

Bylaws and Constitution

Astronomical Society of Harrisburg, PA., Inc. (ASH)

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<http://www.astrohbg.org>

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ASH Bylaws last updated January 11, 2003

**ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF HARRISBURG, PA. INC.
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS:**

A. CONSTITUTION:

ARTICLE I- NAME:

The name of this society shall be "The Astronomical Society of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Incorporated".

ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES:

The primary objective of this society shall be to promote the interest, education and advancement of its members in amateur (observational) astronomy. The Society also considers as important the education of the public in astronomy, astronomical research, space exploration, the fight against light pollution and other areas of interest that are closely related to astronomy.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP:

The rights and privileges of membership shall be enjoyed by all those who have been duly admitted into the society, after first having complied with the requirements of the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS, TRUSTEES AND ASTRONOMICAL
LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE.**

Section 1. The officers of this society are a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer who shall be elected by the members of the society to serve a term of (1) year in accordance with the Bylaws. A Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers and (6) Trustees, elected by the members of the Society, in accordance with the Bylaws.

Section 3. Removal. Any officer, or trustee may be removed from office for any good and sufficient cause by a majority vote of the members entitled to vote at an election of officers.

Section 4. A representative to the Regional Council of the Astronomical League shall be elected for a term of (3) years, as set by the Council. The election shall be according to the Bylaws. The representative, who shall serve as correspondent to the League, is not entitled to a vote in Executive Committee meetings. However, in the event that the representative is also a member of the Executive Committee, the voting privilege as an Executive Committee member shall be retained.

Section 5. All Executive Board (Executive Committee) members are required to attend at least 50% of Executive Board meetings in a one year period covering one May meeting to the next, and not missing more than 3 (three) meetings in a row. Failure to comply will be reviewed by the executive board, and further action or removal from office may result as

necessary. In cases of leniency, the officer would not have to come before the general membership for reinstatement.

ARTICLE V - CONDUCT OF BUSINESS:

Section 1. Society business shall be conducted in accordance with the bylaws of the society.

Section 2. A quorum of the Society shall consist of (15) members present, at least (2) of whom shall be officers of the Society.

Section 3. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of (6) members.

Section 4. A 2/3 majority is required for any motion to be passed.

ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS:

The Society Constitution and Bylaws may be amended through the following procedure:

i) The proposed amendment is presented and read at length at an Executive Committee meeting. The presentation shall include a full and clear explanation of the problem or need being addressed, and how the proposed amendment solves the problem or meets the need. This step allows input from the Executive Committee to be incorporated into the proposed amendment.

ii) The proposed amendment is presented and read at length at a regular meeting of the Society. This step allows input from the general membership to be incorporated into the proposed amendment.

iii) The proposed amendment is published in the Stardust and posted on the Society website. The publication shall include a full and clear explanation of the problem or need being addressed, and how the proposed amendment solves the problem or meets the need. This step allows those not present at the meeting in step ii) above to examine and comment on the proposed amendment.

iv) The proposed amendment (as published in the Stardust and posted on the website) is presented and read at length at a regular meeting of the Society. The proposed amendment is then voted on provided that a quorum is present. Adoption of the proposed amendment requires a minimum 2/3 majority.

B. BYLAWS:

ARTICLE I - MEETINGS:

Section 1. A regular meeting of the Society shall be held on the second Monday of each month through the year. The purpose of the regular meeting shall be to promote the interest, education and advancement of its members in amateur (observational) astronomy and any closely related topics, and to conduct business requiring a vote of the general membership as determined by the Executive Committee. All regular meetings are open to the public.

Section 2. March Regular/Nominations Meeting. The nominations for the Society Officers', Trustees' and Regional Representative shall take place at the regular meeting in the month of March of each year.

Section 3. April Regular/Annual Meeting. The meeting held in the month of April shall be the Annual Meeting for the election of officers and trustees and the reading of annual reports. The newly elected officers and trustees shall be installed and shall assume their duties at the Executive Committee meeting immediately following their election. An orderly transfer of notes, contact lists, records and other materials and information shall occur at that time.

Section 4. Special Meeting. A special meeting of the members may be called at any time at the direction of the President, a quorum of the Executive Committee, or on the written request of at least (6) members. Those calling the special meeting shall provide to the President a written explanation of the reason(s) therefore. Thereupon, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify the members of the meeting and its purpose. Only topics directly related to the stated purpose of the special meeting will be considered. A change in topic or additional topics shall require written notice to the President, Secretary (via the President) and to the members (via the Secretary) prior to the meeting.

