

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Minutes

Submitted by Christa Hay
05/31/03 Schoharie Cabin, 4:00 PM

Meeting called to order at 4:13 PM

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Nominating Committee Chairman Robert Simmons announced the results of the Trustees' election. New Trustees were seated at this time. Welcome to Jay Siemion and Jeff DeGroff and welcome back Jon Allison.
3. Attendance:
Officers: B. Addis, B. Folsom, J. Levinson, C. Hay
Trustees: V. Kappler, E. Lucas, P. Murphy, S. McLuckie, M. Warner, A. Lehmann, J. Allison, J. DeGroff, J. Siemion.
4. Absent without Proxy – J. DeGroff (he was not contacted before and, as he is a new trustee he did not know about the meeting). V. Kappler – made contact with President before meeting.
5. The Board of Directors moved that Mike Chu and Emily Davis be appointed proxy for Vince Kappler and Jeff DeGroff respectively.
2nd by Warner
Passed unanimously
6. President's Report – Bob Addis - Attachment A. (found at end of document)
 - Gave thanks to the trustees Tom Rider and Craig Cantello for their efforts while serving on the board.
7. Vice President's Report – Bill Folsom - Attachment B
8. Treasurer's Report – Joe Levinson - Attachment C
7. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay - Attachment D
8. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter- no report.
9. Knox Cave Preserve Report – Emily Davis – oral
 - Cave was open in time for NRO – tiny bit of ice but not dangerous, active visitation, reminder to everyone to let Emily know if there are cars without passes.
 - 2 Second Pit property is for sale.
 - Barbara Heard has written a book on caves, Knox cave is included.
10. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel – Attachment E
11. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report - Jon Allison- oral
 - Ice is out of sink hole
 - Levys was filled in with mud – needs to be cleaned about 1-2 hours of work
 - Mike Chu recently mowed

12. Publications Committee Report - Christa Hay
 - Newsletter went out
 - Asking for updated email addresses for electronic delivery of newsletter
13. Website Subcommittee Report – Norm Berg - Attachment F
14. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner – oral
 - Working on updating email and mailing addresses
 - Renewal notices sent out quarterly
 - Currently around 150 members, if purchase Clarksville could go above 200
 - Donation letters sent out
 - 2nd in size for Conservancies
15. Land Trust Liaison Committee Report – Mike Warner – oral
 - Meeting with project manager at Schoharie Land Trust, positive towards NCC holding title, conservation easement (act on the books)
16. Legal Committee Report – Dan Werner - no report
17. Addis moved to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice President will preside.
2nd by Levinson
Passed unanimously
 - a) Addis – Clarksville up date – spoke with owners – June can speak for the other sisters that co-own the property- they want \$5,000 (\$50,000 for 10 acres) an acre. They do not want the liability anymore. Several options as to purchasing:
 - 1) not see trees worth that amount) This needs to be checked before proceeding or including logging in final financial report.
 - 2) Offer lower than asking - \$42,500.
 - 3) Pay \$35,000 and have them hold \$15,000 mortgage.
 - b) Allison – heard back from Albany County and they are donating the Gregory entrance to us and conservation easement to Albany Land Trust.
 - c) Much discussion on Clarksville: What is cave worth to the NCC?, important cave to acquire, need management plan for grant money, need to talk to town planning on issues for subdivision, check with Foundation on their interest in this, do we need cave if we have Gregory entrance, now setting price for caves – do not want this on paper for negotiating in future.
 - d) Warner – need to move on the Clarksville purchase, nominated himself as project manager.
 - e) Engel- spirited discussion on Clarksville management plan issues, ask owners of 2 Second Pit if they are interested in subdividing out, will set up a sink hole cleanup at Thatcher in fall time
 - f) Engel and Warner – will check on the easement process with Albany County Land Conservancy and Schoharie Land trust. ACLC wants it to go through for Onesquethaw.
 - g) Addis – need to move the metal from Tufa Cave cleanup to Carlisle recycling.
 - h) Smothers- need a NCC road show for getting new members.

