

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Minutes

June 6, 2015, 9:00 Thacher Park, NY

Management Plan Review Schedule

March 2015 Bentleys

June 2015 Clarksville

September 2015 Ella Armstrong

December 2015 Knox

March 2016 Merlins

June 2016 Onesquethaw

September 2016 Sellecks

December 2016 Benson

Informational Point: two guest speakers today.

- Carl Herzog – NYS DEC – long eared bats etc
- Laure-Jeanne Davignon -explain the capital campaign for the visitor center

Carl Herzog spoke about the Northern Long Eared bat and the effect the listing on the threatened species list will have for managing our caves. These bats have been seen in all NCC caves other than Sellecks. These are based on old surveys and both Fish & Wildlife and NYS DEC agree there needs to be new surveys conducted. This is a federal listing so any harassment of the bats is illegal. Caves can be open May 1 to end of September. NCC will help DEC with surveys etc.

Laure-Jeanne Davignon – Friends of Thacher State Park, spoke about the new center being built and how they are fundraising for \$1 million for producing and updating displays over the next several years. Currently they have \$400,000 committed.

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am

1. Introduction and greetings – Bob Addis
2. Attendance
Officers: B. Addis, V. Kappler, B. Folsom, C. Hay
Trustees: M Chu, T. Engel, M. Berger, P. Woodell, A. Traino, T. Rider, J. Morris-Siegel
3. Absent with Proxy: Chuck Porter will proxy for Kevin Dumont.
4. Absent without Proxy Ingalls
5. Nominating Committee Report on Elections- Bob Simmons
6. Addis moved to thank Peter Youngbaer for his dedicated years of service to the NCC both as a Trustee and an Officer.
2nd by Engel
Passed unanimously
7. New and returning trustees will be seated. Welcome Jacob Morris-Siegel
8. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
9. Vice President's Report –Vince Kappler – Attachment B
10. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
11. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay Attachment D
 - Electronic Votes

April 27 - Motion: Berger moved that an expenditure of up to \$4,000 for an emergency survey of the Knox Cave Preserve is approved.
2nd by Engel
For: Traino, Rider, Chu, Engel, Woodell, Berger, Dumont, Hay
No response - Rest
Passed

April 28 - Youngbaer moved that any further discussion on the Knox Cave Preserve situation be done in Executive Session, and that the Board may consult with non-Board members (e.g. Emily, Paul, councilman, sheriff, etc.) in furthering our interests.

2nd by Traino
For: Traino, Berger, Ingalls, Chu, Woodell, Youngbaer, Folsom, Dumont, Engel, Rider, Hay
No response: Rest
Passed

Youngbaer moved an additional \$2,975 (we already voted \$4,000) be approved to accomplish the survey of the Knox Preserve.

2nd by Traino
For: Rest Abstain - Hay
PASSED

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

2nd by Traino
Passed unanimously

- CCG will be hosting fall NRO and is looking for a group to host the dinner.
- Cave Closures – Ad Hoc Bat Hibernaculum Committee to be formed
- Thacher questions

13. Kappler moved to close the Committee of the Whole.

2nd by Traino
Passed unanimously

14. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the March 2015 meeting.

2nd by Berger
Passed unanimously

15. Kappler moved that Bob Simmons represent the NCC at the 18th Annual Cave Conservancy Roundtable at the 2015 NSS Convention.

2nd by Hay
Passed unanimously

16. Kappler moved the Risk Management Committee (RMC) is a permanent committee assigned to the President's Department. The RMC will complete tasks previously assigned to the *ad hoc* RMC, the committee will monitor NCC publications and policies for compliance with NCC approved risk management standards, attorney recommendations, or insurance carrier policies, and, will research any other risk issues that come before the NCC. The RMC Chairman will appoint a liaison who will be the primary NCC spokesman and contact with our insurance broker(s). The RMC Chairman may appoint committee persons to assist in the committee's work as issues are identified and researched.

2nd by Hay
Passed unanimously

17. Addis moved the NCC offers the Knox Cave Preserve for a field study of the WNS treatment. Peter Youngbaer is appointed the liaison with the NSS WNS Liaison and other appropriate entities. Subject to a receipt of scientific research project.

2nd by Chu
For – none, Against- rest
Failed

18. Hay moved to adopt Clarksville Management Plan updates.

2nd by Berger
For – rest Abstained: Hay, Porter, Engel

19. Addis moved the NCC accepts the donation of Spider Cave, Schoharie County, NY from the Carl family, subject to board approval of a management plan.

2nd by Hay
Passed unanimously (Berger absent)

20. Addis moved the NCC will purchase the Straddle Canyon Karst Preserve, Schoharie County, NY from Paul F. Murphy for the sum of \$_____, subject to board approval of a management plan.

