

# **BVS Astronomy Club**

## Observatory Committee

Meeting Minutes, 1-14-22

### Overview

The meeting was conveyed at 1000 via Zoom. Present were Bill Norton, Claude Plymate, Teresa Plymate, John O'Bryan, Michael Lewis, Denise Lewis, and Tom Blast. The meeting followed the Agenda (attached) and was directed by the Committee Chairperson, Bill Norton. The meeting adjourned at 1100.



Agenda\_14-Jan-22\_  
Obs-Com.pdf

### Discussion

1. There were no comments on the proposed Mission Statement, Objectives, and Users as presented in the minutes of the 1-7-22 meeting. It is understood these can be altered in the future and serve only as guides.
2. Mr. O'Bryan had yet to work the IRS tax-exempt action item that is principally intended to ensure donors can claim a tax deduction. This presently has no urgency until the Committee establishes that BVSA can accept donations for the Club.
3. The Joe Horswell meeting had yet to occur or even a call-back. However, it was learned that Joe was on vacation. Although it was proposed that we go to his boss, Debbie Papac, the Committee decided to wait until a few days into the new week to give Joe time to respond.
4. The Craig Gates Observatory on El Rancho Drive was discussed. Most of the members feared possible liability issues with working on someone's private property. Insurance via the Astronomy Society and a hold-harmless agreement were possible means of ameliorating this. The use of the facility would also likely be only a few years before the property is sold but could serve temporarily until a permanent observatory on BVSA property is erected. This will be discussed further as other options are examined more fully.
5. The spreadsheet for guiding site and building selection was not discussed other than to encourage the Members to review and offer input. The decision was made to conduct a site survey on Sunday, 16 January, to help in this process. This will include the RV Campground and adjoining areas. There might also be sites on Skyline such as beside water tanks. The daylight survey should be followed by a night survey to assess and measure the light pollution. One note was that electrical power can come from batteries recharged by solar panels. This may be cost-effective compared with a generator assuming power off the grid is unavailable or prohibitively expensive. Wind is also not a factor in observation from within the building.
6. It continues to be a strong desire to improve potential Star Party sites on the valley floor, though the concern remains as to adverse impact on the observatory effort. This will be

explored with Joe Horswell when that meeting occurs and then discussed further within the Committee.

7. The Committee agreed to send representatives to the 2 February BVSA Recreation Advisory Committee meeting. Joe Horswell will be advised in due course as to number of individuals to attend and who will speak/present.
8. The Committee agreed to again withhold selection of roles and tasks for Members until the course ahead comes into greater focus.

#### Next Actions

1. Mr. O'Bryan: Examine the terms of the insurance that the Club intends to obtain from the Astronomy Society and advise the committee as to its coverage for liability.
2. Mr. Norton: Contact the RC Modeler's Club and further explore any objections to operating on their airfield surface in the short-term
3. A meeting with Joe Horswell will continue to be pursued or, if that proves elusive, with his Debbie Papac. The discussion will be guided by the *proposed* discussion points below:
  - A. Outline goal
  - B. Discuss the possible sites examined to date.
    - a. Do any of these have show-stoppers?
    - b. Will the Board support any of these or one above others?
    - c. Do you see other potential sites?
  - C. Is there liability coverage for activities on BVSA property by Clubs or such activities on private property within BVS?
  - D. If we provide a Porta-Potty will BVSA cover the periodic drained?
  - E. How do you see our chances of obtaining matching funds from BVSA?
  - F. Is it feasible for the Association to take in donations for the Club as a tax-exempt organization?
  - G. Ideas on best approach for improved Star Party sites.
  - H. Who is our best liaison during planning?
  - I. If we attend the 2 February Recreation Planning Committee meeting, what course do we take thereafter w.r.t. the BVSA Board?
  - J. Other advice for us?

#### Next Meeting

The next meeting will be conducted via Zoom on 21 January at 1000 (invitation hyperlink previously sent) with agenda provide prior to that time by the Chairperson.