

TAAA Board of Directors Open Meeting Minutes: June 11, 2025

The teleconference Zoom Board open meeting was called to order at 6:33PM, E. Foley, President presiding. Board members present: M. McDowell, Treasurer; D. Rossetter, Vice President and B. Reynolds, Secretary; as well as Members-at-Large, S. Ferris and J. Kalas and immediate Past President, Mae Smith. Members attending included: Jim Knoll, John Mead, Sandy Nichols, Gary Steffens and Nelsey Toner.

Welcome to New Board Members by the President:

- Given this was the first Board meeting since the recent elections, Ed Foley welcomed all the new Board members to their positions.

Approval of Minutes:

- A motion was made by Mike McDowell to approve the May 15, 2025 minutes. The motion was seconded by D. Rossetter and the motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Status of Open Action Items:

TAAA Board Action Item List as of 06/11/2025

Date			Date	
Entered	Item	Assigned to	Completed	Comments
Long ago	Develop award plan/structure for TAAA			Need to find a leader for effort
3/13/24	Continued follow up on Strategic Plan			Looking forward to input from D. Eicher
9/11/24	Insurance valuations for Ketelsen	Reynolds/Kalas		Pending bid for DKO construction
9/11/24	Research off site tractor liability insurance coverage	Knoll		Trying to get a quote
10/9/24	Recommendation to migrate to TidyHQ	Foley/Rossetter		Tied to progress on volunteer tracking
12/12/24	Status of proposal for new tablet or camera	Lappin		Pending input from Terri
1/8/25	Contact TIMPA to see if interested in site wifi	Bailey	6/11/25	WiFi (lease) would be pursued by TAAA alone
2/12/25	Need mount for Stellarview refractor by end 2025	Ferris		Or sell the refractor
2/12/25	Formation of radio astronomy SIG	Knoll		Pending June BOD approval
2/12/25	Survey on non-participating imaging SIG members	Reynolds		Check w/Ruppel
2/12/25	Coordination of imaging SIG/CAC imaging infrastructure	Ruppel/knoll	6/11/25	
4/3/25	Create & implement star party volunteer award	Knoll/Stinger		
5/8/25	Revise TAAA By Laws to avoid potential conflicts	Rossetter		Pete to put together position paper
5/8/25	CAC/TIMPA reserve study	Knoll/McDowell		By end of 2025
5/15/25	Establish CAC & TIMPA capital improvement accounts	McDowell		Incl remaining MOP/RV expansion funds in CAC act

- Ed Foley noted that a strategic planning session may be scheduled later this year.
- Jim Knoll noted that we have been unable to procure liability insurance for use of the CAC tractor off site.
- Effort to move from Member Planet has become dependent on strategies to track volunteer manhours. To that end, TAAA has been denied access to Microsoft Access thru TechSoup.

Treasurers Report

- May accounting included \$4,700 of revenue with \$3,700 of expenses for a net income of ~\$1,000.
- Income items of note were interest on cash accounts, membership dues and star party revenue. Expense items were CAC maintenance, utilities and other routine expenses.
- A motion was made by B. Reynolds to approve the Treasurers Report as presented for the financial month of May. The motion was seconded by J. Kalas and passed by a vote of 7-0.

Annual Budget

- This is Mike McDowell's first budget since he was Treasurer some years ago. To that end, he noted that his last historical budget had \$29,000 of revenue and \$27,000 of expenses whereas this current budget has \$92,000+ of revenue and \$56,000 of expenses.
- Mike then walked the Board thru a representative sample of the budget detail highlighting areas of interest noting that the new budget closely resembles last year's budget.
- Bob Reynolds made a motion to approve the Operating Budget which was seconded by J. Kalas. The motion then passed by a vote of 7-0.
- The motion was then made by E. Foley to examine capital accounts for restricted funds and determine disposition of those restricted funds. Motion was seconded by B. Reynolds. Discussion noted that these capital accounts, at a minimum, included the CAC MOP, GTTG, Member Pads and TIMPA 16 projects. It was also noted that it was important that all donor and lessee funds are carefully tracked and accounted for. The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.

