

Brent Ogle called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. This meeting included 5 main topics of business, then we adjourned to enjoy Christmas desserts and snacks.

- The Night Sky – Brent

Brent shared current night sky highlights, including discussions regarding the constellations Ursa Major, Lynx, Cancer, and Canis Minor. Discussions included Chip Davis's "The Seven Stars of the Big Dipper", the fact that recent meteor showers have affected TV reception, and Comet Lovejoy's near crash into the Sun. See spaceweather.com for more information on Comet Lovejoy.

- Minutes Review from Last Meeting

Brent shared minutes from the November meeting, and asked for any corrections or additions. The only correction was that the November minutes stated that the annual dues are \$20, when they are really \$25. The correction was noted and communicated to those in attendance.

- Annual Dinner Plans – January

In the November meeting, the club had decided to hold the Annual Dinner at the Fireside Grill in Teays Valley. After the November meeting, Brent researched the cost more, and found that Fireside would cost approx. \$25 per person. Brent checked on using Mayberry's to cater a dinner at Hansford Center – Mayberry's can provide a buffet, including delivery and setup for approx. \$12 per person.

The club voted and decided to go with the Mayberry option. The Annual Dinner will be held at Hansford Center on 1/20/12, and will be a buffet catered by Mayberry's.

A question was raised as to whether Mayberry's would provide tablecloths. Brent will follow-up.

- Report on Observatory Plans

At the November meeting, a committee (the "Telescope Replacement Committee, or TRC") consisting of Ed, Robert, Chuck, Bob, Brent, and Rodney was formed to identify options for future upgrades to the Observatory.

Rodney reported that the controller for our current telescope has been sent to a vendor in New Jersey for repair – we expect it to be returned before 1/1/12. Cost was less than \$100, and was approved previously by the Board. Rodney gave an overview of the relative capabilities of different size scopes – sharing the increase in stars visible as the size increases. He also shared measurements that the team took to set boundaries on options for upgrades – the measurements showed that we have quite a bit of flexibility in options.

Ed then shared details around options the team has identified. The options included

- Continuing use of our existing 12-inch Meade, with it's new controller
- 14-inch Meade
- 14-inch Celestron – an option here is to remove the secondary mirror and insert a camera at an additional \$1300 expense.
- New Astrophysics mount for our current scope. This option would also support use of Chuck's 16-inch "water heater" scope. We could also mount a wide view refractor alongside for wide-angle viewing.

Discussion points made –

- Suggestions were made to continue to use our existing scope with the new controller for as long as we can
- Have telescope vendors come to give us demonstrations – but we probably aren't big enough.
- Bob suggested we not spend all of our money on Observatory upgrades, but to reserve enough to pay for any unexpected expense, such as if a storm were to require repairs to the Observatory roof.
- Ed summarized advantages of the Astrophysics mount, including it's robustness, ease of repair, and ease of star alignment.

- Bob made the point that area light pollution offsets some advantage of larger scopes – the group shared general agreement.
- Rodney pointed out that we could consider installing a light pollution filter, and shared a good handout that summarized many filter options.

The group in attendance decided to table the discussion, and renew it at a future meeting. There was strong appreciation for the great work done by the Committee.

Ed will write up the options in more detail and share at a future meeting.

- Nominations for New Officers

Nominations were taken as indicated below for election of new officers

President	Rodney
Vice President	Chuck
Treasurer	Bob
Secretary	John
Board Members	Dan Pleska, John Willson

Additional nominations will be solicited at the January meeting.

The group then retired to enjoy Christmas desserts, snacks, and good company.

Submitted by John Willson, 12/17/11