

Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association,

December 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Jack Chastain in the Coykendall Auditorium at SUNY New Paltz, NY, and on the online application Zoom.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as published in the newsletter with the following corrections:

- Corrected the spelling of Amy Bartholomew's name in the membership report.
- Corrected the entry under old Business that the Plattekill event was for the Girl Scouts and they observed outside and especially the Moon.

Officer's Reports:

President: Jack Chastain was present.

- Election of officers tonight! (See below).
- Candidates for the Board of Directors are Alex Passas, Steve Dittmar, Willie Yee and Jack Chastain.

Vice President: Dave Sherman was present.

- Nothing to report.

Recording Secretary: Jim Rockrohr was present.

- Nothing to report.

Publicity: Tim Denman was present.

- Nothing to report.

Newsletter: Rick Versace was not present.

- (No report).

Treasurer: Eric Myers was present.

- See newsletter for the current numbers.
- Annual insurance bill of \$936.00 paid.
- Per the bylaws, Eric will present a budget for 2026 at the January meeting.
- Eric is investigating having the club finance a weather station at Taghkanic State Park.
- Telescope lending program:
 - o Michael has prepared a MOU (Memo of Understanding) and passed it to the library for their review.
 - They have some changes. Eric tied up at work, but they will be reviewed soon.
 - o The library would like to have an instructional video.
- 501(c)(3) application
 - o Eric tied up at work, so no progress.
 - If under \$5,000 gross receipts no tax filing required.
 - There is an EZ form to use for application.

Outreach: Mike Goldstein was present.

- We had a good star party at Cairo Elementary School; lots of kids and parents.
- Possible presence at a Steam punk festival in October.

Speakers: Bart Henin was present.

- No report.

Solar System Ambassador: Willie Yee was present.

- Willie has ordered the outreach pins.

Membership: Steve Dittmar was present

- See newsletter.

Webmaster: Steve Dittmar was present

- Everything seems solid for now.
- Will be adding the MHAA Library pages next.

Old Business:

- **Orange County 4H, Otisville** – 11/22, good evening.
- **Last club star party** – moved to Saturday. Sparsely attended.
- **Arlington High School** star party – LOTs of people. Chilly but good seeing.
- **Cairo Elementary School** – 12/8, got some good views.

New Business:

- We need a valuation for the ETX125 that was donated to us for the donor's taxes.
 - o Jack working on it.
- Night Sky Network awards for 2025 coming up.
 - o See Willie if you have participated in 4 or more outreach events.

Elections:

- The slate for the 2026 officers is:
 - o President – Steve Dittmar
 - o Vice President - Mike Goldstein
 - o Secretary – Jim Rockrohr
 - o Treasurer – Eric Myers
 - o Newsletter Editor – Rick Versace
 - o Membership Coordinator – Steve Dittmar(?)
 - o Publicity – Tim Denman
 - o Outreach – Michael Goldstein
 - o Speakers – Bart Henin
 - o Directors:
 - Alex Passas
 - Steve Dittmar
 - Willie Yee
 - Jack Chastain
 - o Voting was conducted on the MHAA website and in person at this meeting.
 - o It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed to accept the slate of candidates for 2026.

Upcoming Events:

- **Next Club Star Party** – 12/19, Lake Taghkanic. Rain date 12/20. Be sure to RSVP.
- **Opus 40** – 12/20. See Rick Versace.
- **Kent (Huestis Park)**– 12/20 See Jack.

Reminders:

- Paid members get access to club equipment (telescopes, imagers, trackers) and club DVD/VHS video library.
 - o See the website or Jack for a list of available items and how to pay to join the club.
- Paid members can also get access to the club Slack channels. Contact Jack or Eric for access.

Observing Reports:

- Nothing reported.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM. There were 9 Zoom windows open at the end of the business meeting and approximately 15 people were in the auditorium. **The next meeting is January 20th, 2026, on Zoom and in person. Check MeetUp for details and link. Zoom link will be sent to all those that RSVP.**

As traditional the December presentations were by members followed by goodies for a Holiday party.

- Scott Ewart: Update on his progress making a 26" telescope.
- Bart Henin: "Apollo 11 – What Went Wrong"
- Eric Myers: "Using Astrohopper"
- Willie Yee: "Quantum Tunneling Magic"
- Michael Goldstein: A story about Harlow Shapley and Milton Humason as told by Halton Arp.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, January 18, 2026.

MHAA Treasurer's Report for January 2026

As of 18 January 2026 we have \$9,463.99.18 in our bank account, \$3,080.08 in our PayPal account, and \$26.00 in petty cash, for a net gain of \$130.84 since last month.

Our monthly payment for Google gSuite on the first of the month was \$36.33, and since the last meeting we've paid two payments of \$16.99 for Zoom. We received \$172.25 in dues for 7 new members, and \$271.40 for 11 renewed memberships. I paid \$50 to Willie Yee to cover the cost of award pins, and \$193.31 for 6 more months of service on Meetup.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer

MHAA Membership Report

As of January 19, 2026

Club Membership: 106 total

Members	Students	Honorary from SUNY New Paltz
98	6	2

Social Network Engagement

Slack	Meetup	Groups.io	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube
24 active of 128	2999 (+13)	132 (+10)	1285 (+10)	254 (+2)	568 (+167!)

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Dittmar
President, Membership Coordinator