(Note: 5:30 PM J. Allison leaves - selects T. Rider as Proxy)

18. Folsom moved to close the Committee of the Whole. Items from this meeting will be introduced as new business.
2nd by Murphy
Passed unanimously

19. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the March 15, 2003 meeting.
2nd by Lehmann
Passed unanimously
20. Folsom moved Tonya Smothers be appointed Membership Chairman.
2nd by Lucas
Passed unanimously
21. Motion postponed from last meeting:
Kappler moved the NCC will reimburse the \$40 registration fee for _____ to attend the Fundraising Training Workshop scheduled for Wednesday, August 6, 2003 at the NSS Convention. The recipient shall make a presentation to the NCC Board of Trustees at the fall meeting.
2nd by McLuckie
Levinson moved to postpone until next meeting.
2nd by McLuckie
Passed all (Folsom absent)
- Levinson moved to amend motion to say “.... reimburse the registration fee....”
2nd by Mcluckie
Passed unanimously
- Warner moved to amend motion to say “....one member to be appointed by the president”
2nd by Folsom
Passed unanimously
- Final Motion: Kappler moved the NCC will reimburse the registration fee for one member to be appointed by the president to attend the Fundraising Training Workshop scheduled for Wednesday, August 6, 2003 at the NSS Convention. The recipient shall make a presentation tot he NCC Board of Trustees at the fall meeting.
- Passed unanimously**
22. Lucas moved that the NCC bans the use of pressure treated lumber at all NCC properties.
2nd by Folsom
Passed unanimously
23. Addis moved that the Acquisitions Committee negotiate a purchase price for Clarksville Cave, which reflects possible tax savings to sellers. Funding may include 1st and 2nd mortgages, private loans, donations and grants. Initially the NSF will be consulted as a possible funding source.
2nd by Lehman
Passed unanimously
24. Davis moved that the straw vote made at the last meeting concerning Clarksville Cave management is not a directive to those preparing the management plan.
2nd by Folsom
Passed unanimously
25. Lucas moved to thank Craig Cantello and Tom Rider for their service on the board.
2nd by Murphy
For – Rest, Opposed – Rider
Passed

26. Addis moved that Warner be appointed Preserve Manager of the proposed Clarksville preserve.
2nd Siemion
Passed unanimously
27. Lucas moved that we spend up to \$125 to convert Bill Folsom's PowerPoint presentation to slides.
2nd by Levinson
Passed unanimously
28. Addis moved that the Officers will conduct an Executive Committee meeting on August 17th at Hay/Addis household in Cohoes at 10:30 am.
2nd by Levinson
Abstained – Rider, Lucas
Passed Rest
Passed
23. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held on September 20th at the Warner household in Schoharie at 11:00 am.
2nd by Warner
Abstained – Hay
Passed Rest
Passed
24. Addis moved to adjourn.
2nd by Lucas
Opposed – McLuckie
Passed Rest
Passed

Meeting adjourned at 6:34 PM.

Attachment A
The President's Report

Bob Addis
5/31/03

Acquisitions are really moving along for the NCC. Clarksville: I tramped the back (north) property line and ran into Chuck Porter's flaggings of the approximate corners. I then divided the north line into two roughly equal segments and took the aerial mapping prepared by Christa Hay to the Albert's. They were very impressed with the aerals and liked the dividing of the parcel. Negotiations have the price for ____Acres between our offer of \$35,000 and the Alberts' asking price of \$50,000. As this is being written and before the Board meeting, I will visit the Albert's again and see if we can narrow the gap. Read the agenda-it's being updated if something moves.

Ella Armstrong: See my attachment for my proposal to the realtor to take to the owner. Basically, I have offered \$15,000 for 14 Acres - the assessed value from the tax rolls. Note: This may or may not be the market value. I proposed \$5,000 down and that the owner hold a private mortgage for \$10,000, 7 % interest, 4 years, quarterly payments roughly \$750. I enhanced the proposal with an alternative of the owner granting a conservation easement with the Albany County Land Conservancy and getting a big tax deduction/savings.

Federal taxes reviewed & mailed on 5/15/03.