2nd by Folsom
Amended to include: "an acceptable price"
2nd by Engel
For – none, Against – Rest, Abstained Hay
Failed.
Amended to "up to \$6,000"

Addis moved the NCC will purchase the Straddle Canyon Karst Preserve, Schoharie County, NY from Paul F. Murphy for up to the sum of \$6,000, subject to board approval of a management plan.

2nd by Folsom

For – Rest Abstained – Berger, Porter

Passed as amended

21. Addis moved the NCC seeks competitive bids for the land surveys of :

A) Onesquethaw

B) Straddle Canyon

C) Spider

2nd by Berger

For – Rest Recused- Hay

Passed

22. Engel moved within one year of the acquisition of a new preserve, it shall have a professional survey done, if it was not done prior to purchase.

2nd by Traino

For – Rest Against – Woodell

Passed

23. Informational Point: The President established the ad hoc Bat Hibernaculum Committee. Emily Davis and Mike Warner were appointed co-chairs.

24. Informational Point: The President established the ad hoc Thacher Park Center Committee. Thom Engel was appointed as chairman.

25. Informational Point: The President established the ad hoc WNS Treatment Study Committee. Peter Youngbaer was appointed Chairman.

26. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be August 9, 2015 in Kerhonkson, NY at 10:00.

27. Addis moves that the next NCC Board meeting will be September 13, 2015 , location to be announced and the December meeting will be December 6,2015 at 10:00 at Speleobooks.

2nd by Kapler

Passed unanimously

28. Engel moved to thank Thacker State Park for use of the pavilion.

2nd by Berger

Passed unanimously

29. Addis moved to adjourn

2nd by Hay

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 2:04 pm

**Attachment A
President's Report**

As mentioned in the Preserve Reports attached, damages at the Knox Cave Preserve have taken up many people's time. Since the Board is currently in Executive Session over this due to legal constraints, I am not at liberty to discuss it now. I fully appreciate that this is very frustrating since considerable time has passed and we worry about our assets as well as the Preserve itself, but I ask you to believe in the Executive Committee which the Board has elected "to run the day by day business of the NCC." The Officers are working tirelessly to follow due diligence procedures and we should discuss it at the June 6 meeting.

NCC life goes on and reading the Acquisitions Committee report you will see two new Preserves on the very near horizon, Spider Cave and the Straddle Canyon Karst. Motions on the June agenda show our progress.

As well, the recent incident at Knox has the EC dusting off the land surveying status of all of our Preserves, boundary postings, and court house locations of filed documents. Only Knox and Onesquethaw do not have surveys on record and that is being rectified now. The court house research for Knox is done and the survey crew is about to or has started on the ground this week. There is a motion on June's agenda for a survey to be done on the Onesquethaw property.

June 2 is the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Thacher State Park Visitor's Center. Recall that the NCC has had input in the Park's master plan, has an annual permit for project cave surveying in the Park, and been asked to design two displays in the new facility. The NCC had a personal invitation to attend and we did since this represents a major venue for the NCC to present its Mission Statement on a continuous basis to the public. Displays and handout brochures are only the start of our public outreach possible soon at Thacher. Through a generous matching grant from Thom Engel, the NCC is helping to fund the publicly-funded interior displays in the Visitor's Center. Details to follow.

NCC Preserve Reports Compiled by the President for the 6/6/15 Meeting

Bensons: Luke Mazza

Progress: The last of the boundary markers were placed on 5/2/15, marking the northern and eastern sides of the parcel.

New Plans: None to speak of.

Problems: Some smallish trees have fallen across the trail recently and will need to be cleaned up. I'll be taking care of these soon when I do R.O.W. maintenance.

There has been one trip to Bensons since the last report, during the NRO weekend and just after the cave was opened for the season.

Bentleys: Jonah Spivak

REPORT DATE:

May 19, 2015

VISITATION RECORD:

From May 4, 2014 to March 22, 2015, 146 people signed into the register at Bentleys Cave Preserve.

PROJECTS:

On March 22, 2015 there was a cave cleanup at the preserve. Focus was on graffiti cleanup, but trail work and garbage removal was also done. 16 people attended the cleanup that was sponsored by the Vermont Cavers Association. Jonah Spivak was also in attendance and provided brushes, spray bottles, and a tote to carry the tools, which was then donated to the VCA at the end of the activity for VCA use at future cave cleanups.

During the cleanup, six hibernating bats were observed. I was told that three were Tri-color bats, and three were small brown bats. However, in the past, we have only seen large brown bats in the cave (since 2010). It is possible that the small brown bats were misidentified. Unfortunately, no photos were taken for verification.

