

*DRAFT only - to be approved at NC Meeting of June 8, 2025*  
**RASC National Council Meeting 25-2 DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**  
**Sunday, April 13, 2025:** 2:00pm - 4:00pm EST  
11:00am PST, 12 MST, 1pm CST, 2:00pm EST, 3:00pm AST, 3:30pm NST  
Meeting was hosted via Zoom.

**MEMBER ATTENDANCE:**

(See Appendix).

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**WELCOME TO NEW REPS:**

No new representatives were in the meeting. Land and sky acknowledgments were made.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Agenda was circulated last week. A notation was made to make a change in the February Meeting Minutes. The agenda item number 5 and a change to the title need to be noted and updated. A. Ling asked to add an Observer Handbook Request to New Business.

**NC25-2-Mot01:** Motion to approve the amended agenda by M. Redmond and seconded by C. Ennis. **Approved.**

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

Minutes for the NC25-1 (February 9, 2025) meeting were amended by ensuring the numbering reflect the correct meeting and motion numbers. An additional error was found in the Financial Report circulated by S. Heggie, where the figures should be 11% vs 111%, and 19% vs 119% with regards to the gross profit.

**NC24-5-Mot02:** Motion to approve the NC24-3 Meeting Minutes as amended by C. Ennis, seconded by M. Redmond. **Approved.**

**REVIEW OF PAST ACTION ITEMS:**

**NC24-06-Act05:** The committee will consider hosting training sessions to ensure that Centres. effectively distribute and utilize the Starfinders, rather than just handing them out without guidance. **OPEN.**

**NC25-01-Act01:** J Hinds to send summary email to all members detailing the new locations of documents and ensuring that the information is communicated effectively, including links to updated resources. **OPEN.**

**NC25-01-Act02:** Members are encouraged to review the clean version of Policy C-11 and provide feedback before the April 13 meeting, in order to obtain approval. Here is the link:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nPjfNWhO7MShtUelchhEMizZe4r67qX9/view?usp=sharing>. **CLOSED.**

**NC25-01-Act03:** J. Hinds will post the document containing various land acknowledgments on the NC Google Drive – subject to personalization by the Centres and geography. **OPEN.**

**NC25-01-Act4:** J. Black and J. Hinds will investigate the AI summary tool and report back to the group in the next meeting to decide on its usage. **CLOSED.**

**REMINDER: NC MEETING DATES FOR 2025**

February 9, April 13, June 8, September 7, October 19 and December 7, with considerations for holidays.

**2. BOARD UPDATE**

The Board met twice since the last National Council meeting, on February 26th and March 22nd, with the next meeting scheduled for April 30th. There are anomalies in the February financial statements concerning revenues that need to be addressed before finalization. S. Heggie has resigned as the Treasurer and the Board decided not to replace him before the annual meeting following his resignation.

The annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, June 22nd, and M. Watson's President term ends at the end of June, with two more years remaining in the director's term. M. Watson is interested in running for Treasurer of the Society, subject to Board approval.

**NC24-5-Mot03: IN CAMERA SESSION.** Moved by C. Ennis, seconded by B. Weir

**NC24-5-Mot04: End IN CAMERA SESSION.** Moved by C. Ennis, seconded by M. Redmond

## **CENTRE REPORTS**

Annual Centre reports are being compiled, with most reports received but some Centres (Sarnia and Thunder Bay) still missing their submissions among other smaller Centres. J. Hinds noted that they will start assembling the report after the General Assembly, indicating a timeline for completion.

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

It was decided that the General Assembly is set to go, with all speakers sorted out and tickets on sale, confirming the event's readiness. Participants are encouraged to promote attendance at the General Assembly, particularly focusing on the theme of astro-tourism and citizen science activities planned for the event.

Four NOVA modules will be presented at the General Assembly, as a preview to the course, and it is not paid. It will be the one time that National is offering sessions.

Members across Canada will be showcasing their observatories via virtual tours (Burke-Gaffney Observatory, York Observatory, Wilson Coulee Observatory), astrophotography and other engaging elements geared to new members. Other session topics are about astrophotography.

