

**NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.**

**Minutes**

March 4, 2012, 10:00 Five Rivers, Delmar, NY

Meeting called to order at 10:10 am

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Attendance:  
Officers: B. Addis, V. Kappler, B. Folsom, C. Hay  
Trustees: M Chu, K. Dumont, T. Engel, A. Hicks, A. Traino, P. Woodell, M. Ingalls, M. Warner, P. Youngbaer
3. Absent with Proxy: K Dumont, Al hicks, Alan Traino
4. Folsom nominates Chuck Porter as proxy for Alan Traino – **Passed all**
5. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
6. Vice President's Report –Vince Kappler – Attachment B
7. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
8. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
  - Status quo
  - Setting up bat counts with DEC for NCC caves and others.
  - February EC meeting minutes – Attachment D
9. Science Committee – Larry Davis
10. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter
11. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson
  - Nothing to report
12. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
  - Still working on the brochure.
13. Fundraising Committee Report – Open
14. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
  - Plans: None at this time
  - Problems: None at this time
  - Progress: status quo
15. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis
  - Plans: None at this time
  - Problems: None at this time
  - Progress: Knox bat count completed. Thanks to all involved. Final report not in yet but preliminary sets count at the same or above last year.
16. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel
  - The management plan has been updated in accordance with board discussions at the last meeting. It has been submitted for board approval. Seven permits have been issued since the last NCC Board meeting.
17. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report – Alan Traino
18. Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
  - With little snow, Clarksville has seen fairly regular visitation in this last period.  
One event requires special note. On 14 January 2012, daytime high temperatures were in the teens with a wind chill near zero. Despite this, J. Heller (29) and M. Lipari (47) rode bicycles from Troy, NY to Clarksville to visit the caves, a distance of about 23 miles. They arrived at the cave about noon. They had only flashlights and beer.  
Also at the cave that day was Kay Shriver from Met Grotto. She was leading a beginner's trip. She led her group to the Lake Room and then out the Thook Entrance. She left her group to continue out of Thook as she brought one girl back to the Ward Entrance. She saw one man (Heller) walking toward the Lake Room. She advised him to follow her out. He had no helmet, only a light sweatshirt, and one flashlight. He was alone and had been drinking. He continued forward alone. Just before the breakdown at the Big Room she saw a second man (Lipari) passed out on the floor. There was a flashlight on and a collection of empty beer cans nearby. He appeared to be cold, wet, and intoxicated. She went to the surface and alerted David Rhodin and Bobby

Fabiano of his location and condition. Dave went in with hand warmers and a blanket and Rob set out to find the other who was wandering. Kay called Emily Davis and was advised to call 911. The rest of Kay's group was unable to exit Thook and on their way out Ian Bunk was able to rouse and guide both men out of the cave. The older man was disoriented had difficulty moving and communicating fluently and did not know where the exit was. When rescue arrived both men were at the Ward Entrance. Both men were evaluated by paramedics and then were given a ride home by sheriff's deputies.

- Sonny and June's son has start quarrying gravel from the pit adjacent to the preserve. He tells me that they intend to keep the amount below that which would require a permit from NYSDEC. (The limits are 1,000 tons or 750 cubic yards of minerals, whichever is less, within 12 successive calendar months.) He also suggested that they were likely to sell the property.
- Permission was given to a local to pick up metal on the Gregory parcel. He is raising money to pay for past misdeeds.

19. Bentleys Preserve Report - Jonah Spivak

20. Ella Armstrong Preserve – Alan Traino

21. Merlins Cave Preserve – Morgan Ingalls

22. Education Committee Report – Thom Engel

- Not much has happened over the winter. In terms of plans, EMS club day is coming up 4/13 and 4/14. Also, the NCC has been invited to display at SAGE's Science & Health Discovery Night. Clarksville School is now closed, but we have also been asked to display at the Earth Day at the Slingerlands Elementary School.

23. Membership Committee – Peter Youngbaer

- All new and renewing memberships since Dec. 1 have been acknowledged with an email letter. Template letters for new, renewing, sustaining, and life members have been created. Had a long on line session with Mike Chu learning the on line data base system. I've decided to break the updating of this information into three separate projects: individual members, donations, and group users. Currently working to update all on line member contact information using the most recent hard copy print out from the Office Committee and electronic office reports. This should be completed by the NCC meeting. This will enable elections to be conducted with as current an email list as possible. On line donation information is years out of date. Would like to discuss with the Board - I'll have a proposal for going forward beginning Jan. 1, 2012, as capturing past data accurately is probably an exercise in futility. Group user information needs to be updated. Amy Cox told me she uses emails, but I haven't got them from her yet. I'll need to coordinate both with her on that list, and the Office Committee on the other hard information, such as mailing addresses. Discussed with Mike Chu adding the capability of electronic letter generation to the on line system.
- (At meeting) Online database- all should be updated by end of week. Mike C working on getting a one-button setup for sending letters voting etc.

