

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Board Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Christa Hay

06/19/2004 Schoharie Caverns, Schoharie NY 2:00 pm

Meeting called to order at 2:10 pm

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Nominating Committee Chairman Robert Simmons announced the results of the Trustees' election.
See attachment A-2
Paul Murphy – re-elected
Joe Armstrong and Peter Youngbaer newly elected
New Trustees to be seated at this time.
3. Addis thanks the past members, Steve McLuckie and Ed Lucas for their service.
4. Attendance:
Officers: B. Addis, B. Folsom, C. Hay
Trustees: J. Allison, J. Armstrong, M. Warner
5. Absent with Proxy – J. Levinson – Emily Davis Proxy
6. Absent without Proxy: J. DeGroff, P. Murphy, V. Kappler, P. Youngbaer, A. Lehmann, J. Siemion
(had J. Armstrong as proxy)

Board nominated proxies from the floor.
7. Warner moved to elect as is for proxies: Steve McLuckie, Ed Lucas, Mike Chu, Chuck Porter, Paul Woodell and Bob Simmons.
2nd by Folsom
Passed unanimously
8. President's Report – Bob Addis – Attachment A
9. Vice President's Report – Bill Folsom – Attachment B
10. Treasurer's Report- Emily Davis – Attachment C
 - Total amount in checking = \$40,690.65
11. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay – Attachment D
 - Electronic votes from April 28, 2004:
Levinson moved to allocate up to \$300.00 for the closing on the Gregory's entrance to Clarksville, pending the donation from Albany County. The \$300.00 breaks down to \$150.00 for hiring Mike Breen to perform the closing, and \$150.00 for closing fees, and transfer taxes etc.
2nd by Hay
Passed unanimously
Levinson moved to allocate up to \$100.00 to register in Vermont as a foreign corporation doing business in Vermont.
2nd by Hay
For- Rest, Abstained-Siemion
Passed
12. Acquisitions Committee Report – Chuck Porter – Attachment E

13. Conservation Committee Report – Joe Armstrong – oral
 - Knox Cave cleanup Part II- about 10-15 people on June 19th – before NCC meeting. Removed nails, anchors, wires
 - Gage and McFails cleanups will be scheduled.
14. Publications/Publicity Committee Report – Christa Hay - oral
 - Newsletter went out
 - Working on display for convention
 - NCC to provide a la carte breakfast at convention campground for fundraising
15. Fundraising Committee Report – Alan Traino – Attachment F – presented by B. Folsom
16. Membership Committee Report – Tonya Smothers – oral by C. Hay
 - Following up with all new members with welcome emails that include an attached copy of the newsletter. Members without email will get a hard copy welcome letter and newsletter.
17. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis/Mike Warner – oral
 - New system working well – when receive bank deposits send email out to EC, Fundraising and Membership Chairs.
 - Standard procedure for all other.
18. Knox Cave Preserve Report – Emily Davis – oral
 - Early summer visits, youth groups are setting up for summer
 - Thanks for cleanup
19. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel- oral by E. Davis
 - Early summer visits and youth groups are setting up for summer
20. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report – Jon Allison – oral
 - Light visitation so far this summer
 - Need to attach bolts – need large drill
 - Levys has some fill – rock seems steady
 - Log in Sellecks – but is accessible
21. Proposed Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Warner – oral
 - Stewardship training with John Layton is set up, this will be to train selected people and then they will train the rest of the volunteers.
22. Website Committee Report – Norm Berg – Attachment G
23. Land Trust Liaison Committee Report – Mike Warner – oral
 - Would like to transfer committee to Jon Allison as Jon is currently working with the Land Trust.
 - Jon- is currently working with Land Trust on Gregory Entrance
24. NCKMS 2005 Report – Mike Warner – oral
 - Working on preliminary budget
 - Will have written report within a month – need for NSS Convention
25. Legal Committee Report – Dan Werner –oral by B. Folsom
 - Liability insurance – what are others paying?
26. Addis moved to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice President will preside.
2nd by Simmons
Passed unanimously
 - Folsom – status of Clarksville contract – see motion no.30
 - Allison – easement issue – can we do a lease for parking.

- Allison – when we close in August on Clarksville will we start stewardship right away? Yes.
- Folsom/ Davis – issues on promotional items for Clarksville – hand out what we currently have – do not pay extra. NSS convention – NCC not allowed to “sell” at booth – but can receive donations for promotional items.
- Hay – ordered new mugs to sell at convention – specifically for Clarksville – contract close enough that we will add Clarksville Cave to the mugs.
- Porter – meet the Thook entrance owners – very nice and we should say hi when we see them.
- Davis – was contacted about NCC selling lanyards at OTR – C. Hay to contact Tim Brown and Tom Rider will order lanyards.