Section 5. The Executive Committee shall hold meetings on the third Saturday of each month. Meeting dates for the Executive Committee meetings shall be published in the Stardust. Executive Committee meetings shall be open to all regular members.

A special meeting of the Executive Committee (i.e., one in addition to the regularly scheduled meeting) may be called by the President or on the written demand of three or more Officers or Trustees. Those calling the special meeting shall provide to the Secretary a written explanation of the reason(s) therefore. Thereupon, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify all of the Executive Committee members of the meeting (when it is scheduled) and its purpose. Only topics directly related to the stated purpose of the special meeting will be considered.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP:

Section 1. Any person interested in amateur astronomy shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Application for membership in the Society shall be in writing and shall set forth the name and address of the applicant. The application and the dues for one year shall be submitted to the Membership Committee. The applicants name and home municipality shall be published in the next Stardust. Membership shall be voted upon at the meeting following publication in the Stardust. On acceptance, the Membership Committee shall forward the dues to the treasurer and give the new member a membership card.

Section 3. Student Membership: Membership in the Society shall include a "Student Membership" applicable to those who have attained what is commonly known as the eighth grade of education and have not reached

their 24th birthday and possesses a valid Student ID. Regular membership shall begin at age twenty four. Student members, under the age of 18, shall not be eligible for elective office nor shall they share the voting privileges granted regular members. Student members, under the age of 18, shall be limited to the privileges granted regular members to the extent necessary to preserve and protect the Society in its corporate status and without interfering with the obligations imposed by its insured and tax-exempt position. To this end, Student Members, under the age of 18, will not be granted the unsupervised use of the premises and its facilities and will not be granted the " Key" privilege of regular members unless written permission is obtained from a parent or legal guardian, and authorization is given by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Dues. The cost of regular membership and student membership shall be as determined annually by the Executive Committee and approved by the membership for the forthcoming fiscal year. Each membership shall be entitled to one vote. A family membership shall entitle two adults, immediate family members, which shall include husband, wife, and children with legal address at the same household the right to vote. The two people holding voting rights will be listed on the application.

Each membership is entitled to one mailed copy of the society newsletter, the Stardust. All members shall have the privilege of subscribing to the magazine Sky Telescope and Astronomy magazine on an annual basis through the Society by paying the prescribed annual subscription rate in addition to and with their annual dues.

In addition, the following select classes of membership exist to support the Society with the prescribed dues:

Membership Class Annual Dues (\$)

Student Member	15.00
Regular Membership	35.00
Family Membership	50.00
Contributing Member	50.00
Sustaining Member	75.00
Supporting Member	100.00
Corporate Member	250.00
Sponsor Member	500.00
Life Member	1000.00

All members of all categories shall be subject to all the applicable rules and regulations of the society, its Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 5. Delinquent Members. Members who fail to pay their annual dues on or before their membership anniversary date shall forfeit all rights and privileges as members of the Society. Delinquent members shall be sent notification 30 days prior to their anniversary date.

Section 6. Keyholders. The facilities (buildings) at the Naylor Observatory are locked. Access and use of the facilities requires a key or the onsite presence of a member with a key (a keyholder). Any adult member may qualify for and obtain the key privilege after fulfilling the following obligations:

- 1) Must be a member in good standing.

- 2) Must have successfully completed the Key course and an Observing Apprenticeship during which competent operation of the equipment and facilities, and an elementary, working knowledge of the sky are learned and demonstrated. The observing apprenticeship shall consist of scheduled and informal instruction and astronomical observing at the Naylor Observatory. It shall include at least 2 nights (scheduled or volunteered) as an observing assistant on public observing nights.

- 3) The member must perform a mandatory summer public observing session and any one of the below services during each year a key is held:
 - a. Participation in group (scouts, church, etc.) observing as a keyholder.
 - b. Participation on a (working) committee.
 - c. Participation as an observing assistant on 2 public observing nights.
 - d. Participation in an ASH authorized presentation to another group, club or society.
 - e. Participation in other service-activities authorized by the Executive Committee.
 - f. Participation in a workday scheduled by the Maintenance Committee Chairman.
 - g. Participation as an officer or trustee in the society.

h. Participation in public observing as a keyholder a second time during a given year.

