

The Open University Astronomy Club

MINUTES OF THE 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6th MARCH 2012

The AGM of the OU Astronomy Club was held at 7.45 p.m. in room 15 of the Christodoulou meeting centre on the OU Walton Hall Campus. 11 members were present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Barry Jones and Diana Parsons.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

These were circulated at the meeting and were posted on the website prior to the AGM. There were no amendments and their acceptance was proposed by Sheridan Williams, seconded John Walters.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Discussion took place on the focuser and mount of the telescope. Jakub led the discussion and suggested that the course focuser mechanism be replaced with a more modern one, and that the mount be checked out as the tracking in RA was suspect.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported success in getting the radio dish placed outside the observatory in such a way that it didn't affect the use of the telescope in the observatory. He also reported that the orange sodium light that affected us so badly has been replaced with much more friendly down-lighting. Discussion also took place about the "Weather station" and whether it was accessible via the internet for people to check the weather at the observatory. Apparently it is accessible, although the wind speed indicator doesn't work. There is no sky camera either.

The Chairman also reported success in obtaining several speakers over the year from within the OU. Jakub suggested that we invite Physics department to our talks, as they invite us to theirs.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer presented the annual accounts. The closing balance was £14 down on the previous year, which is small considering that there was a reduction in membership from 24 to 17. Again this had been helped by the fact that many of our speakers had been from the OU which had saved us fees and travel expenses. The club had made no application for grants from the OU club, and no equipment had been purchased.

The treasurer recommended that subscriptions remain at £8.00 for OU staff, £10.00 for non-staff members and £5.00 for students for the time being.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- The Treasurer explained that as he is standing down. A single nomination for treasurer was received from Samantha Rolfe. She was proposed by Karl Wraight and seconded by Rosalind Armson and was elected unanimously.
- The Chairman also stood down as he is finishing his PhD and nominated Jakub Bochinski as his replacement. This was proposed by Karl Wraight and seconded by Peter Hudson, and was elected unanimously.
- The secretary announced that he was willing to stand for a further year and was elected unanimously having been proposed by Karl Wraight and seconded by John Walters.

UPDATE ON THE OBSERVING GROUPS

The observing groups had made good progress, however John Walters apologised for not being as active in the Planetary observing as he had hoped. Some images have been posted to the website, but we really do need more.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

PIRATE

John Walters has started to be trained on the robotic telescopes use, and Jakub will continue with this. Jakub will also embark on some training sessions on MaximDL. The SBIG camera has been thoroughly checked out and drivers updated.

Equipment

A discussion followed about additional equipment needed as a grant could be available. Thoughts included a “webcam” type instrument such as a DMK or ATIK camera. Also suggested was a new focuser for the Meade. This latter suggestion seemed to be the favourite but further research was needed. There was a suggestion that the existing one could be overhauled.

Sky notes

Sheridan proposed a vote of thanks to Peter Hudson for his Sky Notes which he has presented every month since the 1990s. They are a valuable resource appreciated by everyone.

There was no further business and the AGM finished at 8.30 p.m.

The next AGM is scheduled for Tuesday 5 March 2013.