27. Folsom moved to close the Committee of the Whole. Items from this meeting will be introduced as new business.

2nd by Lucas

Passed unanimously

28. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the March 27, 2004 meeting.

2nd by Davis

Passed unanimously

29. Folsom moved Paul Murphy be appointed Chairman of the Finance & Investments Committee.

2nd by Porter

Passed unanimously

30. Addis moved to substitute the following for Item #29 of the 12/14.03 meeting minutes: The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. accepts Attachment A-1 as the final contract for the purchase of Clarksville Cave, Albany County, New York subject to minor corrections and additions by the NCC attorney. The purchase price will be \$50,000.00.

2nd by Porter

Davis moved to postpone for electronic email vote by 07/02/04.

2nd by McLuckie

For – McLuckie, Davis, Wamer, Simmons

Against – Armstrong, Folsom, Porter, Allison

Abstained – Lucas, Chu, Hay, Woodell

Breaking vote by President Addis – Against

Motion failed

Original motion vote

For – Rest, Against – Davis

Passed

31. Davis moved to appoint Jon Allison Chairman of the Land Trust Liaison Committee.

2nd by Lucas

Passed unanimously

32. Davis moved up to \$300.00 for 5 years be allotted to purchase a domain name and appropriate services for the NCC website.

2nd by Allison

Passed unanimously

33. Davis moved that the NCC advance \$1000.00 as a deposit to the Quality Inn for NCKMS 05.

2nd by Warner

Passed unanimously

34. Addis moved that the Officers would conduct an Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2004, 2:00 pm at Hay/Addis house in Cohoes. Annual NCC BBQ for all members to follow.

2nd by Allison

Passed unanimously

35. Addis moved that the next NCC Board Meeting would be held on September 12, 10:00 am at Speleobooks.

2nd by Davis

Passed unanimously

36. Addis moved to thank the NSS Schoharie Caverns Nature Preserve for the use of their facilities.

2nd by Simmons

Passed unanimously

37. Addis moved to adjourn.

2nd by Armstrong

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 5:13 pm

There was a potluck BBQ following and since the Helderberg -Hudson Grotto monthly potluck and meeting was about to start we all enjoyed sharing the meal and the rest of the evening.

Attachment A-2
REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE
NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY
JUNE 2004 BOARD ELECTIONS
JUNE 18, 2004

A total of 144 ballots were mailed/distributed to the membership based on the mailing labels and email provided by the Office Committee. A total of 47 ballots were received by the June 17th 2004 deadline, which contained 105 individual votes. The results are as follows:

1. Joe Armstrong		27
2. Peter Youngbaer	27	
3. Paul Murphy		23
4. Ed Lucas		21
5. Thom Engel		2
6. Bob Simmons		2
7. Emily Davis		1
8. Peter Grant		1
9. Rick Pingree		1
Total:		105

There was an average of 2.23 votes per ballot with a range of 0 to 3 votes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert W. Simmons
Nominating Committee Chair
Northeastern Cave Conservancy
June 18, 2004

Attachment B
Vice President's Report

6/19/04

Update on establishing an NCC legal presence in Vermont

Peter Youngbaer has graciously agreed to be the NCC's registered agent in the state of Vermont. The check to New York State has been mailed to the Secretary of State requesting a Certificate of Authority (basically stating that the NCC is currently paid up taxwise and is a legal NY entity). Once we have this in hand I can send the \$15 check and application to Vermont to be a Registered Foreign Agent. Upon notification from Vermont that our application was accepted, the NCC will legally be able to do business in that state.

Indian Oven Cave in Columbia County up for sale

I was contacted via email by the Columbia Land Conservancy as they are looking for advice in purchasing about 150 acres of land that includes Indian Oven Cave, a 641 foot long popular sacrificial cave in southeast Columbia County, NY.

The CLC does have insurance and plenty of assets, so the contact sounded quite interested when I suggested that the NCC take the liability off their hands by leasing the cave to us after they complete the sale. I also offered that the NCC would help them formulate a management plan and pointed out the ones currently on our website. Protecting the CLC from liability seemed to be the number one priority.

CLC plans to speak to Heidi Wagner of TNC who manages Sam's Point Preserve for her take on liability issues in New York, then speak to the CLC lawyer on next steps.

