

**From:** [halofficers@yahoogroups.com](mailto:halofficers@yahoogroups.com) on behalf of [David Illig](#)  
**To:** [HAL Officers](#)  
**Subject:** [halofficers] Minutes from the January 6, 2011, Board Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, January 10, 2011 2:33:08 PM

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Minutes from the January 6, 2011, Board Meeting of the Howard Astronomical League (HAL). The meeting was convened at 7:00 P.M. at the “Pasta Blitz” restaurant in Ellicott City.

The meeting was attended by President Bob Prokop, First Vice President Ed Sabala, Second Vice President and Publicity Chair Tim Laswell, Treasurer Peter Friedman, Observatory Chair Joel Goodman, Webmaster Chas Rimpo, Event Coordinator David Stein, and Secretary David Illig.

Bob Prokop opened the meeting by reading Article III, Section I, of the HAL bylaws, which defines the HAL Board of Directors. Bob then read the proposed amendment to Article III, Section I, as written by the Secretary. The amendment, if approved by the membership, will expand the board by two members, adding the Observatory Chair and the Webmaster as elected board members. There was no opposition from the Board to this amendment.

In the context of amending the by-laws, David Stein asked why we need two Vice Presidents, and suggested that we eliminate one Vice President position from the Board. The Secretary did not see a problem with having two VP's. David Stein noted that that's just one additional position for which we need to find a candidate at election time. Joel said that it would not be a big deal if one of the positions was empty for lack of a candidate. The sense of the Board was that there was no need to eliminate a VP from the Board. The referenced amendment as written by the Secretary passed unanimously.

Said amendment will be the first item to be voted on at the January meeting. If the members accept the amendment then the incumbents, Joel Goodman and Chas Rimpo, will be introduced as the candidates for the Board of Directors. Joel, who is in charge of the conduct of the election, polled the incumbent board members (all of whom were present) and all are willing to seek re-election. Others may put themselves forward as candidates up until the time of the vote.

Bob read his proposed rules (not a bylaw) for park keyholders. After some discussion of the rule that specifies the waiting period before a new member qualifies to receive a key—eight months, nine months, or a year—the Board voted to accept the rule as written, with the eight-month membership requirement.

Philip Brown and Gary Ingle have applied to the Board to receive park keys. The Board discussed their eligibility and rehashed various issues relating to keyholders in general, then the Board voted unanimously to issue keys to both applicants.

Bob asked if we need to designate alternate hosts for our scheduled star parties. After a brief discussion the sense of the Board was that this is unnecessary; in the

event a scheduled host has to cancel, someone has always been willing and able to fill in.

Bob asked if there was any outstanding business that should have been dealt with at the cancelled December meeting that need to be taken care of in January. The Secretary complained that he didn't get any cupcakes because the December party did not take place. The Secretary then suggested that, since we missed the Solstice, we should hold an Equinox Party at the March meeting. The Board did not vote on this but there was general agreement that we should do this.

Joel showed the architect's drawings of the observatory and briefed the Board on the layout of the observatory and its position in the park. There was a discussion on the fact that the wheelchair lift will comprise a part of the observing-platform floor and will most likely result in some unevenness in the floor where the observing ladder will be (this being a Newtonian reflector with the eyepiece well above normal eye level). This was deemed not to be a problem.

Finally, Treasurer Peter Friedman noted that, while HAL's operational funds and observatory funds used to be in the same bank account, they have been separated into two accounts. The balance in the operating funds account exceeds \$750, which is the amount needed for operations in calendar year 2010. Peter will transfer the surplus to the observatory account. Peter will present a financial report at the January meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

David Illig, Secretary

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