A total of 1712 volunteer miles were driven in 43.5 hours of travel time, for 81 volunteer hours on site doing the work at the cleanup. (details on volunteer time has been provide to Vince Kappler)

A tremendous amount of graffiti was removed! The cave looks great.

A story, and photos by John Dunham and Jonah Spivak was submitted to the NCC newsletter editor, Danny.

FUTURE WORK:

The driveway and parking area continues to be in acceptable condition, and will not require work this year. The sign panel at the kiosk is showing wear, and I have a new sign to replace it. I plan on doing that work in early June, at which time I will also do trail clearing. The boundary of the property also needs to be walked and remarked. I will need new boundary signs.

Clarksville: Engel, Porter, Chu

The draft of the updated management plan has been completed and is out for discussion.

Times Union had an article "Leisure on the Cheap" and include Clarksville information. Should be pulled from website and write a corrected article.

Ella Armstrong: Alan Traino No report.

Knox: Mitch Berger

Progress:

- o The new kiosk risk assumption warning sign was posted on March 29.
- o Mitch discussed posting philosophy with Thom.
- o Mitch, Alan, and Jay performed trail maintenance and a preserve checkup happened on April 26 (see Issues).
- o Bob and Emily inspected the property April 29.
- o Thom, Emily, and Mitch did some further maintenance and inspection May 3.
- o We've issued 7 Knox permits and answered several inquiries.
- o We've issued 2 Crossbones permits.

Issues:

- o One of our Crossbones groups (April 11) reported to us on April 17 that a drainage ditch has been dug from the neighboring property straight to the cave. Alan, Jay, and Mitch inspected the site on April 26, and found major property damage. The Board has been in Executive Session on the issue since shortly thereafter.

Plans:

- o Recurring trail maintenance over the summer.
- o Possible graffiti removal in Knox.
- o Land survey to be completed shortly.
- o Remediation of the damage at Crossbones.
- o Addition of trail markers and re-posting of property.

Merlins: Morgan Ingalls

Progress:

Boston Grotto helped with a trail work day where the old trail was cleaned up (blow downs cleared, and water bars fixed), a new trail was cleared, a small fence was put up around some sensitive plants, old trail markers were replaced and new ones were added. I wrote a short article for the most recent newsletter.

I walked the property during the spring NRO and put up more trail markers on the new trail, but ran out before I finished. I also walked the boundaries adding new nails were needed. A few boundary markers will need to be replaced since the red squirrels find them delicious.

Two trips were run during the spring NRO. We (John Dunham) found a large rock had fallen at the top of the first drop/end of the bear trap. John moved the rock and poked at the ceiling. More rocks will likely come down at some point and we'll need to take another look at this area.

Two dig requests were submitted to me this spring. One for the Slime Climb in Merlins, and one from Dragon Bones. Both requests were submitted by the Berkshire Diggers and both were approved. One dig day was done (May 24th) at Dragon Bones.

Plans:

The new trail needs to be marked, but first I need more trail markers.

Both the Slime Climb and Dragon Bones will likely be dug this summer. The Berkshire Diggers will let me know when they plan to dig on the property.

Problems:

Some property boundary markers will need to be replaced, but none immediately.

I will be away June 1st until mid-October. A Merlins Steward training needs to happen this summer, but John has said he'll be able to do this, as well as helping out with other aspects of the property management. Jacob Morris-Siegel may help out as well.

The rocks over the first climb in Merlins will need to be stabilized at some point. The Berkshire Diggers will be in the cave soon (planning on May 30th) and will take another look at the area. Obviously, since they plan to be in and out of the cave, it is in their best interest to try and make the cave safe.

Onesquethaw- Thom Engel

Onesquethaw – Since the last report there have been five (5) trips permit with a total of 42 individuals. One group reported unexpectedly high water. A check of the culvert upstream by Lawson Lake showed some work had been done there. I discussed it with my contact at the county DPW. They indicated they'd done no work there. They said they'd keep an eye out and I will too.

I have tentatively scheduled a workday for October 10. I would like to construct and install the kiosk called for in the management plan.

Sellecks – Alan Traino – No report.

Torys ad hoc Committee - Bob Simmons

There has been little activity at the cave this quarter. Weantinoge has retained a surveyor to confirm the actual boundaries of the preserve property and the pertinent features thereon. We are sure that the parking area, kiosk and trail head are on the CT DOT Route 7 right of way and not on the preserve. In question is the location of the access trail and the proximity of the cave entrances/sinkhole to the northern property line. Once the survey has been completed, we will confirm alternative trail routes, including moving the access trail which crosses the preserve and provides access to a portion of the CT Blue-Blazed Housatonic Range Trail away from the cave area and onto the preserve where possible.

The Cave will reopen for visitation on Monday, June 1.

