

From: halofficers@yahoogroups.com on behalf of [Davoud](#)
To: [HAL Officers](#)
Subject: [halofficers] Minutes of the December 6, 2010, HAL Board Meeting
Date: Saturday, January 01, 2011 1:59:48 PM

Minutes from the December 6, 2010, Board Meeting of the Howard Astronomical League. The meeting was held 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, Treasurer Peter Friedman, Observatory Chair Joel Goodman, Webmaster Chas Rimpo, Event Coordinator David Stein, Former President Marc Feuerberg, Secretary David Illig, and members Philip Browne, Jr., Gary Ingle, Tony Matesi, and James Willingham.

President Bob Prokop opened by saying that we need more salads for the holiday party. There will be a short program for the December meeting, then we will get on with the party.

Observatory: Joel said that there isn't much news. The architect wants to finish his work by the end of the year. There is a question of clearance for the steps leading to the observing platform. The architect is working with the County on this.

Joel also noted that there is an increased demand on HAL for outreach programs. He noted that the Robinson Nature Center will have a 50-seat planetarium. Joel is thinking of formally organizing his Celestial Searchers organization into a 501c(3) tax-exempt organization. HAL members cannot accept compensation for performing astronomy outreach. The 501c(3) would get around this by taking some of the outreach load from HAL; it would be an independent adjunct to HAL and would, for example, support the observatory in a "friends of the observatory" capacity. Joel also reported that he will teach a beginning-level astronomy class at Howard Community College (HCC).

Bob brought up the matter of the HCC Greenfest, which will be held on April 2, 2011. Bob will give a talk on light pollution. On the subject of interacting with the public, Bob asked if he is permitted, under our tax-exempt status, to recommend specific brands when asked by members of the public. The answer was "yes." Members acting on behalf of HAL may engage in non-political advocacy.

For the lunar eclipse on the night of December 20-21 we will have an all-nighter for paid members only. In the event of a cancellation an announcement will be posted on the Yahoo group.

Bob noted that there are no guidelines for park keyholders in the by-laws. The Board sees no need for such guidelines, and the consensus is that the Board should set the policy via a resolution. Bob said that we have accounted for all keys, but still need some signatures from some of the keyholders.

Elections: Bob asked if there were any other nominations (no) and if there was anyone who was unwilling to run for re-election (no). Joel is in charge of the conduct of the election with Marc assisting.

Joel suggested that the HAL Board should be expanded to include the Observatory Chair and the Webmaster as elected board members. There was general agreement that this should be done. The Secretary suggested that we make the first item in the January election an amendment to the by-laws to include the Observatory Chair and the Webmaster; then, assuming that the amendment is accepted by the membership, we announce Joel Goodman and Chas Rimpo as candidates for the Observatory Chair and Webmaster positions, respectively, and go on with the election of the new Board. The Secretary will circulate an amendment proposal to the Board prior to the January general meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 P.M., EST.

David Illig, Secretary

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