24. Website Subcommittee Report – Mike Chu

25. Legal Committee Report – Open

26. Special and Group Use Coordinators –Thom Engel/Emily Davis interim

- Need to advertize the position – person has to be able to answer email daily, Thom / Emily will help for interim – we will advertize the position
- Twelve (12) group permits have been issued – 8 for Clarksville and 4 for Onesquethaw. Most of these trips have yet to occur. (3 for Clarksville and 1 at Onesquethaw have occurred.)  
One group was denied a permit. On 1 Feb I received a PDF of an expired Certificate of Insurance (COI) from the Waldorf School of Lexington, MA without explanation. I wrote back and explained the COI was expired and asked why it was being sent. She eventually sent an up-to-date COI and said she had students waiting to leave for the cave and asked me to call Steve Lewanick. Being at the library and without a cell phone, I was unable to do this. I wrote, "I am sorry but you should have planned this a little better. I am not in a place or a position to call Steve. Considering that you waited till the last minute to contact us, I can't even be assured that the waivers have been signed. These must be mailed the day of the trip. I assume you knew before this morning that this trip was planned. You should have contacted us for permission sooner." In retrospect, I should have asked if the waivers were all signed before denying the trip, but her acceptance of the denial suggests that she didn't have the waivers ready to mail to us.
- (At meeting) – SUNY Binghamton – paid leaders – contacted Thom recently still need certificate of insurance from them and they need to follow the cave for pay requirements.

27. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson

- Nothing to report

28. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler

- Progress: VV totals for 2011: 1546 hours of work and 14,118 miles driven to/from projects for a total value of \$54,684.00.

### VOLUNTEER VALUE STATS

	Hours	Miles	Dollar Value
2006	1389.5	20,862	\$29,955.00
2007	1571.5	14,607	\$35,542.00
2008	1680.5	14,143	\$36,926.00
2009	1440.5	10,442	\$39,564.00
2010	1234	10,949	\$42,211.00
2011	1546	14,118	\$54,684.00
			\$199,318.00 TOTAL

VV totals to date for 2012: \$837.00.

The IRS has increased the mileage rate to \$.555 per mile. That is the rate I'll use to credit members who drive a vehicle for work projects. Note that \$.555 is not the same rate that individuals can claim as a deduction for income tax purposes for contribution to a charitable organization.

The dollar per hour rate for volunteer work in our area has not increased substantially since I last researched it in 2010. The average rate for our region, using 2009 data which is the latest available, is \$25.33 (New York State is \$27.17), therefore the NCC rate will remain at \$25.00.

Plans: I will send periodic VV reminders to the membership and monitor data collection.

Problems: None at this time

29. Nominating Committee – Bob Simmons

30. Ad hoc Committee – Surprise Cave – Bob Simmons

31. Ad hoc Committee- Tory's Cave – Bob Simmons

32. Ad hoc Risk Management Committee - Bob Addis, Peter Youngbaer, Vince Kappler

- On going work – Peter has a name of an attorney for work going forward

33. Addis moved to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice President will preside. Items can be entered as new business.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Porter

**Passed unanimously**

- NCC table at 2012 convention – yes
- Proposed gas line ending in Schoharie County
- Diddly Cave – Thom Engel - Mohawk Hudson LC might have some interest in purchasing the property – offered our help – fundraising, managing the caves, buying a section with cave etc. Thom to let Dan Driscoll know we are interested in helping
- Berkshire Natural Resources Council – Chuck Porter – information for cave gating contacted Chuck - made some information about a potential large karst acquisition. Bob responded to NNRC about we are hear to help.
- Fracking – email from Carol Malz, Esq. she was looking for NCC support Thom said there are no caves above the Marcellus...the karst is below the Marcellus. We have not responded to her. Will try to keep informed on the issue but will not be involved.
- Update all management plans with approved wording concerning “digging” – Kappler will do and format all plans at same time.
- Devil's Den- expanding a HS football field in Boston area and contractor by cutting corners have destroyed part of the cave. Construction is on hold .
- Great Radium Springs – Bob has been in touch with the Berkshire church– have offered our help – waiting for response