CAC/TIMPA Reports

- CAC will be receiving approximately 140 tons of gravel to complete the RV expansion and MOP projects. A TAAA work crew of 7-10 will spread the gravel to save cost.
- The DFM telescope will be moved from Warren Hensey's garage by June 16 and stored in a disassembled state at the CAC.
- CAC is still working ongoing air conditioning issues but have vendor assurances that the problems can be solved. Bedroom 10 has the biggest issues.
- Jim notified the BOD that we have been unable to procure liability insurance for offsite usage of the CAC tractor. He went on to request relief from the current restriction for offsite usage such that the tractor could be used for maintenance of South Price Ranch

Road. There was significant amount of discussion about this request starting with the use of signed waivers by tractor users. However, it became clear that the bigger concern is

- not personal injury but general liability. As a result, a motion was made by Mae Smith that allow the tractor to be used for offsite road maintenance with the provision that the tractor operators be required to sign liability waivers that exempts TAAA from responsibility for any injury or liability. After much discussion, Ed Foley seconded the motion. The vote was 5-2 against approving the motion.
- Bob Reynolds then made a motion that the CAC owned tractor be restricted to use on TAAA and John Kalas properties and that offsite road maintenance be performed by licensed, insured contractors. The motion was seconded by M. McDowell. It was noted that we don't know the cost of professional road maintenance services but additional BOD actions could be taken at a later date. The motion was passed by a vote of 5-1-1 in favor of the motion.
- Ed provided an update on the 32" observatory. The observatory is essentially complete except for minor punchlist items. Bob Reynolds then walked the BOD thru the following capital cost summary:

32" Cost Forecast as of 5/28/25

Scope/Activity	Assigned to:	Actual Spent to Date	To Go Forecast	Forecast at Completion	Comments
Package 1 - Scope Acquisition & Move					
County Bldg Permits	E. Foley	1,695	0	1,695	
Tom	E. Foley	3,868	0	3,868	
DFM	E. Foley	7,002	0	7,002	
Misc	TAAA et al	6,365	0	6,365	
Transport from CO	TAAA et al	1,782	0	1,782	
Subtotal		20,712	0	20,712	
Package 2 - Site, Foundation, Pier, Building, Roll Off Roof					
Parking gravel & spreading	Maddox			0	Cost of white gravel surround?
SSVEC	SSVEC			0	
Construct observatory	Maddox	110,000	15,000	125,000	Current estimate = \$122k + electrician costs(?)
TAAA provided items/mtls	TAAA	7,513	487	8,000	From "TAAA Provided List"
Punchlist items	Various		2,500	2,500	From Larry's 5/28 punchlist
Subtotal		117,513	17,987	135,500	
Package 3 - Scope Relo & Install					
Installation consultant	Tom	0	4,000	4,000	Based on paying gas, hotels, food
Frank consultations	DFM	0	2,000	2,000	
Crane rental	TAAA	0	5,100	5,100	
Flatbed truck rental	TAAA	0	0	0	Use skidsteer trailer
Donation to Golden Rule	TAAA		400	400	Pymt for equip operator & donate scope skid
Gravel	TAAA		1,300	1,300	Cost of white gravel surround?
Skid steer rental	TAAA	0	500	500	Allocation of CAC skid steer rental
Subtotal		0	13,300	13,300	
Package 4 - Scope Commissioning					
Installation consultant	Tom	0	4,000	4,000	
Frank consultations	DFM	0	3,000	3,000	
Subtotal		0	7,000	7,000	
Package 5 - Optical Redesign					
Install direct focus camera package	Doug			0	Conversion to f/3 prime focus camera
Subtotal		0	0	0	
Grand Total w/o Contingency		138,225	38,287	176,512	
Contingency				0	
Grand Total		138,225	38,287	176,512	

Total Funding
Raised
Shortfall

156,769	Includes \$25k from John Soule estate
19,743	Loan from Member?

- Ed noted that we need to start a fundraising effort to cover the shortfall. This effort will begin with an objective to raise the shortfall on or before commissioning of the telescope scheduled for 4Q, 2025
- TAAA's TIMPA activity winding down due to upcoming monsoon and awaiting TIMPA's execution of a lease with the City of Tucson. However, TAAA's team closely following events within the City and keeping the options open to use the site during monsoon season.

Radio Astronomy SIG

- Sandy Nichols made a presentation on recent activities to establish a radio astronomy user group and made a proposal for a formal TAAA SIG.

TAAA

RADIO ASTRONOMY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

INTEREST

- Current
 - Met twice via zoom (April, May)
 - 12 participants at first meeting, 17 attending 2nd meeting
- Potential
 - Members of other astronomy clubs

OBJECTIVES

- Assist members in pursuing Radio Astronomy observing through discussion and development of skills and equipment.
- Assist members in building a small personal radio telescope.
- Pursue and complete Astronomical League radio astronomy awards.
- Expand radio astronomy observing through outreach events.
- Additional goals will be added as the group progresses.