One suggestion for fostering good will with the CLC would be to publicize to the cave community that the cave is closed pending negotiations with the CLC. The owners of the access trail (not the cave owners) have started vigorously enforcing their No Trespassing policy.

Dutchess Quarry Caves status

An article that ran in the May 23rd edition of the Times Herald-Record, *History Needs a Bit of Help – Battle to Save Caves that Show us Their Past*, spurred the following information from a local caver familiar with the area:

I've been to them in the late 1980's. They were/are archaeologically significant in that in the 1950-1960's numerous digs were conducted on the cave floor and the outside entrance area(s) and clovis projectile point(s) and associated (charred wood) debris (ca. 10,000-12,000 years ago) were recovered they were dated to the commonly believed first native American migration into the Americas and specifically to the southern New York area.

As for sporting caves, they are not. They are actually numerous small rock shelters in limestone with thick bands of good dense tool grade chert (American version of flint, which by the way is *technically* only found in chalk deposits). As I remember they were on the outside face of a limestone quarry. They are in the Pine Island vicinity in Orange County. I have detailed directions to them and have archaeological literature on them, somewhere. I can find out info if you need it.

Attachment D
Secretary's Report
06/19/2004

Convention: The 2004 NSS convention has offered the NCC a fund raising opportunity. We will be serving a continental style breakfast at the campground. There is a kitchen we can use and they have a Gordons (like Sysco or Sams) and also a super Wal-Mart near by where we can buy items to sell (fruit, muffins, yogurt, juice etc).

I am also in the process of purchasing some nice camp style mugs to sell at convention. Have not set a price yet but would have one regular price and then another price with free refills all week. Need to be able to distinguish between the two.

To make this work we will have to have NCC members help. I will be setting up a schedule. There will also be the booth that will need volunteers at it as much as possible. We will also be selling raffle tickets. The prizes are items worth \$100, \$200 and \$300. So far we have the \$100 and \$200 items donated by Peter Jones and Speleobooks.

Spring NRO Dinner: The dinner went very well and we sold close to 100 meals. The final profit to the NCC was \$561.12. Thanks to all volunteers!

Communications: As requested sent out two thank you notes to local business that have helped us with fund raising, the Carrot Barn and Sarah Goodrich. We have borrowed equipment from Sarah; and the Carrot Barn has given us fresh items that have been an extremely good value. Sent reports to both the NCC newsletter and the Northeastern Caver. Communicated with our Membership Chair and we now have a system in place to great new members.

Attachment E

ACQUISITION COMMITTEE REPORT
NCC Board Meeting, 19 June 2004
by Chuck Porter

This past week we have had some exciting developments at CLARKSVILLE CAVE, which will be discussed in more detail orally and in the President's report.

A June 12 cave radio survey by Brian and Bonnie Pease on the surface, with Bob Addis, David Porter and myself working underground, showed that the entire portion of the Perry Avenue section--up to the northern NCC property boundary--lies within NCC property. A low crawlway plugged with dirt and rocks just south of this point (a few feet north of the Anvil formation) is within inches of the eastern boundary. If dug it might continue under the remaining Alberts property. But it's about 60 feet below the land surface here. We marked the approximate eastern boundary of the NCC land here with red plastic squares nailed to trees and the east side of Perry Ave. with yellow squares.

On June 15 Bob Addis and I met with June and Sonny Alberts and our lawyer Mike Breen at Clarksville and agreed on final details for a contract which Breen is now drawing up.

On April 28 Bill Folsom, Alan Traino and I, joined by Ken Fortuin in part, checked out the karst features on the Ella Armstrong property and dropped Two Second Pit.

The apparent NW corner of the 14-acre parcel with ELLA ARMSTRONG CAVE is near a utility pole about 155 feet north of the Ella Armstrong entrance (measured by pacing). It's a concrete post with the upper 4-6 inches of concrete eroded away and rusty reinforcing rods sticking up. Going south 208 feet from this (to make a square acre) puts us near the southern end of the guardrail and just before the high limestone terrace to the south.

We also walked back from the road about 200 feet to see what else might be on the 1-acre parcel and found some small insurgences but nothing exciting. Nice old trees though.

If the NCC gets this property we should build a debris strainer to keep roadside trash from washing into Ella A cave. We should also make a hardened path alongside the road, for with the new guardrails on both sides it's dangerous to walk on the road. Parking would probably have to be at the Knox parking lot 1100 feet south.