The ticket price for members is set at \$30, which includes a \$10 discount from the original price. It was decided to maintain the ticket price at the membership level to prevent dissatisfaction among members. J. Hinds encouraged participants to send new members to the GA and mentioned the possibility of setting up discount codes for partner organizations to facilitate their attendance, with a few already having received the codes.

There is a concern that past experiences have shown that ideas and resources created may not be utilized effectively, leading to wasted efforts.

## **OUTREACH MATERIALS**

Outreach materials were sent out to all the Centres and it was identified a concern about the quality of the moon gazers, which are now printed on a thinner, magazine-like paper instead of the intended card stock, potentially affecting their usability for demonstrations. This was an unintentional cost-saving. It was decided that feedback on the new Moongazer material will be collected during the next national council meeting to assess its effectiveness and usability.

## **3. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH**

### **INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMY DAY (IAD)**

*The International Astronomy Day* livestream is scheduled to run May 3, 2025, from 7pm until 11pm, with in-person events at the DDO from 7pm to 8:30pm and 9pm to 10:30pm. Currently, eight Centres are confirmed to contribute to the livestream, including Centres from Ontario, Montreal, 2 Maritime centres and Victoria. There are several speakers also attending such as David Levy, John Percy, and Ron Brecher, along with a couple RASC members from the USA sharing their cross-border ventures. We are trying to make this a showcase of what the RASC has to offer by highlighting IAD.

K. Jaffer will invite the Celestron team coming to Toronto to tour the National Office and the Dornier Museum and to meet some of the Board members and staff. The possibility of developing a direct link to

them as a provider will also be explored. The Explore Alliance is a board member of Astronomers Without Borders (AWB). AWB has April listed as Astronomy Month and for now the RASC is not listed as a partner. The RASC will explore potential partnerships with them for future events and to fill any gaps in their current programming.

J. Thompspon enquired about determining how Centres will contribute to the live stream, whether through live interaction or pre-recorded content, and to communicate this to the organizers. The event will utilize Zoom as the platform for live streaming, with options for pre-recorded segments and live feeds from various Centres. This was based on experiences from the previous year, 2022, where different formats were successfully implemented.

Participants are encouraged to contact Karim (or Jenna) in advance about their preferred format for contributions (live or pre-recorded) to allow for flexibility in the event schedule.

Members will be informed through the *RASC Bulletin* and Karim will be reaching out to Centre EPO representatives directly. Centres are also encouraged to have the livestream going on their website.

## **SEASONAL NOVICE OBSERVING PROGRAM**

This program was initiated by Linda Pulliah (Sudbury Centre) prior to her death. Karim has been working with Jo Ann Salci and Tony Schellinck to develop seasonal novice observing activities filled with observing targets, star hopping with storytelling to allow for a novice beginner to start to understand the night sky and to allow outreach members to run star party events in each season. It includes a scripted structure to follow but that they can add to whatever they themselves like as nighttime targets. There will be a template for stickers or certificate that can be handed out by the Centres as a first-timer completes a season session. For those first-timers completing all four activities, a national RASC certificate can be provided.

This is not an observing program but rather an introduction to star-hopping using the stars and our Starfinders to navigate through the night sky. It is a way to acknowledge those who want to know something about the night sky and then encourage them to enter our observing programs such as the ETU and Explore the Moon. The certificate would also include information on they can access the RASC and its programs.

The novice program will serve as a resource guide for members who are new to providing outreach programs and for Guides and Scouts who cannot use our current resources, ensuring that all Centres can share it with their partners and utilize it effectively. The novice program is currently in its second draft and will be discussed further in the EPO meeting with plans to release it sometime in May, in time for summer observing and star parties. Karim and Jo Ann will share aspects of the program at the upcoming GA.

In the past year, the RASC is working with the Canadian Space Agency to position RASC as a partner for astronomy knowledge and resources.

J. Black enquired about the availability of the program to be shared with national and provincial parks and other partners. The format will facilitate knowledge sharing with the public, as a part of the natural evolution education and public outreach within the Society. This resource will be evolving as they get used.