Verification shall be by a signed activity log sheet from the responsible Keyholder or appropriate committee chairman to the Observatory Maintenance Committee chairman or the Site Administrator.

- 4) The key privilege shall be suspended by a vote of the Executive Committee under the following conditions:
 - a. Scheduled public observing is missed once per year during 2 consecutive years,
 - b. Demonstration of consistent or frequent abuse, negligence or carelessness with the equipment or facilities.

The Executive Committee shall review all cases and determine by a vote (written ballot) any action to be taken, including suspension of their key privilege, and its duration. Members shall be notified in writing of the reason(s) for a review at least one week prior to the review. The member shall have the right to appear at the review, and to appeal suspension to the general membership.

Section 7. **Honorary members** shall be voted in by the Executive Committee and shall receive the club newsletter. Honorary membership does not include the voting privileges granted to paying members.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS: DUTIES

Section 1. President. It Executive Committee. He/she shall appoint members of committees, and shall exercise all executive powers usual to his office, performing such other duties as may be delegated by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Vice-President. It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to perform all the functions of the President in his absence, and in such case shall exercise all powers conferred upon him. He shall also carry out such additional functions as may be delegated to him by the President or the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Secretary. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a written record of the proceedings of the Society, and of the Executive Committee, and to make public the minutes thereof. The Secretary shall attend to all correspondence, and shall perform all duties usual and incident to the office.

Section 4. Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all dues and other monies due the Society and to have custody thereof. He shall keep a set of books showing such receipts and shall make such disbursements as shall be authorized by the Executive Committee (not to exceed \$50) or the members. He shall make a financial report at each Executive Committee meeting or, if unable to attend, shall give the report to another officer for submission. The Treasurer shall make an annual budget showing income and expenses for the coming year for presentation at the June Executive Committee meeting. All committees requiring significant monetary expenditures (more than \$50) shall submit an itemized budget request to the treasurer at the May Executive Committee meeting for inclusion in the

Societies annual budget. The proposed annual budget must be approved by a vote of the Executive Committee. Any divergences from the budget during a given month shall be noted in the financial report for that month presented at the following Executive Committee meeting. The Treasurer shall also perform all other duties, which are usual to the office.

ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF COMMITTEES:

Section 1. Executive Committee. All items of business, policy or otherwise requiring action on the part of the Society or pertaining to assets of the Society shall be presented to the Executive Committee for discussion, consideration and action. The Executive Committee shall fill temporary vacancies in the list of officers, authorize the expenditure of money for the ordinary and regular expenses of the Society, and shall attend to such other business as shall be required by the Society. Those items requiring a vote of the general membership shall, after due consideration, be published in the next Stardust and scheduled for presentation at the next general meeting. The Executive Committee is responsible for insuring that those representing the Society or acting on the part of the Society are qualified to do so. The Executive Committee may authorize expenditures of up to \$50.

Section 2. Nominating Committee. The President shall appoint at the regular February meeting a Nominating Committee of at least three members, which shall nominate one or more eligible candidates for each office and shall report thereon at the March meeting.

Section 3. Auditing Committee. The President shall appoint at the March meeting an Auditing Committee, consisting of two members, who shall complete an audit of all books and records of the Society at least one week prior to the April meeting. The Auditing Committee shall make its report at the April meeting after the Treasurer has made his report.

Section 4. Membership Committee. The Membership Committee shall be responsible for promoting membership in the Society, and providing for the needs of new members. Membership applications shall be distributed and received by the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee shall be responsible for the development and effective distribution of introductory materials for new members and for distribution of the Members Handbook. The Membership Committee shall maintain a complete list of the membership.

Section 5. Observatory Maintenance Committee. The Observatory Maintenance Committee shall be responsible for the maintenance of the Societies astronomical equipment, facilities, and grounds at the Naylor Observatory. Persons should report all maintenance needs to the Observatory Maintenance Committee chairperson. The Observatory Maintenance Committee shall submit an annual maintenance budget request to the treasurer at the May Executive Committee meeting. Emergency maintenance expenditures must be authorized by the Executive Committee.