PROJECTS

- Map Milky Way intensities and structures
- Observe radio signals from Jupiter (Radio Jove)
- Observe meteors through radio
- Measure solar fluctuations – flares, CMEs
- Astronomical League awards focus on completion of projects



Scope in a box components:

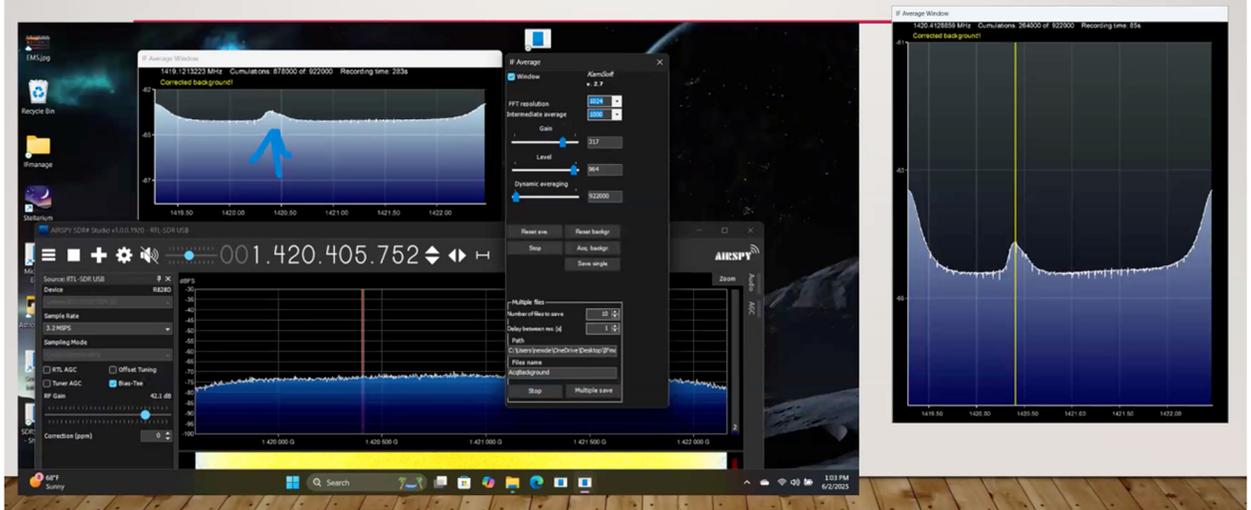
- Antenna
- Low noise amplifier
- Software Defined Radio (bias tee)
- Stand
- USB cable to laptop
- Optional calibration terminal

Total Cost \$200

Extra components

- Laptop – running free software
- Tracking mount optional

AIRSPY (PROGRAM ON LAPTOP)



SIG FORMAT

- Roles
 - Coordinator (Sandy Nichols)
 - Alternate (Gary Steffens)
- Zoom meetings
 - Once a month
 - Presentation
 - Questions about projects

TAAA SUPPORT

- Recognition as official SIG
- Use TAAA Zoom account
- Create listserv group like FORUM used by TAAA astrophotographers
- Future
 - \$ for Timpa and CAC radio telescopes – can either include laptop or not

- Bob Reynolds made a motion that TAAA formally establish a Radio Astronomy SIG in accordance with Sandy's presentation. The motion was seconded by Mae Smith and approved by a vote of 6-0.
- Mae Smith then requested a budget proposal from Sandy to support the new SIG.

TAAA Calendar

- Susan O'Connor notified the BOD that not all 2025 calendars were sold so a loss has been incurred. She is now seeking guidance on how to go forward with future calendars.
- Options are to produce fewer, stop production or produce to pre-ordered amounts. Proposed changes also suggested integrating input from imaging SIG members, expand calendar marketing and to improve both quality of pictures as well as include pictures of membership activities.
- It was noted that the historical objective was to break even on calendars and a consensus was expressed that we should continue the effort. It was also noted that we should rely on shipping services as opposed to personal delivery for calendar distribution.
- The conversation concluded with a recommendation to continue producing calendars in similar numbers as 2025 with improved images, more marketing/exposure of the product

and pictures of club members/events. There was also agreement to use commercial shipping options.

- Calendar working group members could include Jim Knoll, Mike McDowell, Nelsey Toner and Stephen Ferris.

A motion was put forward by M. McDowell to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by B. Reynolds. The motion was approved 6-0 and the Board meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.