

Marshall Martz Memorial Astronomical Association

Martz-Kohl Observatory

General Membership meeting 28 February, 2024

President Corey Swanson opened the general meeting and 7:40 p.m., delayed due to the previous board meeting running overtime due to a presentation by the new Jamestown Gazette owner and publisher, Lori Cornell.

Secretary's Report: Walt Pickut. Walt read the minutes of the previous General Membership Meeting of January 24, 2024. President Corey called for motion to accept the secretary's report as read. John Anderson so moved, Josh Campbell seconded, and unanimously approved without objection.

Treasurers Report: John Anderson. John presented the balance sheet and profit and loss report to date. Overall, we are at a positive status of \$1,194.07. This accounts for the initial investment in MKO Gift Shop promotional inventory of \$3,445.50. John will be tracking the online and on-site gift shop sales and announce that we now have a sales tax number. Walt Pickut suggested advertising MKO merchandise in the Jamestown Gazette. John noted the receipt of the Relief Zone payment of \$2000. Solar glasses sales continue in a profitable direction. Present Swanson called for motion to accept the report as presented. Walt Pickut so moved, seconded by Phil Stafford, and unanimously approved without objection.

Committee Reports:

- **Finance Committee Report:** President Swanson presented the report for Laurie Livingston, unable to attend. Committee met on Monday, February 26. Board approval is needed for the falconer Kiwanis Club to have their meeting at the Observatory on Thursday, May 23 at 6 p.m. including pizza and wings. But rather than booking the room for a fee, President Swanson amended his motion to simply state that Kiwanis was booking a tour and bringing their dinner with them for which board approval is not needed.
- **Merchandise Committee:** Present Swanson reported that a display will be set up in a display cabinet in the Welcome Center.
 - Barcode scanning for future sales is being set up. Proposal is made for merchandise committee and Finance Committee to jointly handle merchandise sales on Wednesday nights.
 - In May or June Finance Committee will reevaluate CD rates and report back to the board for possible funds transfer. The committee will meet with Tom Traub in March concerning sale of telescope time.
- **Facilities Committee:** John Anderson.
 - Storage room is under renovation
 - Library books are being offered to members with a display in the Welcome Center. The Frewsburg library has offered software for loaning and tracking books borrowed by members.

- Estimates for security system updates are being obtained from DFT.
- **Program Committee:** Walt Pickut. Doctor John Mather will be a special guest speaker for March. Other future speakers include the return of Doctor James Spann, Doctor David toot, and Joshua Thomas, Assistant Professor of Astronomy & Director of the Stull Observatory at Alfred University, and Dr. Darren Williams.
- **Solar Eclipse Committee:** Tom Traub reported that solar eclipse classes continue to sell briskly, several more eclipse talks have been completed and more are scheduled, including Happy Homeschool with almost 100 people. Warren, Chautauqua, Erie, Cattaraugus, and McKeen Counties all appear to have begun or continue their eclipse preparations by emergency services.
- **Educational Outreach Committee:** Tom Traub.
 - Tom reported that the STEM Camp has been set for the next two last week in July 2024 including an excursion to the Challenger Center. Online applications will go live on March 1.
 - President Swanson added that the telescope/library project is going well especially with respect to the telescope contribution by Marcy Kupiec for Asheville. A search for reliable vendors is underway.
- **Technology Committee:** Tom Traub.
 - Tom reported on the upgrade to the secondary focusing system including a new specialized adapter manufactured by Brian Ceci. Component integration is now underway for greater reliability.
 - The Internet switch system was moved from the main dome to the control room for better temperature control.
 - A dehumidifier has also been installed in the dome
- **Additional Projects Underway:** President Swanson reported on the ongoing project of title transfer from Gary and Nancy Nelson to MMMAA by means of a quit claim deed.
- **Public and Media Relations Committee:** Andy Felong.
 - Andy reported that at times eclipse presentation at the Observatory was probably the best attended program in a long time. Advertising was exceptionally broad throughout the region including a radio ad.
 - The online store is being advertised on Facebook with an online ad for two months contributed by Andy, reaching 5 to 6000 people in the area. To date 250 to 300 people have clicked on our store page.
 - The STEM Camp and an online payment form keyed to the official application form. Randy and Bill have been added to the public relations committee.
 - Andy requests publicity worthy contributions from members for our website.

Unfinished Business:

- Website members only page password has been changed to mko2024.
- We now have an attractive MKO bracelet artistically created by high school student that President Swanson knows, which we will sell in the gift shop.

New Business: Kyle and Tom reported on discovery of at least one more new exoplanet.

Correspondence: None to Report

For the good of the association: Dan Fellows prepared an eclipse PowerPoint and proposed placing it on the website. He was invited to submit it to board members with appreciation expressed by President Swanson.

In the absence of additional business President Swanson adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Walter W Pickut

Secretary