

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.
Board Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Christa Hay
12/05//04 Howe Caverns, Howes Cave, NY 10:00 am

Meeting called to order at 10:10 am

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Attendance:
Officers: B. Addis, B. Folsom, J. Levinson, C. Hay
Trustees: J. Allison, J. Armstrong, J. DeGroff, V. Kappler, A. Lehmann, P. Murphy, J. Siemion, M. Warner, P. Youngbaer
3. Nominating Committee Report - Bob Simmons - Attachment A-1 (all attachments can be found at the end of this document)
4. Addis moved to convene a meeting of the Trustees to elect Officers. Mike Warner will preside over the elections as Chairman of the Trustees and will report.

2nd by Lehmann

Passed unanimously

"The Board of Trustees wishes to thank the Officers for an excellent job this year. Under your leadership the NCC has received a lot of positive publicity, is being recognized as a responsible conservancy by local and regional governmental agencies, has conducted successful fundraising campaigns, is fostering fellowship among NE cavers, and most significantly, the NCC is achieving its goal of preserving caves in the NE. Thank you for a job well done and we look forward to working with you this year."

Due to no other nominations the existing Officers were elected to the same positions:

President – B. Addis
Vice President – B. Folsom
Treasurer – J. Levinson
Secretary – C. Hay

5. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
6. Vice President's Report –Bill Folsom – Attachment B
7. Treasurer's Report – Joe Levinson - Attachment C
8. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
 - Status quo
9. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter
 - Plans: - 1) Hope to begin seeing more individual NCC members starting preliminary acquisition steps by talking with landowners and mentioning NCC.
2) Working on Schroeders Pants through Roland Vinyard, Joober Hole with Emily Davis, starting things with landowners at several other caves.
 - Progress: 1) Since last Board meeting we have acquired three more preserves.
2) Roland says legal situation of Schroeders property remains the same for now but will advise when it changes. Offers professional services at no charge when/if.
3) Emily will initiate discussion with owner -Joober

10. Conservation Committee Report - Joe Armstrong – no report
 - Status quo
 - Thanksgiving weekend visited Baugh Cave – full of garbage – cleanup to be scheduled for spring.
11. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
 - Status quo
12. Fundraising Committee Report - Alan Traino
 - Nothing to report
13. Membership Committee Report - Tonya Smothers
 - Nothing to report
14. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
 - Completed about 20 letters informing the non member donors and Pete Johnson fund donors that we had closed on Clarksville. These were signed by our President and sent out on the day of the Friends and Neighbors gathering. We plan to send rest of the donors their letters the first week in January as we have done in the past.
 - 155 paid members, 35 past due
 - Sent out dues notices
15. Knox Cave Preserve Report – Emily Davis
 - The cave is closed for the winter.
 - Crossbones will be open depending on the conditions at the entrance.
 - Concerned that managing the entrance and access will be difficult until the parking lot at Ella is completed.
 - Management Plan Review:
 1. A co manager mainly interested in hands on work on the property be advertised for within the membership of the NCC.
 2. A kiosk be built on the property near the sinkhole.
 3. I am open to other suggestions from the board.
16. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel
 - Plans: Construct the changing area this year.
Progress: Status quo
Problems: None
 - Management Plan Review:

There are several minor structural changes that could be made to the plan. No change in overall management is recommended. Since the management plan is the basis for our management agreement with the ACLC, I strongly recommend deferring action on any changes to the plan until, the NCC owns the preserve.
17. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report - Jon Allison
 - Status quo
18. Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter – Attachment D
19. Ella Armstrong Preserve Report – Joe Armstrong
 - Do we really need a parking lot – can use Knox parking lot - but open to thoughts.
20. Website Subcommittee Report – Norm Berg
 - Status quo

21. Land Trust Liaison Committee Report – Jon Allison
 - Plans: Conservation Easement on Onesquethaw
 - Progress: Hopefully close on Gregory Entrance before end of the year. The hold up has been a county employee who would normally be doing it is out on disability.
 - Problems: None

22. NCKMS 2005 Report - Mike Warner
 - Developing budget, registration and staffing.

23. Legal Committee Report – Dan Werner – no report

24. Special and Group Use Coordinators – Aaron and Amy Cox
 - Ramping up to deal with the added traffic at Clarksville
 - Working on enforcing waivers for minors – updated the parental waiver.
 - Collecting addresses and contacts for summer visits.

