



Lincoln Hills Astronomy Group (LHAG) Operating Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures contained in this document shall be established and modified by vote of the LHAG membership. These policies and procedures do not require approval of the Sun City Lincoln Hills Community Association (SCLHCA) but must not conflict with their policies and procedures.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Process for joining LHAG:

Prospective members must complete an LHAG Membership Application Form. The Form is available online at www.lhag.org or can be obtained at any of the LHAG general meetings. New membership dues of \$15.00 per household will be assessed and included with the completed membership application. New membership applications and dues received after July 1st will cover the following calendar year membership period.

2. Annual LHAG membership dues and roster:

Annual membership dues of \$15.00 per household will cover a calendar year and are expected to be renewed by January 1st of each year. Active members who do not renew their membership by April 1st will be changed to inactive membership status. Annual dues may be made by cash or check to "LHAG" and will be collected and documented by the current LHAG Treasurer.

An official membership roster will be maintained from the sign-in sheets during the meetings of the LHAG or any of its sub groups. All attending members are required to sign in on the attendance roster for each meeting. The meeting rosters will be used to review and validate annual and active membership. Non-residents may participate in Club activities only by invitation and accompanied by a valid LHAG member.

3. Confidentiality:

Personal information contained in the LHAG membership applications and official meeting rosters shall not be made available for any commercial, political or personal benefit.

4. LHAG Communications and information

Official business communications to and between the membership may occur through telephone, email, or US mail.

The LHAG Steering Committee (SC) will approve dissemination of club information, education and notices regarding club meetings, presentations, and events through such media as the

SCLHA Compass magazine, the official club website, flyers, newspapers, magazines, etc. All LHAG meeting agendas and recorded meeting minutes will be maintained by the SC.

5. LHAG Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The LHAG currently incorporates two SIGs described below.

Cosmology Interest Group (CIG)

The CIG focuses on the study of the origin, evolution, and eventual fate of the universe including physical cosmology involving the scholarly and scientific study of the origin, evolution, large-scale structures and dynamics, and fate of the universe, as well as the scientific laws that govern these realities. The CIG meets on the third Monday of the month at 6:45 pm.

Telescope Interest Group (TIG)

The TIG consists of like-minded enthusiasts eager to share their knowledge and love of the sky. TIG meetings offer opportunities to learn about the ongoing night sky and current observation equipment, methods, software observation applications, and astrophotography.

Accompanying star parties offer the chance to practice observing techniques, try out new equipment, learn how to use a variety of astronomical observation equipment, and how to capture astronomical images. The TIG meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6:45 pm.

6. LHAG Meetings

General LHAG meetings shall be conducted on the first Wednesday of the month at a predetermined time and location unless otherwise established by the SC. Monthly meeting location and time will be posted in email to the general membership and the LHAG website at www.lhag.org.

7. Voting and quorum during LHAG meetings

Ten (10) percent of the members present during a LHAG meeting shall constitute a quorum for voting on general and election issues. A simple majority is needed to approve voting questions.

8. Changes and additions to Scheduled Meetings and events

Permanent changes to the schedule of general meetings may be made by a majority vote at a LHAG meeting, or by the SC. Additional Meetings or events may be held for such reasons as Star Parties, field trips, special interest groups, conducting tutorials, discussing special interests, or assisting new telescope owners; however, no LHAG business will be conducted at these meetings.

9. Bylaws review and amendments

The SC shall periodically review the bylaws to verify currency with SCLHA club bylaw requirements. Amendments to the LHAG bylaws or Operating Policy and Procedures may be made at any time and approved by a majority quorum vote of the LHAG membership.

10. Finances:

Revenues and expenditures of the LHAG will be managed by the SC Treasurer. At least one additional SC member shall be authorized to conduct financial business with the bank in which LHAG funds are deposited. Individual disbursements over \$75.00 shall be supported by a receipt and must be pre-approved by the SC. A financial status report will be presented to the SC during their monthly meetings. All financial disbursements should be made by LHAG checks.

11. Rules of Conduct

The LHAG expects that both General and Steering Committee members to conduct themselves at any meeting or star party in a professional manner that will reflect positively on the Astronomy Group. A determination by the SC that a member has engaged in conduct materially and seriously prejudicial to the interests or purposes of the LHAG may be cause for termination of membership.

12. Disciplinary Actions / Termination of Membership

(a) Grounds for Termination. The membership of a member shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

- (1) The member may terminate their membership either by mail or e-mail
- (2) Upon a determination by the board of directors that the member has engaged in conduct materially and seriously prejudicial to the interests or purposes of the organization.
- (3) If the member has not renewed membership by the end of March that member will then be dropped from LHAG membership. Renewing a membership after the March cutoff date still requires the full dues rate for the year not prorated.

(b) Procedure for Expulsion. Following the determination that a member should be expelled the following procedure shall be implemented:

- (1) A notice shall be sent by first-class or registered mail to the last address of the member as shown on the membership records, setting forth the expulsion and the reasons therefor. Such notice shall be sent at least fifteen (15) days before the proposed effective date of the expulsion.
- (2) The member being expelled shall be given an opportunity to be heard, either orally or in writing, at a hearing to be held not less than five (5) days before the effective date of the proposed expulsion. The hearing will be held by the SC in accordance with the quorum and voting rules set forth in these bylaws applicable to the meetings of the SC. The notice to the member of his or her proposed expulsion shall state the date, time, and place of the hearing on his or her proposed expulsion.
- (3) Following the hearing, the SC directors shall decide whether the member should in fact be expelled, suspended, or sanctioned in some other way. The decision of the SC

shall be final.

