

TAAA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes: Nov 9, 2022

The teleconference Zoom Board meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM, M. Smith, President, presiding. Board members present: D. Smith, Vice President; B. Whitehead, Treasurer; B. Reynolds, Secretary and Members-at-Large, J. Kalas, D. Rossetter and G. Gomez as well as TAAA Members: J. Knoll.

Approval of Minutes:

- A motion was made by B. Reynolds and seconded by B. Whitehead to approve the minutes for the Oct 12, 2022 regular Board meeting. The motion as passed by a vote of 5-0 with one abstention and one absence.

President's Report:

- Conversations took place between the historical UofA Astronomy Camp and selected TAAA leadership. As a result of the loss of UofA sponsorship and the associated infrastructure such as liability insurance, it was agreed that conversation between TAAA and Astro Camp leadership would be suspended pending further reorganization/sponsorship of the Astronomy Camp organization.
- It was pointed out that at the completion of the Board meeting agendas, that the meetings will be concluded.
- Everyone was reminded that any suggested agenda items for a Board meeting should be submitted early such that the Executive Committee of the Board can build the items into the agenda for the coming Board meeting.
- The membership of the IT Committee was announced. They will be D. Rossetter, Chair; D. Smith; J. Knoll; T. Lappin; B. Whitehead and E. Foley. It was also noted that E. Foley has been appointed as the TAAA Webmaster.
- At this point, it was reported that the link to the TAAA membership form on the top page of the TAAA website is dead. Also, though the form can be found in the pulldown menus, the membership form has not been updated for the recent increases in membership dues.
- A request was made for donations to raffle at the Holiday Party scheduled for December 10. Items do not necessarily need to be astronomy related.
- An initiative has begun to publish more information/articles on the administration, organization and operation of TAAA.

Treasurers Report:

- The 990 is not yet ready for review so approval will be delayed until the next Board meeting.
- Current bank balance is approximately \$231,000 plus ~\$221,000 for the MO and \$4,500 for the endowment fund.
- TSA revenue starting May 2022 has been moved to operating account
- Total TAAA assets are now in excess of \$1.28 million(!)

- Actuals vs budget are very favorable due, primarily, to higher levels of GTTG donations and the receipt of MOP which had not been budgeted.
- YTD income now greater than \$316k and over budget by \$274k.
- A presentation on the options to change TAAA liability insurance was put forward. As a result, a motion was put forward by B. Reynolds and seconded by M. Smith to change coverage the coverage. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.
- Further changes to insurance coverage will be considered at the next policy renewal in July, 2023. It is expected that the policy will be put out to bid at that time.
- A further motion was put forward by B. Whitehead to add coverage for contents of the new Learning Center buildings however the motion did not receive a second and was deferred until the LC buildings are more complete and we have more complete insurance bids on all TAAA CAC and TIMPA equipment. Further research on ownership also needs to be completed on the Maksutov components located at TIMPA.
- As a result of discussion of liability coverage of both members and non-members at TAAA events, a motion was made by B. Reynolds to implement a liability waiver policy for all members and non-members at TAAA CAC and TIMPA. The motion was seconded by D. Rossetter. Further discussion proposed the waiver be part of the annual membership process and by occurrence for non-members. The motion past by a vote of 7-0.
- As a result of the liability risk conversation, a motion was made by B. Reynolds to implement a snake bite first aid protocol at both CAC and TIMPA. The motion was seconded by D. Smith. Discussion of what this protocol might be followed and it was agreed that more research and training needs to be completed. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.
- A motion was made by B. Reynolds to accept the Treasurer's Report which was seconded by D. Smith. The motion passed 7-0.

Review of COVID Policy:

- No changes were considered or approved. In addition, we continue to monitor COVID trends the need to continue this agenda item after December was discussed.