## **4. NEW BUSINESS**

### **CENTRE FUNDRAISING COLLABORATION**

C. Ennis (Sunshine Coast) and J. Sheard-Patrick (Saskatoon) had a productive call to brainstorm fundraising ideas for their Centres. If you are interested in joining, please contact them directly. Reminder that NC contacts for members are listed in the Google Drive.

### **RASC OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK**

The passing of Bruce McCurdy has created a gap in the contributions to the Observer's Handbook, particularly in the month-by-month section. A. Ling requested that anyone interested in contributing to the

month-by-month section of the handbook should contact James Edgar (current editor of the Handbook, [jedgar@rasc.ca](mailto:jedgar@rasc.ca)).

## OTHER ITEMS

T. Sobocan mentioned that the 80th anniversary dinner of the Windsor Centre is set for Saturday, November 15th, with David Levy as the guest speaker.

## 5. ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING REMARKS

The second meeting of 2025 ended at 3.57 PM EST.

**NC24-6-Mot05:** Motion to adjourn by A. Ling, seconded by T. Sobocan.

Our next meeting is **Sunday, June 8**, from 2:00pm-4:00pm EDT.

## APPENDIX:

### OUTSTANDING & NEW ACTIONS:

**NC24-06-Act05:** The committee will consider hosting training sessions to ensure that Centres. effectively distribute and utilize the Starfinders, rather than just handing them out without guidance. **OPEN.**

**NC25-01-Act01:** J Hinds to send summary email to all members detailing the new locations of documents and ensuring that the information is communicated effectively, including links to updated resources. **OPEN.**

**NC25-01-Act03:** J. Hinds will post the document containing various land acknowledgments on the NC Google Drive – subject to personalization by the Centres and geography. **OPEN.**

## ATTENDANCE:

### Number of Centres in Attendance

- 19 Centres out of 30.

### Members in attendance

- 23 National Council members were present.

<b>NC Chair</b>	Judy Black	Present
<b>NC Vice-Chair</b>	Charles Ennis	Present
<b>NC Recorder</b>	Adriana Stone	Present
<b>Belleville</b>	Debi Butler	Present
<b>Calgary</b>	Adriana Stone	Present
	Garnet Tozer	Present
	Dan Boychuk	Present
<b>Edmonton</b>	Alister Ling	Present
<b>Fraser Valley</b>	Greg Sebulsky	Absent
<b>Halifax</b>	Judy Black	Present
<b>Hamilton</b>	Andy Blanchard	Present
<b>Kingston</b>	John Hurley	Absent
<b>Kitchener-Waterloo</b>	Ellen Papenburg	Present

London	Peter Jedicke Chris Bolte	Absent Absent
Mississauga	Allan Connery Kirby Alguire	Absent Absent
CF de Montréal	Patrice Scattolin	Absent
Montréal	Morrie Portneuf	Absent
New Brunswick	Francois Theriault	Absent
Niagara	Rick Stasiak	Present
Okanagan	Jim Failes	Present
Ottawa	Stephen Nourse Jean Sebastien Gaudet Jim Thompson	Absent Absent Present
Prince George	Rob Woods	Present
Regina	Mark Meadows	Absent
Sarnia	Marty Cogswell	Absent
Saskatoon	Joelle Sheard-Patrick Lori Tedford	Present Absent
St. John's	Marcellus Redmond	Present
Sudbury	Alan Ward	Absent
Sunshine Coast	Charles Ennis	Present
Thunder Bay	Andreas Buchholz	Present
Toronto	Ralph Chou Lucy Winnicki	Present Present
Vancouver	Nolan Smith	Present
Victoria	Bill Weir Lauri Roche	Present Present
Windsor	Tom Sobocan	Present
Winnipeg	Dennis Lyons Bryan Stach	Absent Present
Yukon	Dyson Hale Christa Van Laerhoven	Absent Absent

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF**

- Michael Watson, National RASC President
- Brendon Roy, National RASC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President and Light Pollution Abatement Chair
- Randy Atwood, RASC Director
- Jenna Jinds, Executive Director
- Betty Robinson, National RASC 2<sup>nd</sup> VP

## **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

- Karin Jaffer, Education and Public Outreach Committee Chair

Submitted by:

Adriana Stone

National Council Recorder

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