Earth Day @ Howe Caverns, 4/26-27, saw Board members manning the booth & continuing good relations with Howe. Thanks to Tom Rider for heading it up. We hope to establish a permanent display @ Howe's newly refurbished Lodge area.

At the Spring NRO, Vince Kappler got a good start (4 vertical posts in the ground) on the changing station for Onesquethaw.

Excellent NRO, much thanks to Bill & Robin, and the NCC had a strong presence there.

Spirited elections for 3 Board seats. Thanks to all who ran, and thanks to the Nominating Committee, Bob Simmons.

Norm Berg is revising our website in some interesting ways, so keep an eye out!

Ok - So some folks are doing things. How about you?

THE NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

P.O. BOX 254

SCHOHARIE, NY 12157

MAY 30, 2003

To: Century 21 Realty, Sandy Cole

Reference Listing: Knox Cave Rd., Albany Co., Tax Parcel No. 46.1-37.11

As President, I have been authorized by the Board to offer \$15,000.00 for the abovementioned undeveloped land with the understanding that this is the parcel containing a sinkhole and/or cave locally known as "Ella Armstrong Cave".

We propose to offer \$5,000.00 cash and for the owner to hold a private mortgage for \$10,000.00, 7% interest, for four (4) years, payments to be made quarterly. I do not have access to amortization tables at this time, but I estimate quarterly payments to be approximately \$750.00.

Alternative: The owner could grant a conservation easement to the Albany County Land Conservancy, Inc., a 501.c.3 organization under IRS tax status. This easement assures that the land will be "forever wild", i.e. can not be developed. This action obviously greatly lessens its value, **and this decrease in value is a tax deduction to a nonprofit organization.** At this point the owner could sell the land to the NCC, receive cash, a flow of payments, and a substantial income tax savings. **Please bear in mind that this is not to be meant to be legal advice, and that the owner should consult with his or her attorney and/or accountant.** The point here is that the NCC wants the ACLC to hold a conservation easement on all of its Albany County properties because the NCC is a 501.c.3 organization itself with similar goals.

I trust that we can open a dialogue on this subject, and we can expand our explanations on any of the above which may seem unusual or unfamiliar.

Contacts:

Bob Addis, Work: 7-3:30 - 914-244-3428

Home & Fax: 518-237-1165

Attachment B
Vice President's Report

5/31/03

Spring NRO 2003 wrap-up

By most yardsticks NRO was very successful. 242 NRO registrants frolicked during a weekend of perfect weather. All advertised activities happened in a timely fashion thanks to lots of NCC teamwork. While not entirely final pending resolution of the NSS insurance cost, here are the numbers on what the NCC netted:

NRO registration fees:	\$793
Tshirts/mugs:	\$420
Guidebooks:	\$123
Auction:	\$948
50/50:	\$137
Donations, etc:	\$79

Total profit from event: \$2500

Tonya Smothers obtained 14 new NCC memberships at the NRO as well.

My thanks to all who helped make the NCC a team player for the NRO!

South Bethlehem Cave update

This acquisition has been stalled for several reasons, not the least of which is Callahan Industries' requirement of \$2 million in liability insurance. If the NSS approves of the management plan, in theory the NSS could lease the cave and have the NCC manage it. While the NSS only has insurance up to \$1 million per incident, it is hoped that this would prove adequate. I emailed the lawyer for Callahan with this proposal in Chuck Porter's absence on 4/24/03, and have not heard back. Chuck to follow up upon his return.

New member volunteers

I joined the NCC at NRO and am writing to offer my services as a volunteer. My career goal is to work for a land trust in my area, so I welcome any opportunity to further my qualifications in this field. I have a law degree with a certificate in Natural Resource and Environmental Law. My computer skills include desktop publishing and web design. I recently moved to northeastern PA from Utah, where I was a ranger at Timpanogos Cave National Monument. I see this opportunity as a great marriage of my desire to pursue a career with land trusts and my love for caves. Please let me know how I can best contribute to the Conservancy.