34. The Vice President moved to close the Committee of the Whole.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Folsom  
**Passed unanimously**
35. Informational Point – The president creates the Mohawk River Basin Karst Ad hoc committee- Chuck Porter and Art Palmer
36. Informational Point – The president creates the Transmission pipeline karst Impact ad hoc committee – Thom Engel
37. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the December 2011 meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Youngbaer  
For – Rest Abstain – Hay  
**Passed**
38. Addis moved to approve the revised Merlins Management plan as submitted and amended on March 4, 2012..  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Youngbaer  
For-Rest, Abstain-Ingalls  
**Passed**
- Motion postponed from previous meeting*
39. Addis moves \$10,000.00 be directed to the Rensselaer Land Trust (RLT) for a conservation easement to be held by RLT on the Bentley property. This will be paid in five equal annual installments of \$2,000.00 each, the first payment being due upon the acceptance of the conservation easement agreement by RLT. If requested, the NCC shall forward a copy of the survey and the walking right-of-way into the property.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Traino
- Postponed from September 2011 meeting*
- Engel moved to postponed until Merlins conservation easement is completed and the recommendations of the ad hoc risk committee are given  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Youngbaer  
For- Rest Abstained-Porter  
**Passed**  
**Motion postponed**
40. Addis moved to approve the revised Onesquethaw Management plan as submitted.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Kappler  
**Passed unanimously**
41. Kappler moved that the exploration rules regarding digging be uniform across all management plans consistent with the Onesquethaw management plan adopted 3/4/12.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Hay  
**Passed unanimously**
42. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be held May 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 – conference call. NCC Conference Call: 605-475-6111, Access Code: 814008
43. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held June 10, 2012 at 10:00 am at Newton NJ.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Porter  
**Passed unanimously**
44. Addis moved to thank NYS DEC for use of Five Rivers for the meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Engel  
**Passed unanimously**
45. Addis moved to adjourn.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Hay  
**Passed unanimously**

Meeting adjourned at 12:42pm

**Attachment A**  
President's Report

The Executive Committee meeting was held as a phone conference on 2/8 with the four Officers and Chuck Porter present. Later Peter Youngbaer joined us on the conference call. The phone conference method seems to be a good one for EC meetings and anyone can join us or at least listen. The downside is the "free" conference is hosted in North Dakota and you had better have free long distance minutes!

NCC Conference Call: 605-475-6111, Access Code: 814008

This should be posted on the NCC website.

We discussed Merlin's as the featured cave for the Spring NRO, May 18-20, 2012. In other reports you will see the special access policy for the NRO Weekend, including at least two surface geology tours – Saturday & Sunday.

Parking is severely limited during NRO – Please cooperate.

The Merlins dedication will be 2 PM on Sunday, 5/20. We will be inviting members of the local community who helped us and expressed an interest in our cave. Light refreshments and light speeches will be featured, concluding hopefully with a surface tour. We need volunteers in several aspects, contact Morgan Ingalls:

- Prepare an announcement to send out.
- Refreshments, Tables, Banners, etc.
- Surface guides and perhaps parking assistants on Sunday.

The Conservation Easement is moving forward with the new lawyer, Lawrence Harold. We are forwarding our comments for him for consideration and summarizing, and he will get back to us with a revised Conservation Easement for Board discussion.

We had a spirited discussion at the Winter 2011 NCC Board meeting concerning future acquisitions – the Wish List go around. From this we refined our discussion at the EC to some realistic possibilities but no decisions or action was taken.

**Attachment B**  
Vice President's Report

I have to admit that I didn't realize how much happens behind the scenes between meetings. There is a constant flow of emails mostly dealing with minor issues but occasionally there is a thread on a single, complicated subject that may go on for a week or more.

I assisted Jonah with research on the Bentleys Management Plan and verified some of the resources quoted in Bentleys' early history. Checking the reference in the MP that Bentleys may have a connection to the Underground Railroad took a lot of internet research as well as phone and email communication. I found that Berlin, NY has a documented association with the Underground Railroad, the Bentley family ledgers show that "Big Sam" purchased supplies in large quantity, and at least one Underground Railroad researcher has written (but may not have published) about her findings on Big Sam, Bentleys Cavern and Berlin, NY. This definitely needs more research and anyone interested is welcome to my notes.

I assisted Morgan with minor edits and some proofing for the Merlins Management Plan.