The Observatory Maintenance Committee chairperson shall act as or appoint a Site Administrator. The Site Administrator shall maintain a file of all activity log sheets. The Site Administrator shall maintain a supply of keys to

be distributed to members meeting keyholder privilege requirements (see Article II, Section 6). Monies collected for keys shall be turned over to the treasurer on a monthly basis. The Site Administrator shall post all scheduled site activities (group star parties, ASH member star parties, workdays, etc.) on the Societies website on a monthly basis.

Section 6. Public Outreach Committee. The Public Outreach Committee shall be responsible for scheduling public observing assignments (keyholders and assistants) at the Naylor Observatory, and at other locations (parks, municipal buildings, etc.) as appropriate. Public observing assignments are to be posted on the societies website and in the Stardust one month prior to the start of the years public observing events. Thereafter, assignments are to be posted in the Stardust on a monthly basis. News releases, interviews, articles and the like require the prior approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 7. The Publicity Committee shall be responsible for organizing activities publicizing the Society. News releases, interviews, articles and the like require the prior approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 8. Special (temporary) or New Committees may be created by a vote of the Executive Committee. The responsibilities of new committees shall be defined by the Executive Committee at the time of their creation. Permanent committees shall be added to the Bylaws by amendment.

Section 9. Members (other than officers) must have the approval of the Executive Committee to represent the Society in any capacity.

Section 10. Persons resigning from an appointed position (such as a committee chairperson) shall turn over all pertinent materials, records, etc., to the Executive Committee no later than at the Executive Committee meeting immediately following their resignation.

ARTICLE V - ELECTION OF OFFICERS, AND TRUSTEES

Section 1. The officers, trustees, and Regional Representative shall be elected by written ballot at the April meeting. In the event that there is only one nomination for a position, the vote may be taken by a show of hands. The newly elected officers shall take office at the next Executive Meeting immediately following their election, and shall serve until their successors have been installed.

Section 2. The officers shall serve for one (1) year. In the event a vacancy occurs before the expiration of the full term, a special election shall be held to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Section 3. The trustees shall serve for two (2) years, three (3) of whom shall be elected each year. In the event a vacancy occurs before the expiration of the full term, a special election shall be held to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Section 4. Nominations for the officers shall be made by the Chairman of the Nominating Committee and in addition, nomination for all such offices may be made from the floor.

Section 5. Persons leaving office or resigning shall turn over all pertinent materials, records, etc., to the Executive Committee no later than at the Executive Committee meeting immediately following an election or their resignation.

ARTICLE VI - RULES OF ORDER:

Section 1. The order of business shall be such as is required by the occasion.

Section 2. Robert Rules of Order shall be the authority on all questions of Parliamentary Law and Procedure unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 3. All motions requiring action on the part of Society members and/or the financial resources of the Society shall first be presented to the Executive Committee and be put to a two-vote approval process. For the motion to be adopted a minimum 2/3 majority will be required for each vote. The first vote shall decide on the merits of the motion as these relate to the objectives of the Society. If the motion is found to have merit, then the person(s) making the motion shall provide a demonstration of commitment for consideration. This shall include (as applicable) a list of members committed to performing any required tasks, a detailed budget, and a timetable showing milestones and completion dates. In the event that the Societies annual budget does not include the required financial assets, the motion must include an alternate source of financing. Such financing must be acquired prior to any purchase, or alteration of Society assets or property.

If the motion is approved (2nd vote) by the Executive Committee, and the required financial assets are available, the motion with the demonstration of commitment (budget, list of committed members, etc.) shall be published in the next Stardust and voted on by the general membership at the next general meeting. A minimum 2/3 majority will be required for the motion to be adopted.

Section 4. Under no circumstances shall the Constitution and Bylaws, and/or rules contained within the Constitution and Bylaws, and/or Robert's Rules of Order be suspended.

ARTICLE VII - DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY

Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the corporation shall exercise only such powers as are in furtherance of the exempt purpose of the organization as set forth in section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its regulations, as the same now exist or as they may be hereafter amended from time to time, provided that the foregoing amendatory change shall at no time or under any circumstances be amended or repealed. In addition, in no event, including liquidation, shall any property of the corporation inure, either directly or indirectly, to the benefit of the members.

Article VIII RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE A.S.H.

PREMISES

1. As used herein, the word "premises" designates the ground owned by the Astronomical Society of Harrisburg, PA., Inc., which organization is represented by the word "Society" wherever it appears herein. The phrase "Society member(s)" applies only to a member or members of the Society who is/are in good standing.