25. Financial and Investments Committee – Paul Murphy
 - Nothing to report

26. Addis moved to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice President will preside.
 2nd by Levinson
Passed unanimously
 - Emily Davis – NCC should plan a dedication day for Clarksville in late spring or summer of 2005. Inform Pete Johnson family and Beverly Schwartz. All are invited.
 - Joe Armstrong – there should be no plaques mounted or bolted on the rock face of any of our caves.
 - Jeff DeGroff – recent count of the Howe Caverns coin drop is \$140.00
 - Jon Allison – Onesquethaw conservation easement – should we go one-by-one or all at once? Sellecks should be the last one.
 - Peter Youngbaer – status of Mount Aeolis and Nickwackett.
 - Mike Warner – Peter Youngbaer should bring information to the Board, write management plans for VT.
 - Ken Nichols – membership issues, need thank-you notes and inform members when their renewal has been received, more updates. Emily Davis – checking many other organizations send a newsletter 4 times a year which is sufficient for informing members. There was a lively discussion on this issue as many felt that the NCC is kept informed, but with renewals the members could be contacted when payment is received.
 - Kappler – lifetime membership discussion. Mike Warner – lifetime membership does not work out financially for the most part
 - Norm Berg – should try a multiple year membership with slight discount.
 - Jon Allison – what is going on with Indian Oven Cave? Bill Folsom - asked for more information from the contact but she wrote back “Sorry but I have nothing for you--if anything happens, it won't be for awhile and I'm really not at liberty to disclose any more details at the moment”
 - Jon Allison – did we hear anything on the offer to manage Surprise Cave? Thom Engel – has made the contacts but no response.
 - Bill Folsom – Pompeys cave – longest cave in Ulster County, Collapsed dry river bed, several entrances. Approached owner and we was very friendly and would entertain an offer. Questions of who owns the river bed? Treasurer states NCC can “afford” \$10-\$15K.

27. Folsom moved to close the Committee of the Whole. Items from this meeting will be introduced as new business.
 2nd by Levinson
Passed (Murphy absent)

28. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the September 12, 2004 meeting.
2nd by Allison
Passed (Murphy absent)
29. Levinson moved to suspend the order of business to discuss motions 32 and 33 (*on agenda, now 30 and 31*).
2nd by Hay
Passed unanimously
30. Allison moved the NCC spend up to \$300 to purchase 1000 trail markers.
2nd by Kappler
Passed unanimously
31. Allison moved that the NCC make arrangements to take ownership of Onesquethaw Cave and transfer a Conservation Easement to the Albany County Land Conservancy for the property. The final easement will be presented to the Board for approval when completed. Up to \$300 is allotted for closing.
2nd by Levinson
Passed unanimously
32. Levinson moved to accept the 2005 budget as attached in the treasurer's report.
2nd by Youngbaer
Passed unanimously
33. Levinson moved to accept the Cave and Karst Acquisition Policy.
2nd by Siemion
Levinson moved to postpone until March 2005 board meeting
2nd by Folsom
Passed unanimously
34. Folsom moved that Mike Martuscello be appointed Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Bob Simmons is thanked for his service.
2nd by Levinson
Passed unanimously
35. The President appointed Bill Folsom as Chair of an ad hoc committee to study the possible acquisition of Pompeys Cave, Ulster County (Informational – no Board action required)
36. Addis moved that the Officers will conduct an Executive Committee meeting on January 23rd at 10:00am in Cohoes.
2nd by Levinson
For – rest, Abstained - Siemion
37. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held on March 20th at the Cave House at 11:00 am.
2nd by Levinson
Passed unanimously
38. Addis moved to thank Howe Caverns for hosting the meeting.
2nd by Lehmann
Passed unanimously
39. Addis moved to adjourn.
2nd by DeGroff
Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 12:37pm.