**Risk Management ad Hoc Committee:**

Numerous phone conversations and many emails with other conservancies confirm that the question of needing and/or purchasing liability protection for our preserves has no simple answer. Conservancies that lease land and manage caves struggle to find adequate coverage as well as funding the annual premium. Another conservancy purchases coverage for only one of its many properties and relies on sportsmen laws and a tightly controlled release form system to minimize risk. I spoke to the broker who handles the policy for SCCi and she is checking to see if an affiliate in NY can offer us a quote. Some state associations that represent the interests of land trusts and other not-for-profits have set up insurance reference pools which groups can apply to. I need to do more research to determine if this is an option in New York State.

**Attachment C**  
Treasurer's Report  
March 1, 2012

	Mar 1, 12
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	2,783.95
Money Market	10,034.15
NSF Account (12/31/11)	41,414.08
PayPal Checking	109.28
Total Checking/Savings	54,341.46
 Total Current Assets	 54,341.46

## Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

03/01/2012

January through March 1, 2012

	Jan - Mar 12	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	0.00	1,000.00
NCC Contributions	0.00	4,000.00
Donations - Other	167.04	
Total Donations	167.04	5,000.00
 Donations Restricted		
NCC White Nose Fund	50.00	
Total Donations Restricted	50.00	
 Interest Earned	0.70	50.00
Membership Income	935.00	5,000.00
Total Income	1,152.74	10,050.00
 Expense		
Acquisitions	0.00	500.00
Bank Charges	2.76	20.00
Development	0.00	1,445.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Easements	0.00	1,500.00
Education	0.00	100.00
Executive		
President	0.00	150.00
Secretary	0.00	75.00
Treasurer	0.00	75.00
VP	0.00	75.00
Total Executive	0.00	375.00
 Legal Fees	0.00	2,000.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	300.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00

Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00
Postage	11.00	150.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bentleys	0.00	100.00
Clarksville	0.00	300.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	100.00
Knox	0.00	100.00
Merlins	0.00	100.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	100.00
Sellecks	0.00	200.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>1,000.00</u>
Printing	0.00	200.00
Promotion/Fundraising	0.00	800.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	200.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	<u>0.00</u>	<u>260.00</u>
Sponsorships	0.00	500.00
Supplies	0.00	300.00
Taxes on Properties	13.25	
Total Expense	<u>27.01</u>	<u>10,050.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	1,125.73	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value	837.00	0.00
Total Other Income	837.00	<u>0.00</u>
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	837.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	<u>837.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Other Income	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Income	<u>1,125.73</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	<u>0.00</u>	
<b>NET Income after NSF Fund Gain/Loss</b>	<u><b>1,125.73</b></u>	

## Attachment D

### EC Minutes

EC Meeting  
February 8, 2012

Cohoes/Conference Call: Addis, Hay, Kappler, Folsom, Porter, Youngbaer

Onesquethaw management plan- Thom sent the edits to the management plan for voting at the next meeting. Discussion concerning the parking situation. *Bob to talk to Thom about the parking (bus and lawn mowing).* Exploration...stronger language needed.

Reporter going on bat counts – Could have a negative response if reporter has a hidden agenda. Peter is good with having reporter.

Merlins access – Vince has been working with Morgan on this. *Vince will talk to Morgan to get this out to the board before the meeting.* Discussion concerning Spring NRO and trips to Merlins. Looking to allow for several small groups to go in the cave. Do not want to turn off our members if just allow surveyors and exploration.

Merlins Dedication – want to set it up like Bensons but without the rain. Looking to do it the Sunday of NRO maybe 1 or 2:00. Have reporters etc

Acquisitions – Great Radium Springs Cave – Bob heard from Father Chris Moratessa property not for sale. Bob responded to him about we could manage etc. has not heard from him again.

Diddly – Chuck found out that they are negotiating with Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy.

Berkshire NRC – started by a query on gating. Chuck got in touch with them. Not really sure what cave they are talking about since they are not saying which. We have sent them the standard ..we can help if you need it.....

Columbia County –Snort Ridge cave property is for sale. The estate is for sale...Mike T found this...he thinks we can cut off a small section for just the cave.

Church Wagon wheel – rumor that property was for sale. Bob checked and it is not for sale.

Merlins & Bentleys Easement – *MAKC and SCCI Vince will contact on what their costs are.* Need to also hear from the Risk Management committee. *Bob will contact Jean Devries on the outcome of her survey for easements.* Merlin is not an expensive easement. Need to check the contract for Merlins if we HAVE to do it by a certain time. The board did pass to get the easement for Merlins.

Online membership – Peter. Looking to get the final edits by the end of this week. Mike Chu to add some upgrades to the program.