

Meeting called to order by President Corey Swanson at 7:34 p.m.

Treasurer's report: Distributed and presented by John Anderson, treasurer. In addition John reported that the annual 990 and New York state tax notifications have been prepared professionally and submitted.

A member questioned why the treasurer's report is formatted on a year-to-year basis rather than month-to-month. John explained that is based on the capabilities and limitations of our QuickBooks accounting system, and not necessity for a more detailed report on a month to month basis. However each month's report can be compared to the previous month for members who would like a more finely-grained understanding of MKO's finances.

A motion was made to approve the treasurer's report as presented. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously without objection.

Executive Committee: Nothing to report.

Finance Committee: the committee met in early February. Two Grant applications have been submitted, one for the library telescope project which will place a telescope in specified local libraries which children can check out as they would a book the grant will purchase eight telescopes, two for each of four local libraries. depending upon results we may expand the program next year. The second grant application was for support of the observatory's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) summer camp program to be held in July in conjunction with the Falconer Central School. Location will be divided between the school and the observatory with one late night telescope observing session included in the schedule. A model rocketry building and launch events will also be included.

Facilities Committee: John Anderson reported on four major projects:

1. An amateur radio station and future radio astronomy facility will be added to the storage room, to be moved from its temporary site in the observatory office.
2. We will be building pads for telescope placements outdoors
3. A new roll-off roof facility for the 16-in and The Takahashi telescopes
4. Refurbishing of the Martz 24 inch Dome

Nominating Committee: Gary Nelson explained for all members present that board, officer, volunteer, and committee opportunities are available. We welcome interest in all levels of participation by members. Four of 13 board membership positions are currently open for two-year terms.

Program Committee: Walt Pickut reported on upcoming events

March - Dr Kevin Sato - Artemis/NASA

April - Phil Evans - Astronomy and History

May - Tom Traub - 2023 and 2024 Eclipse programs

June - Gary Nelson - Bring Your Own Telescope - A hands-on program for better backyard astronomy.

July - STEM speaker - NASA Ambassador

August - Dr. Alexandra Yep - Topic TBD

September - Dr. Darren Williams - Topic TBD

Other committees not reporting tonight, but open for participation:

- ☐ Facilities
- ☐ Bylaws
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning committee to develop the next 3 to 5-year goals

Solar Eclipse Committee: Tom Traub reported that we are now at T-403 days for the total eclipse Planning is underway. Oct 14, 2023 annular, partial eclipse, and April 8, 2024 Total Eclipse.

Educational Outreach program: Tom reported on the upcoming STEM camp

Mentorship program in March

STEM Wars event at JCC

NASA Night Sky Network

Monthly sky viewing on Zoom (under development)

Technology Committee: Tom reported that the remote access program for members to log onto and use the 24 inch scope is now in place and operational. Members from as far as California, and new research programs are now also underway, including discovery of a previously unknown stellar companion in a binary star system. Focusing automation is also now being developed, also possibly to include some of the roll-off roof telescopes including more software updates in the control room.

Public and Media Relations Committee: President Corey Swanson thanked Andy Felong, our webmaster, for the outstanding work he has done in turning the observatory's website into a true showcase and member resource, as well as an outreach resource to the public. Our website had a tremendous impact in publicizing our "Green Comet Night" to the Buffalo audience and stimulating a television appearance by Corey and Tom on the Buffalo News TV report inviting people to the observatory for the viewing. "Andy has definitely had a major hand in putting us on the map."

Corey invited all the members to consider getting involved on any of these committees. They're making tremendous headway at helping the Matz-Kohl Observatory reach its full potential in educating the public about astronomy and space sciences

A member asked where the Committees meet. President Swanson explained that sometimes they meet at the Observatory, sometimes on Zoom, sometimes in hybrid Zoom /in-person meetings, but generally not at offsite places. Generally the committee's meet about once per month.

Unfinished business: non-reported.

Upcoming events:Scouting groups, Community groups, Church groups, and many others continue to book visits and tours, all of which are also opportunities for members to volunteer in guiding those tours and assisting in other ways on site. Many are on weekends or weekday evenings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by President Swanson at 8:13 p.m.

Tours and viewing were offered and organized following the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter W. Pickut

Secretary