Attachment A-1

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE
NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY
NOVEMBER 26, 2004
ROBERT SIMMONS, CHAIR

1. Calls for nominees for the executive offices of the NCC brought no new nominations for this year's election.
2. Each of the incumbent officers has graciously agreed to sit for another term in their respective office.
3. The nominating committee hereby submits the following names for the consideration of the Board:
 - For President: Robert Addis
 - For Vice President: Bill Folsom
 - For Treasurer: Joe Levinson
 - For Secretary: Christa Hay

There are no other items to report at this time. As always, the Nominating Committee requests all Board Members, Officers and Members to consider and inform the committee of likely candidates for the 2005 Board elections and Officers positions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Simmons
NCC Nominating Committee Chair

Attachment A

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
12/05/04

NEWS FLASH! On 11/27, the Office Committee received notice that the NCC has successfully been registered as a nonprofit corporation in Vermont. This means we now need some caves to manage, and more importunately, local management teams to do the real work. Thanks to Bill Folsom for carrying through on the paperwork despite some setbacks.

At the recent NCC Executive Committee meeting, the Officers talked about growing pains of our group. Yes, we are growing, and yes some problems are being noticed because of that. To address the issue that perhaps are meetings are too long (and dare I say, boring?), we are trying a new system whereby each Officer and Committee Chair **will submit their reports in writing 2 weeks before the meeting** so that the Secretary may include them on the agenda. By reading the reports ahead of time or at the meeting, the EC hopes to streamline the meeting by cutting down on the amount of time spent in verbally presenting them. At the meeting, the President will ask the committees if there are any last minute updates, and then he will ask for questions or comments on the written report and verbal updates. It will be the President's job to limit the discussion because important items will find their way onto the agenda as motions. If we need discussion, and often we do, The Committee of the Whole is the perfect venue for that since issues automatically become items of new business at that meeting.

The President will not accept oral reports at the meeting other that last minute updates.

"Status Quo" or "Nothing to report" is a valid response, but hopefully not too many meetings in a row! By this new system, we hope to cut down on the time spent in reports. The EC feels that it is each of the volunteers' responsibility to think ahead a little and write a brief report. Yes, the final agenda will become a longer document, but it will contain concise reports. In the end, everyone should benefit.

Personally I like reading all the reports on the agenda, and we might even print the Board member's justifications or reasoning underneath each new motion if it is not obvious. I'll be interested in your comments on this process.

Thank you for cooperating.

Attachment B

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT
12/05/04

Update on establishing an NCC legal presence in other states

Corrected paperwork has been resubmitted to VT as of 11/15 and I expect no problems this time around. CT, MA and NJ have more expensive yearly fees, so when an acquisition is pending we can apply as a Foreign Corporation at that time.

Pompey's Cave in Ulster County up for sale

Alan Traino and I had a very nice chat with the owner of Pompey's on 11/16. He is very open to hearing an offer from the NCC on his "worthless" streambed over the cave. We then visited both the Town Clerk to get the tax map, then the Code Enforcement/Zoning Office where we found that it should be a slam dunk zoning-wise. The new lot we would create has 170 feet of frontage. This is in the Town of Rochester in Ulster County.

Note this is the longest cave in Ulster County, over 4,000 feet long.

With a digital tax map and the location of the cave known fairly well, as far as the surface is concerned, we should be able to carve off about 3 acres easily. We could get Brian Pease to do some radiolocation if needed also.

In conversation with the owner, he understands that BUILDABLE real estate in a nice spot in that area now goes for between \$10,000 and \$20,000/acre. We have to start somewhere realistic though -- Alan and I discussed an initial offer of \$12,000 (not with the owner - no figures were discussed with him) to start the ball rolling.

Plans

With Clarksville under our belt, the NCC is poised to evolve to the next level. I believe we need to increase our membership, increase community outreach and improve the design of our website in order to appear more professional to the world, cavers as well as non-cavers.

Attachment C

TREASURERS REPORT
FOR
THE NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.
5-DEC-04

As of 26-Nov-04 we had \$20,684.67 in our bank accounts. In addition, at the last accounting, we had assets of \$14,740 being held by the National Speleological Foundation. Clarksville cost us \$55,678.99 and Ella Armstrong cost us \$3,558.06. I plan on getting both of these properties removed from the current property tax rolls. I have also attached a copy of next years proposed budget.

Respectively submitted,

Joe E. Levinson

Attachment D
CLARKSVILLE REPORT

Problems: None so far.

Progress:

General

Thom has now given out nearly 100 copies of the guidelines sheet (copies will be brought to the board meeting) and is now using version 2.0. Nothing but positive feedback has been encountered. As time permits, Thom will continue to serve in the steward position.