2. Activities of any kind may not be held on the premises unless the activities are under Society Member supervision. Activities involving nonmembers shall be restricted to the months of March through November, when the property is generally free of snow. In the event that snow cover occurs when an event involving nonmembers is scheduled, the event shall be cancelled and optionally, rescheduled. An organization consisting of minors, such as Boy Scouts, public school classes, etc., will be under the supervision of adults provided by said group plus the supervision of at least two adult Society Members. The Society Members present assume full responsibility for proper conduct of the activity and for proper use of the facilities and scientific equipment. All activities on the premises shall be conducted in an orderly manner and in such a way as not to reflect in a derogatory or disreputable way on the Society. Any activities on these premises shall be governed by these Rules and Regulations and the purpose of the Society as contained in the Society Bylaws.

3. No construction, building or appurtenance may be erected or placed upon the premises without specific approval of the duly appointed acting Building Committee and subject to the Final approval of the Executive Committee.

4. Use of the Observatory facilities is confined to those activities connected with the objective of the Society as set forth in the Constitution: to promote the interest, education and advancement of its members in amateur (observational) astronomy, and to stimulate the interest of the public in this branch of science.

5. Infractions or violations of any of these Rules and Regulations shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee as soon as known and with pertinent information and names of violators. The Executive Committee, in quorum, shall decide on proper reprimand or penalties.

6. Any improper actions or language at any ASH meetings or functions on or off the Naylor premises will not be tolerated. Any such infractions can be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee, which will review the matter and take whatever measures it deems appropriate. If the perpetrator does not agree with the decision of the executive board, he or she can make an appeal to the general membership.

7. Any member entering the Naylor Observatory Buildings is required to sign in and out on the **Naylor Observatory Usage Log** to protect the Non-Profit Tax Exempt Status of the Society. If the member is attending a formal ASH activity, (for example, Public Observing, Star Parties, etc.), the member must also sign the provided **Activity Sign-In Sheet**, used to track services performed by members.

Article IX SECURITY PROCEDURE

1. Each item of Society property shall be marked permanently and conspicuously.

2. No equipment shall leave the site except by special approval of the Executive Committee.

3. The bookcases in the front and back of the administration building shall be enclosed, with the exception of the top shelf in the front of the building. Observing aids such as charts, etc., will remain on the top shelf so they are available to Society members for observing. The enclosed bookcases, where the Society's books and antique telescopes will be secured, will have key access. The books shall be catalogued. Library procedure: To obtain books or other materials, Society members shall make arrangements of convenience with any key holder member to sign out and pick up book(s) and/or diskette(s) at the site.

4. The door off the vestibule to the interior of the administration building should be keyed to match the keyed front door to the building. Purpose: When star parties are being conducted, members can lock this door for security, which will still give the public access to the bathroom. This will allow Society members to participate at the telescopes during these functions instead of the waiting in the administration building or going through the inconvenient back door exit/entry routine.

5. The Executive Committee shall maintain a security fund to accumulate revenue to cover the costs for the following items: a. Changing locks when deemed necessary (by the Executive Committee) on doors and, if necessary,

on cabinets within the administration building; b. Duplicating keys when locks are changed.

6. Activity log(s) should be maintained by the Society member who is directing the activity. This will insure records are being kept on members who did or did not fulfill their scheduled assignments. It is the responsibility of each participating member to sign the activity log(s). The Observatory Maintenance Committee will use the activity logs to determine if the privilege of key holder status should be renewed and/or new members should be awarded the privilege of key holder status.

7. Any member removing books from the Society Library is required to sign the record-keeping log. Members removing equipment with the permission of the Executive Committee must also sign the log. The member is responsible for any damaged or lost items.

Article X SOCIETY OFFICERS, TRUSTEES AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

A. OFFICERS: President; Vice President; Secretary; Treasurer, six (6) Trustees, 3 elected each year;

B. It shall be the duty of the President to preside over all meetings of the Society and of the COMMITTEES:

Webmaster;
Public Outreach;
Education Chairperson/Coordinator,
Observatory Maintenance;
Meeting Programs;
Star Parties;
Apprenticeship;
Long Range Planning;
Library;
Publicity;
Membership;
Astronomical League Correspondent;
Light Pollution Control;

C. EDITOR:

Newsletter Editor