Ken took us to KNOX ANNEX which is fed by one of the new culverts under the reconstructed Knox Cave Road here (another culvert feeds Ella Armstrong). It is larger and more complex than I had remembered but is mostly manmade. You can see how slabs were laid across to make a ceiling. But there is a real cave crawl going off to the east. It's low and nasty, with a slumped slab presently blocking continuing. The cobble and dirt bed could be dug though.

Knox Annex must be on the southern 14-acre parcel and I don't really see how we could justify trying to acquire this for the NCC. It should pretty much ³take care of itself.² But if the owner wanted to give this little drainage and insurgence to us we could certainly accept it as a gift.

Then we went across the road and dropped TWO SECOND PIT. We had permission (arranged through Ken) from Darren Bassler, the friendly new owner of TSP and I thanked him on the phone later that evening. We only had to clear out a couple logs but the swamp stream was flowing merrily down the crack. At that hour of the early afternoon the sun was shining directly down the crevice.

The entrance pit goes down about 10 feet from field level, then there's a 20-foot section slanting down at a very steep angle. Sort of like the bottom of the drop in Acks Shack. The tight nasty spot which was dynamited wider in 1970 is here and if you go thru just right it's not hard. But I got soaked while thrashing around not able to see where my feet were because it was too narrow to turn my helmet around. This led

directly to the top of a 60-foot silo. Incredible! What a beautiful pit, especially with sunlight coming in. I had always thought this whole cave was tight and nasty, but only that 20-foot section is. The waterfall cascading down in waves makes it even more splendid, and if you're careful you can stay fairly dry coming down (but not going up; I got really soaked under the full flow).

We were in for more surprises at the bottom. There are a number of crawlways going off, and another smaller dome. Much of this was described in the initial report (Kastning, 1970) but I had never imagined what a nice little cave this is. The crawlways go off at a level about 6 feet above the floor of the pit (maybe a contact?) and are clogged with glacial clay. They're intricate and mazy, and keep on going. I turned back, as did Alan, when the main crawlway just got too tight and twisty. But they could definitely be dug and probably connect to Crossbones Cave. Or maybe Skull?? The flow from the waterfall seemed to be draining into a low passage at floor level and completely clogged with cobbles. At one point along the clay crawl we saw a hole in the floor from which the sound of running water (from the floor-level drain?) and good air flow was coming.

Straight-line GPS distance from TSP to Crossbones is 233m or 764 (+/- 50) feet.

It looks like we could take a small chunk off the very back of Bassler's property to add TSP to the Knox Preserve. The problem is that this chunk and the Knox Preserve would meet at opposite corners of a four-way boundary, touching only at a point. The owner says he wishes to keep all his lands for hunting purposes, but perhaps he could be convinced to relinquish TSP for liability-relief purposes. Maybe we could grant him hunting rights. Bassler has already whacked some trails thru the dense brush and only a little more trail-clearing would be necessary to get to TSP.

When Art and Peg Palmer get back in late July we plan to survey and photograph TSP. After that the Rockeaters may want to do some digging. TSP is a real gem and would be an excellent addition to the Knox Preserve. It's definitely not for fat cavers and requires vertical experience and some agility. But the stream probably is dry much of the time.

On May 11 Roland Vinyard took me to the legendary SCHROEDERS PANTS CAVE three miles west of Dolgeville, in Herkimer County. Roland had permission from the owner, whose name I've forgotten. He's in the midst of a divorce and Roland thought he might be willing to sell the 10 acres of woods with the entrance(s). He showed up while we were gearing up and is a friendly guy.

We found the main entrance shown on the Cherry Valley NRO Report. A granite memorial to Jim Mithcell, who died there in 1965, is above the entrance. The entrance is now a small crawl off a shallow sink but you can see how the sink was filled with boulders and that it was formerly an easier entrance. Wouldn't take much to dig this open, but it's better left this way to discourage casual entry because the interior is extremely well decorated. Flowstone and stal everywhere--it's hard to find bare rock. Mostly walking passage but narrow with a squeeze or two. Stream and pools but you can stay dry most of the way.

We went in as far as the point where it turns into a nasty tight crawl, described as worse than the Gunbarrel, and just a few feet before the pit where Mitchell died. The last few feet of this passage is supposedly very difficult and it took the trio from Boston Grotto five hours to get in and rig the pit, just before the Mitchell tragedy.

Looking over the ³confidential² account Clark Downey made of this in 1970, it's evident there is MUCH more cave below. Lots of unreported exploration went on in here 40 years ago and there are pits, huge chambers, and other intriguing karst features in the vicinity. Supposedly the cave waters were dye traced to East Creek 3 miles away.