Dark Sky Sites: CAC Planning/Ops Report

- Started with a summary of GTTG financial status. Total funding raised is ~\$517,000 and \$184k of funding left in the bank or committed. Approximately \$112k remains to be paid on existing commitments which leaves ~\$72k for remaining Phase 2 activity. If contingency is excluded, we only need \$67k for Phase 2. This would imply GTTG is fully funded. However, some contingency related items have yet to be estimated so funding may still be required.
- It was noted that proposed EV connections on the back of the new buildings are funded, if they occur.
- Discussion then proceeded to whether to publish reminders to membership regarding the options for year-end donation/tax planning.
- Update provided on the MOP, RV and EV projects. All are in active planning phase including applications for county permits and contractor coordination.

- Provided update on effort to generate first pass at the annual fee for the MOP including documentation both how much area at CAC has been cleared and what % each part of CAC shares in the clearing.
- As a result of the fee calculation effort, B. Reynolds made a motion that all TAAA fees billed to members are done on an advance payment basis. The motion was seconded by J. Kalas. Bob will send the policy language to Doug. Motion passed by a vote of 7-0.
- John Kalas provided update on status of county permitting effort. Unfortunately, the county is indicating that the RV expansion may require a revision to the TAAA special use permit. The county also has asked for increased septic capacity. The view is that we can successfully address the septic concerns, but the revision of the special use permit is much more troubling. John is going to work the issue with the County to see if he can resolve their concerns and confirm our ability to, at least, clear the land for the MOP project.
- As a result of the increasingly large CAC acreage to be cleared/maintained, J. Knoll advised the Board that we are now considering obtaining our own tractor to maintain the site. There appears to be donors for both this equipment and the required storage. As a result, B. Reynolds made a motion that TAAA establish a separate G/L account to track funding of, and expenditures for, site maintenance equipment and related storage. The motion was seconded by B. Whitehead. Motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.
- Jim Knoll advised the Board that he wanted to take advantage of a special pricing offer from Valley Telecom for our recently upgraded CAC internet connection. This would lock in a 100/300mps service for a discounted monthly fee for 3 to 5 years. As a result of this proposal, B. Reynolds made a motion to authorize Jim Knoll or B. Whitehead to accept a 3 or 5 year service contract of 100/300 internet service for a savings of \$60/month for a total monthly internet service fee of \$130/month. The motion was seconded by J. Kalas. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Dark Sky Sites: TIMPA

- TAAA has been offered a 16" Meade LX200 for the cost of transportation from Minnesota. The condition is that it is used for club/public activity. The telescope is in original manufacturer shipping containers and has recently been refurbished by Meade. Therefore, the TIMPA SPG met recently and is in favor of accepting the offer. As a result, M. Smith made a motion that TAAA accept the donation of the 16' Meade LX200 from the Minnesota club and locate the telescope at TIMPA. The motion was seconded by G. Gomez. Discussion identified shipping cost of \$750-\$1,000 and several funding donors have been identified for both the shipping and telescope enclosure. Additional discussion took place on the role of flood plains may impact construction of any new observatory. It was decided that further investigation needs to occur to mitigate flood risk for the new observatory (perhaps a structure similar to the Gila Monster?). Further research on permitting and power requirements is also needed. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Other Business:

- A brief discussion took place regarding the need to increase/reaffirm TAAA's recognition of volunteer labor. It was noted that recent Board discussions on naming rights had left the impression with some members that volunteer labor should not be recognized. It was agreed that this was not a good outcome. The response was to suggest that the membership award/recognition committee consider a "Volunteer of the Month" in the monthly bulletin and other forms of rewards that could be handed out during TAAA events.
- D. Smith has proposed an extension of his recent, very successful Astronomy Fundamentals class. The extension would focus on practical, hands-on workshops that build basic observational skills such as star hopping, telescope collimation, etc. Recording these sessions was also suggested.

A motion was put forward by D. Smith to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by D. Rossetter. The motion was approved 7-0 and the Board meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.