(4) The LHAG has provided for the payment of dues by members, any person expelled from the group shall receive a refund of dues already paid. The refund shall be prorated to the nearest quarter, returning only the unused balance remaining for the period of the dues payment.

LHAG Steering Committee (SC):

The SC shall be responsible for managing the business and activities of the LHAG as well as recommending any policy changes to the general membership. The SC is comprised of five elected members from the general membership.

1. Term of service:

SC officers shall serve for a two-year term beginning on June 1 and may be reelected to serve one additional consecutive two-year term. Election of SC members shall alternate with two members being elected in one year and three members being elected the following year. SC officers who served four consecutive years must wait at least one year before assuming another SC position.

2. Meetings and voting

The SC shall meet on the last Wednesday of the month. Additional meetings can be scheduled by a quorum agreement of three or more members of the SC. The motion to ratify a vote shall be by majority of a quorum. Any member of the general membership may attend SC meetings but may not vote. Members of the SC are expected to attend all SC meetings on behalf of the membership and participate fully in discussions and voting.

3. Programs and Presentations:

The SC shall review and approve all meetings, programs, presentations, and activities involving the general membership and special interest groups. Planning and scheduling should occur three to four months in advance of the planned event.

4. Absences from meetings:

If a SC member misses three (3) consecutive Board meetings without valid extenuating circumstances, the SC may choose to consider the position vacant. Replacement of a member of the SC whose position is vacated for any reason shall be by majority vote of the SC. Members so appointed shall serve the remaining term of the vacant position.

5. SC officers and responsibilities:

Chairperson:

- Provide leadership and supervision to the overall operation of the LHAG and preside at the general membership and SC meetings.
- Responsible to ensure the development of the agenda for the monthly membership meetings.

- Review and approve all cash and equipment donations to LHAG.
- Work with the appropriate SCLHA staff to schedule meeting room reservations and provide the physical arrangements necessary for monthly meetings as well as special workshops, seminars, etc.
- Initiate appropriate action, as necessary, to deal with any issues affecting the business and activities of the LHAG.
- Present letters of appreciation and/or recognition to individuals presenting a program to the general LHAG membership or the SCLHA at large.

Deputy Chairperson:

- Assume responsibilities of the Chairperson during his or her absence.
- Provide oversight of the two special interest groups.
- Maintain the files of meeting agendas, minutes.

Program Officer:

- Responsible for acquiring and scheduling the monthly programs and presentations at the general LHAG meetings and other special presentations sponsored by the LHAG.
- Organize and Chair a Program Committee, as necessary, to help identify and enlist speakers and programs.
- Determine the needs of the presenter regarding equipment, Internet connection or special needs and make necessary arrangements for acquisition.
- The Program Chair will arrange for letters of appreciation and/or recognition presentations for the speaker.

Communications Officer:

- Ensure that a monthly article is provided to the SCLHA Compass magazine.
- Provide articles for other publications as approved by the SC.
- Maintain all communications, documents and files.
- Send monthly email to the membership.
- Ensure the LHAG website is maintained current

Treasurer:

- Maintain oversight of all LHAG funds, assets, and fiscal documents.
- Responsible to receive revenues and pay all LHAG bills that have been pre-approved by the SC or by the membership.
- Will compile the LHAG financial report to the general membership, at least twice a year including the Annual Meeting in May.
- Shall maintain all the LHAG financial documents (revenues, receipts, expenses, and membership rosters).
- May arrange for one or more assistants to collect dues and take attendance at meetings and other related events.

Technical Advisors

- The LHAG supports individuals who aid the LHAG Members and the SC in their respective areas of expertise.
- Assistance may include such topics as general astronomy, equipment selection and use, viewing, imaging, cosmology and other related subjects.
- These individuals attend the SC meetings to assist in determining meeting content and activity planning.
- The Technical Advisors also set up the meetings and activities of any special interest groups.
- The list of the Technical Advisors can be found on the LHAG website.

6. Election of SC members and voting

The election of the SC will take place at the regular May meeting and their duties shall commence on June 1. Election results will be submitted to the SCLHCA via the SCLHCA club contact update form.

The SC shall appoint a Nominating Committee at the February SC meeting, consisting of members from the general membership and/or the SC. The Nominating Committee members will be announced at the March LHAG meeting.

The Nominating Committee shall present their list of candidates to the general membership via email prior to the May general meeting. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor during the May LHAG meeting. No member will be a candidate without first obtaining his/her assurance that he/she will serve if elected.

In the event that elections cannot be held due to emergencies or extraordinary circumstances, the Steering Committee positions will continue to be filled by the current individuals until elections can be held at the next scheduled election cycle.

In the event that a Steering Committee member is unable to complete his/her term of office, the Steering Committee will appoint a member in good standing that is willing to serve the remainder of the departing member's term.

7. Donations

The LHAG may accept donations in the form of cash or astronomical equipment. Whether or not a donation is accepted will be decided by the Steering Committee. Cash donations will be deposited in the LHAG bank account in a timely manner and the monies used for the benefit of the LHAG and its members.

Equipment donations may be accepted. Disposition of the equipment will be the responsibility of the TIG. TIG managers will ensure that the equipment is used or distributed in a manner that is fair to all LHAG members and put the equipment to the best possible use.

The SC will ensure that all donations are acknowledged in writing to the donor.

Effective Date: August 23, 2018

Revision 1 February 3, 2022

Revision 2 January 19, 2024 (Annual Dues update)