Mitchell's body was dropped to the floor of the pit after the botched rescue. The 6² rescue drill holes are said to be in the ceiling of the pit room. We saw no evidence of fracturing from the massive amount of dynamite supposedly set off in the drill shafts, but of course didn't get all the way back to the pit room. Kevin Dumont found most of Mitchell's bones below when he went in the back entrance around 1990.

The back entrance may be a deep sink nearby which is presently plugged. It doesn't go down as far as the pit room drop, but could have passages which descend to that level. The owner said it used to be open and had boards shoring up the sides, with other boards across the top. He stuck a stick into the matted leaves at the bottom while we were there, and it went way down.

The cave is in the Ordovician Black River Group which contains several limestones. The nearby ³back door² sink is a couple hundred feet SW and easy to find. There are other sinks nearby and we saw at least three parallel fissure trends showing up in these sinks (with the ³back door² two fissures over from the joint along which the main passage trends).

I don't think the NCC should acquire this cave - at least right now - for several reasons:

- 1) The parcel is landlocked and the better part of a mile from the road. No legal right-of-way.
- 2) The entrance passage stal has been damaged.
- 3) The negative psychological aspect of Mitchell's corpse.
- 4) It's a long way from the usual caving areas in the NE.
- 5) Supposedly the cave has been declared a grave by the state legislature (with the former owner's consent). This in itself affords protection.

On the other hand, there may be good reasons for the NCC to acquire this cave in the future:

- 1) It's an extremely well-decorated cave with pits, multiple entrances, unexplored leads, and a fascinating history.
- 2) There are indications of a big undiscovered system in this area (lots of rumors of bottomless pits, etc). But these should be checked out first and then land acquired accordingly.
- 3) As the death site of Jim Mitchell (of the Mitchell Award given at every NSS Convention) it's almost a holy

Attachment F

Report from fundraising Chairman

To all Board Members and Trustees

I am very pleased to report that the fundraising efforts for the purchase of the Clarksville Cave have been going very well as of 6/18/04. We have raised **\$34,100.62**. We have received **\$20,425.62** as of 6/18/04. With **\$13,675.00** in uncollected pledges, we still have not heard from many of our local grottos: CCG, VCA, HHG, SCAG and Boston Grottos. We plan on starting our phone-a-thon in the next few weeks, as soon as we get a signed contract. I plan on calling every member of the N.C.C. and would like to get a list of NE Caver subscribers. Also, we can look forward to our fall NRO and plan our efforts for that event. As of now I feel strongly that we will meet our goal. We can think of ideas for future fund raising but we must realize that our caving community is a very limited group. We cannot keep hitting up the same individuals continually for future purchases. We need to expand the membership in our organization.

Thank you,
Alan Traino
Fundraising chairman

Attachment G

NCC Webmaster Report
June 19, 2004

The NSS went to a new hosting service for the NSS website this Spring. During, and for a while after the transition, the NCC site wasn't updatable, and visitors could not reach parts of the site. The problems appear to be resolved.

Email forwarding has been set up for the NCC email addresses for the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. They all have been confirmed as working. This forwarding is done by the NSS at a cost of \$10 each per year.

I've been in contact with a member of the caving community, Ben Millspaugh, who has offered to host (keep on his servers) the database and website for the NCC. I have been assisted in this evaluation by Bill Folsom and Melanie Peterson. The capabilities of the equipment, software, and site management available to us with this arrangement will meet the needs of the NCC for the foreseeable future, and greatly exceed what the NSS can provide.

This arrangement enables a creation of a membership database that can be accessed from any computer (with passwords). This membership database, or any additional database, can also be integrated with the web site.

Ben M. has offered to provide these services at no charge on his own equipment. I believe he would appreciate contributions. For the Database and Website to be hosted on Ben's servers, the NCC will need to register its own Domain Name (such as necaveconcernvancy.org). Registering the name will cost approx \$100/5yrs or \$150/10yrs. Registering and adding unlimited email forwarding plus many additional features and services brings the cost to approx \$250/5yrs or \$450/10yrs. Currently the NSS site and email forwarding for 4 addresses is \$265/5yrs and \$520/10yrs. These are continuing expenses needed to keep a web presence.

Melanie Peterson has offered to program the database and associated web pages. I will assist as needed.

Note that the original NSS-NCC site can continue to exist while the new site is being constructed. When the new site is ready, visitors to the NSS site can be automatically directed to the new site.

--- Norm Berg,
NCC Webmaster