

**Marshall Martz Memorial Astronomical Association
Martz-Kohl Observatory**

General Meeting, October 25, 2023

President Corey Swanson called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Secretary's Report: Previous month meeting was the annual dinner. Minutes to be presented at the next annual dinner, 2024.

Treasurers Report: John Anderson presented the report, a copy of which is available to any member upon request. Most notable was a generous \$2000 contribution made by member Beverly Carlberg, as well as ongoing positive results from investment accounts, and profits from sales of solar eclipse classes, and increasing membership rolls.

Finance Committee: Laurie Livingston reported that membership now stands at 90, including 30 new members and 49 renewals, and 11 life members. An important challenge for next year in addition to recruitment will focus on retention of members.

Lawen Griffith and Tom Traub will be working on telescope time rental fees and strategies, and the Finance Committee will be working on updating financial policies.

Facilities Committee: John Anderson reported that work is progressing very nicely on the radio astronomy facility, storage room renovation is also well underway, and the roof is being inspected concerning leaks.

Nominating Committee: Gary Nelson reported that for next year new board members nominations will be sought.

Strategic Planning Committee: Laura Livingston suggested removing the strategic planning committee from the agenda for the next two years as the current three-year strategic plan is in place and will not require revision for two more years.

Program Committee: Walt Pickut reported that the program committee will be meeting on 7 November to develop next year's special guest speaker schedule and other program events. One notable speaker already booked (March 2024), Doctor John C. Mather, is our first Nobel Prize winning speaker. He was awarded the prize for his work on the microwave background radiation.

Solar Eclipse Committee: Tom Traub reported that the annular eclipse event in October was canceled due to overcast weather, but community educational events concerning the April 8, 2024 total solar eclipse are ongoing with community organizations, schools, and others. On-site activities are still in the planning stage.

Educational Outreach Committee: Tom Traub noted a recent project completed by M KO members Corey Swanson, Brian Ceci, and John Anderson who attended a Jefferson School Fall Fest (along with other agencies) engaging students in use of telescopes and fun competitions around that.

Tom suggested a program at the observatory available either in person or by zoom on how to purchase the best telescope for the holiday season for children and students with an interest in astronomy.

Tom also recommends setting up a basic astronomy class for beginners at the observatory possibly on Tuesday evenings. Lead time to advertise this program would have to be at least two weeks.

Gary Nelson proposed classes for the membership to learn how to use the 24-inch telescope, as a benefit of membership, as well as docent training for members who run visitor tours.

An on-site class in how to use a backyard hobby scope would also be welcome.

Technology Committee: Tom Traub reported on repairing the Boltwood unit and the Sky Camera. An ethernet cable has been installed in the radio astronomy room. Plans are underway for installing a new controller for the dome. The controller for the 24-inch scope will be repositioned to the control room. Tom is also planning to evaluate all of our computers to see which ones are able to manage workloads for memory, speed, bandwidth, and for radio astronomy.

Implications for a next round of grant applications were also discussed.

Plans are also underway to expand the library telescope project for more libraries within the Chautauqua Cattaraugus Library System

Bylaws Committee: Laurie Livingston reported no further work is needed at this time.

Public and Media Relations Committee: Corey remarked, with universal agreement from all in attendance, that Andy has been doing an outstanding job in public and media relations and notably also on the website. Andy asked for as long a lead time as possible for any planned upcoming events to be sure the promotion can be placed most effectively.

Unfinished Business: Corey offered a Library Telescope Program update. He has reached out to Kennedy, Falconer, Frewsburg, and Randolph (five people attended the recent session that John presented) for the purpose of telescope training. At this stage both Kennedy and Frewsburg have loaned out their telescopes five times

New Business: none reported

Correspondence: no new correspondence noted.

For the Good of the Association: Brian Ceci reported that member Richard Carlson informed him that Richard may have some useful supplies and a wall-mounted cabinet that he might contribute to the observatory, a very much appreciated and generous offer.

Upcoming Events: none currently slated

NOTE: Next meeting was scheduled for the Wednesday before Thanksgiving (Wednesday, November 22), but by consensus is now re-scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, board meeting at 6:30 and a general meeting at 7:30.

In the absence of additional business president Swanson called for a motion to adjourn. John Anderson so moved, seconded by Phil Stafford.

Meeting adjourned by president Swanson at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter W. Pickut

Secretary