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General Meeting Minutes for November 1, 2023

Call to Order:

- Meeting called to order by President Art Arnold-Roksandich at 6:00 p.m.
- 34 in-person attendees at the Prescott Library

Announcements:

- Signup sheets: Art reminded everyone to sign in at the entrance table and pointed out that there are several different signup sheets:
 - Guests
 - Those wishing to volunteer with the club.
 - Nonmembers expressing an interest in the club.
 - Beginner Sessions (ABSIG).

Upcoming Meetings:

- Dec 6th: Christmas Party (replaces the general meeting). Sign up and pay online and select an entrée online. Must register by 22 November.
- Jan 4th: TBD

Upcoming Star Parties and Events:

- November 3rd: Orme School Student star party at the Orme School football field. Set up at 5:30 p.m. and observing starts at 6:16 p.m. High school students. Directions will be sent to those signing up.
- November 10th: Kiwanis star party at Camp Wamatochick. Set up at 5:30 p.m. and observing starts at 6:16 p.m. High school students.

ABSIG (Astronomy Basics Special Interest Group):

- The next ABSIG will be held on January 18th. Bring your equipment.
- The location is 2675 W. Rainmaker off Williamson Valley Road – (Art’s house).
- These meetings are designed for beginners and for those wanting to know more. Art recommended that participants also look at the observing programs on the Astronomical League website. Also get observing guides from the Astronomical League.

Club Business:

- **Reading of the Minutes:** Reading of the minutes of the October PAC General Meeting was waived. **Moved, seconded, approved.**
- **Treasurer’s Report for October 2023:**
 - Cash flow:
 - Income \$1,089.52
 - Expenses: \$1,103.56
 - Net: (\$14.04)
 - Account balances:
 - Paypal: \$77.92
 - Checking: \$3603.81
 - Savings: \$4,060.69
 - Cash: \$218.00
 - TOTAL: \$7,960.42
- **Membership Report:** As of October 31st, PAC memberships totaled 92. New and returning members included Ray & Tina Honeycutt, and Jim McDowell & Leah Cole. At this point last year, the club totaled 70 members.
- **Board Elections:** Art reviewed the slate of candidates for board positions to be voted on by the membership:

- **President** - Art Arnold-Roksandich - Member since 2019. He has served as Treasurer and as the President for the last 2 years. He is running for a third term.
- **Vice President** - Brian Blau - Member since 2021. He is running for a third term as Vice President
- **Treasurer** - Roland Albers - Member since 2021. He has served as Secretary and as Treasurer for the past year. He is running for a second term as treasurer.
- **Secretary** - Jack Evans - Member since 2022. He is running for a second term as Secretary.
- **Directors-at-large** serve two-year terms.
 - Lisa Anderson is running to replace EJ Van Horne. EJ will stay on as a webmaster. Lisa has a lot of previous club management experience. She currently has responsibility for arranging speakers and will pick up the field trip for 2024.
 - Ken Olson is running for another 2-year term. He is in charge of Astro League coordination.
 - Sussanne Vaughn will serve the second year of her term. She plans events.
 - Doug Tilley will serve the second year of his term. He is in charge of the picnic and serves as an advisor.

There were no nominations from the floor. **Those present voted in favor of this slate of nominees. Motion to approve current slate – seconded – approved unanimously.**

- **Proposed 2024 Budget:** Roland reviewed the proposed 2024 budget and presented an overview of key items recommended in the budget
 - **Summary:**
 - Total Income: \$3,805.00
 - Total Expenses: \$7,300.00
 - Net Cash Flow: \$(3,495.00)

- **Notable changes from 2023:**
 - Donations up by \$1000 (assumes 1 fundraiser)
 - Increased spending:
 - \$2000 for 1 time purchase of outreach equipment
 - \$1200 for field trip expenses
 - \$500 for speaker lodging.
 - No increase in club dues.

- **Discussion:** Susanne recommended that the club look into depositing unexpended funds in a CD to get up to 5% interest. The Board will investigate this at its next meeting.

- **Budget Details in Response to Questions:**
 - The club will join Dark Sky International this year (\$200)

 - \$2000 budgeted for outreach Equipment. Roland explained the key items here:
 - A modern computerized alt-azimuth mount with an 8-inch SCT for visual observing
 - A Smart Telescope for EAA which could be used for both outreach and membership citizen science. Example: Unistellar eVScope 2 with a 44 mm aperture, 450 focal length and an electronic eyepiece. However, it's expensive at \$4,899. The acquisition of this scope would require a membership fundraising effort. Maybe revisit this in Spring.

 - \$1200 is budgeted to subsidize a club field trip – e.g., bus ride to out-of-town location.
 - \$500 budgeted to assist with speaker lodging -- to attract speakers here.

- Suggestion – stabilized binoculars for the club. The board will consider adding this to the budget.

Those present voted in favor of the budget. **Moved, Seconded, Approved unanimously.**

- **Audience Feedback and Participation:** Club members were invited to participate in an open discussion regarding club events, astronomical events, field trips, club meetings, astronomical magazines, and other media, focus areas for the club, as well as other ideas to improve the membership experience. Each contribution to the discussion earned an entry into a drawing for 3 door prizes: The **Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Observers Handbook 2024**. Upon conclusion of the discussion, three participants were drawn and received handbooks: Jim Haley, Lynn Chakel, John Dwan
- **Summary of Feedback from Members:**
 - Lisa Anderson solicited feedback regarding club field trips. Kitt Peak and Mt. Lemon were mentioned as well as other locations. Night events were preferred. Another preference is the ability to observe with the equipment at the field trip site.

James Vaughn recommended Homolovi State Park outside of Winslow as an excellent dark sky location and recommended that the club investigate a joint meeting/star party with the Little Colorado River Astronomy Club. This is an excellent location that also offers three archaeological sites for daytime activity.
 - Brian solicited ideas for star parties. Roland suggested sidewalk astronomy in Prescott focusing on bright objects such as the moon -- perhaps in the downtown plaza. Additional locations to investigate included model airplane venues and shooting club ranges. Other suggestions were to target more star parties for springtime (to avoid the cold), to plan star parties when planets are prominent, and to plan star parties to view the quarter to half-moon.
 - Those present also recommended additional topics for future club speaker presentations: NASA's Osiris Rex asteroid sample return

mission, cosmology and theoretical astrophysics, radio astronomy, and light pollution mitigation.

- Brian asked for input regarding the club swap meet. Do we want to continue this event? Should we look for a larger venue that would allow the buying and selling of merchandise? Do we want to continue with member presentations. Those present answered these questions in the affirmative.

Next PAC Board Meeting: The next PAC Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 28th, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Prescott Valley Public Library, Second Floor PC Lab. If you would like to attend, please send a request to p@prescottastronomyclub.org.

Next PAC General Meeting: The next PAC general meeting will be Wednesday January 3rd, at 6:00 pm at the Prescott Public Library, Founders Suite. Note that there will not be a General Meeting in December. Instead, the club holiday party is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6th at the Hassayampa Hotel.

Closing:

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Report submitted by Jack Evans, PAC Secretary