for the GCSP. As a result, the Park Service has granted an additional 5 camp sites for the next GCSP.

Approval of Minutes:

- Subject to a change in the last sentence in the last item in the December 11 minutes to change the word “table” to “tablet”, a motion was made by B. Reynolds to approve the amended December 11, 2024 minutes. The motion was seconded by E. Foley and approved with a vote of 7-0.

Treasurers Report

- Barbara noted that the TAAA December balance sheet showed approx \$26k in its checking account and approximately \$228k in money market accounts. In addition, the endowment account balance is approximately \$14k as a result of recent additions. Further, fixed assets totaled approximately \$1.4 million with net assets sitting at \$1.52 million.
- The net revenue for the month of December was approximately \$30k while year to date stood at approximately \$118k.
- Revenue for the month was over budget due to the receipt of legacy giving while overall expenses were slightly under budget. This resulted in a very favorable actual net revenue vs budget (~300%+) thus far this fiscal year.
- A motion was made by E. Foley to approve the Treasurers Reports as presented for the financial month of December. The motion was seconded by J. Kalas and passed by a vote of 7-0.
- Barbara then previewed the summary level financial data prepared for the monthly Bulletin. It was well received with the primary comments being related to shortening the line item descriptions. For example, “Program Income-Dark Sky Sites” could just be

“CAC/TIMPA Dark Sites”. Also, “Education/Telescope” could be “Education/Library Telescopes”

- Barbara previewed a standard TAAA Expense Report that members would use to seek reimbursements. Discussions clarified use of various reporting categories within the report and it was suggested that a provision for Fixed Assets should be added. This would be used for equipment repairs and/or upgrades. It was also suggested that a description of the various expense categories be provided along with the expense report form.
- A final discussion covered the disposition of the balance of \$12k remaining in the TIMPA 16 project account. It was noted that the remaining funds are primarily the result of the allocation of interest and equipment sales revenues. Given the project needs only the cash donations, a motion was then put forward by B. Reynolds and seconded by E. Foley to reassign the equipment sales and interest amounts currently allocated to the TIMPA 16 project back to TAAA general funds. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Review of Old Business

TAAA Board Action Item List as of 01/08/2025

Date		Date	
Entered	Item	Completed	Comments
3/13/24	Continued follow up on Strategic Plan		Mae taking suggestions for best method to achieve
9/5/24	Implement business expense reporting procedure		Barbara to send out
9/11/24	Research off site tractor liability insurance coverage		Barbara to research (agricultural use?)
9/11/24	Insurance valuations for Ketelsen		Pending decision on location and observatory type
10/3/24	Presentations on non-donation revenue streams		All complete except site fee revenues(?)
10/9/24	Presentation on loaner program		Focus on inventory & utilization rate in Feb
10/9/24	Report on TidyHQ Testing		D. Rossetter/E. Foley/B. Whitehead
10/9/24	Recommendation to migrate to TidyHQ		
12/12/24	Equip donation policy & posit descrip w/o holding period		Ed/Doug to present at Jan BOD meeting
12/12/24	Report on equipment needed for programs/sites		From J. Knoll, S. Ferris, D. Smith, R. Means
12/12/24	Status of proposal for new tablet or camera		For monthly member meetings
1/8/25	Update effective dates of POA's		Bob Rose, Ed Foley, Jim Knoll
1/8/25	Contact TIMPA to see if interested in site wifi		Ben Bailey

CAC Reports

- Current planning activity consists of the ongoing 32” project and the siting plan for the Ketelsen Observatory. Possible future projects include installation of benches and/or additional member pads.
- The 32” scope is moving along well but not much progress was made between Thanksgiving and New Years. However, superstructural steel has just arrived at the site and observatory walls are now under construction.
- Jim Knoll announced that he will be bringing forward a new CAC org chart for BOD consideration in a coming meeting.
- It is anticipated that all access codes will be changed during the upcoming monsoon season when the 32” is expected to be complete or near completion.
- Jim Knoll announced that \$1,150 was made during a private CAC star party for 25.
- Tractor maintenance has begun with fluid and filter changes.

- The 9” folded refractor is back in operation with a new Feathertouch focuser.

TIMPA

- Held two star parties and equipment is functioning well.
- Planning activity included updating equipment for imaging and remote/app functionality.
- Currently envisioning having site open 4 nights a month in coming year.
- Pre-emergent was applied
- A work party is looking at reducing the height of the Hila Monster shed as well as doing door and roof maintenance.
- Also investigating installation of site wifi starting with the airplane club. It was noted that there may be federal subsidization available for trenching and installing internet cabling. However, City ownership and/or proximity to city limits may restrict access to federal funds.
- Investigation is commencing for installation of a sky meter.
- Work has begun on equipment training documentation.

Donor Equipment Policy and Position Description

- Revised documents were issued to BOD and Doug Smith also walked the BOD through a summary of the changes incorporated into proposed documents.
- It was noted that there will be a bias to accepting all offerings to both maximize revenue and support good will in the community.
- A motion was then made by B. Reynolds and seconded by E. Foley to accept the amended equipment donation policy as presented. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.
- The disposal policy was then summarized and it was noted that the 6 month holding period was deleted. There was discussion regarding as to how long an item should be held for sale to members but it was decided to retain the proposed 3 month period. A motion was then made by E. Foley and seconded by B. Reynolds to approve the Donated Equipment Disposal Policy as presented. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.
- The proposed amended position description conforming to revised policies was then reviewed. A motion was made by E. Foley to accept the Donation Equipment Manager position description. The motion was seconded by J. Kalas and passed by a vote of 7-0.

Non-Paid Star Party Review

- Following some introductory items, Bernie Stinger summarized the last 6 years of non-paid star parties. It was noted that venues have included parks, national monument, schools and churches all over southern Arizona. Bernie then shared the following data with the BOD:

TAAA Public/School/Non-Profit Star Party Data 2016-2024				
Year	Events	Participants	Telescopes	Hours
2016	104	15,694	401	1,373
2017	109	15,111	378	1,411
2018	136	14,392	443	1,719
2019	120	13,657	378	1,381
2020	43	8,509	116	554
2021	51	4,691	155	825
2022	118	10,657	330	1,403
2023	117	12,121	358	1,171
2024	117	12,161	370	1,192
Total	915	106,993	2,929	11,029
Average	101.67	11,888.11	325.44	1,225.39

- It was noted that these numbers exclude the 20-25 star parties per year cancelled due to weather.
- Also, the “participants” counts includes some estimation due to the open nature of some events.
- The “hours” include the often lengthy travel times but do not include management/supervisory manhours for the average of 10-20 star parties a month.
- Bernie noted that TAAA star parties are different than most all other clubs in that TAAA goes to customer sites(such as school campuses) versus the more common practice of holding star parties at fixed, club operated sites.
- We do not service the Phoenix area even though we get requests from that area.
- The BOD noted that this was an amazing result and that TAAA outreach has been recognized by the Astronomical League.
- Discussion followed about how to make new members aware of volunteer opportunities as well as TAAA marketing/handouts/signs during star parties. This discussion included possible preparation of remarks that could be utilized to introduce TAAA to star party groups.
- A suggestion was made to form working group(s) to recognize volunteers and how to market TAAA to both paid and non-fee star parties. Ed, Mae, Jim, and Bernie volunteered for the working group.

Member Meeting Technology

- Jim Knoll noted the camera/tablet issues are still be worked. However, the recently expanded video coverage is being noticed and appreciated. A more permanent, newer technology is also be worked.

A motion was put forward by E. Foley to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by S. Ferris. The motion was approved 6-0 and the Board meeting adjourned at 9:07pm.