Kiosk

A kiosk was built at Clarksville during the October NCC community day event. It is 95% done, with the display case cover yet to be built. Because of this, no material has been put on the kiosk yet. Originally Craig mentioned that he may be able to arrange for free lexan from GE, but that fell through, now the frame for the display cover has been built but the lexan has not been purchased yet.

Battery Recycling

Leslie Hatfield suggested to Thom that a battery recycling location might be useful, and is willing to do almost all the work. The managers have agreed to it and plans are being drawn up to put such a battery box by the kiosk.

New Trail

A new trail from the future NCC owned parking area to the current path was designated and cut by Thom during the October community day. Ken Nichols helped further widen the path later in the day.

General Cleanup

All the fallen trees near the Wards sink area (& adjacent fire pit) were cut up by and moved to the upper parking lot during the community day as well. A large load of firewood has been taken to the Schoharie cabin, some has been taken to Mike's house (to get it off the Clarksville property), but some wood still remains on the upper lot. A large refrigerator has been properly disposed of by Thom, Ed, and Tom Rider.

Parking Lot

The 50'x50' parking area has been cleared, but is currently uneven and largely unusable. Sonny has now cut an access road across the back end of the parking lot. Thom suggests that we fence that back line when we get ready to start using the parking lot. (How much work is left to make it useable, and when to do it?)

Plans: The managers need to get together and discuss the long-term plans for bathroom/changing area and parking lot. Criteria under which we would assess the need for one needs to be determined. Right now, Thom is of the opinion that the situation does not warrant the cost (\$1200+ per year). Chuck feels it would be best if this is one fairly uniform and good-looking building or set of structures. (Also things like shrubs and fences to both beautify and bound our property.) Mike agrees with Thom that the current situation does not warrant the recurring cost (for porta-johns), but would favor one larger bathroom & changing structure over porta-johns if it is determined that bathrooms are needed/wanted. Whatever is decided upon will not likely be built until the ground thaws in the spring; the three managers need to meet to determine the location(s).

Also we need to start planning for the stewardship program to get underway in the spring. This might mean some training for special steward leaders through John Lawton and having groups or grottos responsible for certain weekends.

Description	Actual From 2004		Budget for 2005 Fund	Income				Actual From 2004
Knox Property	\$ 325.00	\$ -	Preserve	Regular Members	105	\$ 15.00	\$ 1,575.00	
Onesquathaw Property	\$ 375.00	\$ -	Preserve	Family Members	10	\$ 5.00	\$ 50.00	
Sellecks Property	\$ 375.00	\$ -	Preserve & General	Student Members	1	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	
Clarksville Property	\$ 800.00	\$ 55,678.99	Preserve	Benefactors	28	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,400.00	
Ella Armstrong	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 3,558.06	Preserve	Institutional Members	6	\$ 100.00	\$ 600.00	
Legal Status in VT	\$ 15.00	\$ 125.00	Legal				Subtotal of Membership	\$ 3,635.00
Office Expense	\$ 100.00	\$ -	Mailing & Office				Interest	\$ 50.00
Office of the President	\$ 15.00	\$ -	Mailing & Office				Donations	\$ 7,000.00
Office of the Vice President	\$ 15.00	\$ -	Mailing & Office				Total	\$ 10,685.00
Office of the Treasurer	\$ 400.00	\$ 20.00	Mailing & Office	Total Members	150			\$ 9,496.41
Office of the Secretary	\$ 15.00	\$ -	Mailing & Office					
							Donations towards Clarksville to date in 2004	\$ 46,653.86
Web Site	\$ 60.00	\$ 40.00	Mailing & Office					
Mailings (4 Newsletters, 1 Election)	\$ 231.18	\$ -	Mailing & Office				Total to date in 2004	\$ 56,150.27
Legal Fees	\$ 100.00	\$ -	Legal					
Promotional/Fundraising Items	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 492.20	General					
NCKMS Grant	\$ 500.00	\$ -	General					
Petty Cash	\$ 75.00	\$ 45.00	Mailing & Office					
Total	\$ 6,101.18	\$ 59,959.25						

Mailings	Price per Unit	Number	Total
Copying	\$ 0.05	447.5	\$ 22.38
Postage	\$ 0.37	37.5	\$ 13.88
			\$ 36.25