Thanks,

Brad Phillips
bradladora@aol.com

Attachment C
Treasurers Report

For
The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.
31-May-03

As of 7-May-03 we had \$15,290.92 in our bank account. We still have some bills to pay for NRO, including CCG - \$650.00, HHG - \$934.50, and VCA - \$645.00. In addition, at the last accounting, we had assets around \$12,000 being held by the National Speleological Foundation. I am planning to talk with the foundation at convention about mortgaging of Clarksville. In addition the Sellecks preserve has been removed from the tax rolls.

Respectively submitted,

Joe E. Levinson

Attachment D
Secretary's Report

Christa Hay
5/31/03

Clarksville – worked up a map for the Alberts with the property lines, cave entrances and the halfway division using the aerial orthophotos as the background. Being able to see in “real-life” the area made it easier for them. They have requested another map for the property they live on, which I have completed. Bob Addis is delivering this map.

NRO – Picked up the mugs and T-shirts - thanks to Howard Lanthrop for designing the logo. Set up the NCC table and worked registration. I put together a NCC membership package for Tonya Smothers, our soon-to-be Membership Chair and she took off on a roll with it. We sold a few T-shirts, stickers, lanyards and carabiners. Money, checks and memberships delivered to Office Committee at meeting. Thanks to everyone for helping and supporting NCC and NRO.

Minutes: - Board meeting minutes delivered in a timely manner. EC minutes not so timely but finally delivered to the Board.

Attachment E

Onesquethaw Cave Report - May 2003

Several things have occurred at Onesquethaw Cave that are worthy of note.

There are two incidents of flooding in the Barnyard. In the first case on 4/28 a group of with the Union College Outing Club entered the cave with permission during the mid-evening. They proceeded to the end of the cave and returned. Upon climbing up from the Duck Under, they discovered the Barnyard was flooded and not passable. They waited at the top of the Duck Under until about 3AM at which time the water in the Barnyard had subsided enough to permit their exit. The trip leader noted where he thought the water was entering the passage (on the south side of the passage just in from the Broken Room). He also noted has foot prints the group had left in the first crawl were still there. They exited the cave about 4AM. I have been provided with an incident report.

The following weekend another group entered the cave and after passing through the Broken Room found the cave sumped shut near the beginning of the Barnyard. In both case there was no evidence that water had enter through the entrance. With the assistance of Tom Rider, I have ascertained that the area of the cave in question lies under the field east of the driveway leading to Helderlaan, the large white house set back from the road. As the field has been placed back in cultivation this year, I have not been out into the field. (It is interesting to note that the owner of the house nearest the spot reported that his well has been roily this spring.)

Prior to the farmers coming in to till the land and plant, I went out and marked of the incipient sinkhole in the field. My contact at the Albany County Land Conservancy (ALCLC) had requested this be done. The ACLC has also re-affirmed their plan to turn Onesquethaw Cave over to the NCC but it is not clear just when this will happen. The ACLC would keep a conservation easement on the property.

It is my intention to resign as Onesquethaw Cave Chair shortly after the transfer of ownership occurs.

On another note regarding our relationship to ACLC I was a bit disturbed to see that construction had started on the changing area without consulting with me. Not only is it in the wrong location, but it uses pressure-treated wood. While the ACLC does not have an out and out ban on the use of pressure-treated wood, they would prefer that it not be used unless there is a compelling reason to the contrary. As there is a local source of locust 4x4s, it would seem there is no reason to use pressure-treated wood.

Because of the toxic nature of this material (it contains copper and arsenic) I strongly recommend that the NCC consider banning its use on NCC preserves. Besides being a sound environmental decision, I believe this would be the act of a good neighbor. At present, all our preserves are in rural area where people draw water from wells. Pressure-treated wood potentially contaminates those wells. I understand there are people that will ridicule this proposal, but as this is something I deal with professional, I think I have the authority to speak on this matter.

Attachment F

Report of the NCC Webmaster:

May 31, 2003

No significant changes have occurred with the website over the last few months, and no significant changes are expected before cold weather returns (a weather sensitive site?). Please continue to send content for the site to Norm. Once he posts the content, he will email the content provider telling them that the material is on the site for their review.

-- Norm

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== Norm Berg, Webmaster

== Northeastern Cave Conservancy

== nb.website@cox.net

== www.caves.org/conservancy/ncc/

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