Acquisitions Committee Report – Chuck Porter

After a series of phone conversations with the Binghamton office of NYSDOT, and an on-site meeting in April, NYSDOT has concluded that there is no safe place to park adjacent to the proposed Spider Cave preserve. They recommend instead that we use an existing pulloff area about 500 feet down Rt 146 from the preserve, and walk up from there. Mike Bourgeois is drafting a new Sketch Plan for the preserve showing this parking, as well as ALL the owner's property, and we intend to present it at another Town of Wright Planning Board meeting on June 18. Assuming that goes well, we'll need to send registered letters to adjacent property owners, put a Legal Notice in some newspaper, and have one more meeting which will be a public hearing. And then do a legal survey and have the closing. Thanks to the generous 3-acre donation from the owners, Midge and Joe Carl, total costs should be minimal.

Bob Addis and I met with Paul Murphy on May 9 and we toured the proposed Straddle Canyon Preserve. We found lots of the recent land survey markers and outlined the proposed irregularly-shaped preserve. Paul showed us a new karst feature, Murphy Cave, which we were unable to investigate fully due to ice still present, but we will include this as well. We will need to survey this parcel, determine its acreage, and then arrive at a fair price with the owners.

Attachment B Vice President's Report

NCC Manual

Nine pages of the manual were updated after the March meeting and posted to the web a few days later.

EC Conference Call

The conference call was held in early May and lasted well over an hour. The primary topic was the recently discovered damage to the Knox property.

Other

At the March meeting, NCC committees were reassigned to the four officers to better balance the work load. I corresponded with webmaster Mike and newsletter editor Danny to restructure the committee assignments that appear on those venues.

I was away all of April and had very limited internet access. I was aware of the email threads discussing NCC issues and could keep pretty much abreast of the ensuring conversations but was unable to have regular input. I returned home by May 1 and from then through the 27th, I received and responded to over 300 NCC emails and multiple phone calls. The calls and most emails were dealing with the Knox issue and the EC's attempts to evaluate options and plan an appropriate course of action.

I contacted our insurance broker and requested that policy renewal information be emailed to me (it will also go to the office) so that we might get all the forms signed at the June meeting.

Committee Reports

Education, Science, Special Use, Surprise Cave and Thacher Park Committees are assigned to the VP. Reports are included below as received with VP comments or additional information in *italics*.

Education

Thom Engel, Chairman
Nothing to report.

Science

R. Laurence Davis, Ph.D, Chairman

There have been no new research applications nor inquiries since my last report. However, we did receive a report from Dr. Luis Espinasa on his DNA work in Clarksville Cave. Dr. Espinasa compared the DNA of a species of Amphipod *Stygobromus allegheniensis* from Clarksville and from the Ice Caves at Sam's Point and found them to be identical. This suggests that the populations are the same and that they interbreed (or, at least, have interbred with in the past 1000 years or so). These organisms are unusual in that they can survive being totally frozen. While other invertebrates share this trait, it is very rare. The fact that specimens collected from Clarksville (which never freezes) were able to survive freezing in an experiment means that this is a fundamental trait and not one that exists only in the cave. The fact that the organism can detect light suggests that it may also exist outside of caves. Dr. Espinasa proposes to continue his research by searching in specialized habitats (deep under stream gravels) for specimens of the organism which he will compare to those found in the caves.

I view this as a continuation of his research and in my opinion, he will not need to submit a new application but can continue his work under his existing permit. He has satisfied the terms of his permit by submitting this report and acknowledging NCC in his publication. I recommend that the board indicate to Dr. Espinasa that he may continue on and that they applaud him for including so many students in his research.

Dr. Espinasa has asked for recommendations of locations for collecting these organisms in surface streams. I quote:

My question to you is if there is any part of this stream where the public has easy access and on which we could perform this experiment. Alternatively, do you know any private owner whose property includes the stream banks and would be willing to give us permission to make a three feet deep hole and put this pipe there?

I am not familiar enough with the area to make a recommendation and ask that the board either make a suggestion to him or reach out to someone who can.

Respectfully Submitted

R. Laurence Davis, Ph.D.

Special Use

Thom Engel, Chairman

As of this writing there are 22 permits or scheduled trips for the period since the last meeting. Seventeen (17) or 77% are for Clarksville.

We already have 89 trips scheduled for the summer. Clarksville has 69 or 78% of these.

Surprise Cave

Bob Simmons, Chairman

After much back and forth, I received the new Volunteer Stewardship Permit, I have signed it as the representative of the NCC and returned it to DEC for signature by the commissioner. (*The renewed permit, PDF DOC056 follows this report.*)

I was also informed by Pat Vissering that she is retiring on July 1, 2015. The day-to-day oversight of the cave will fall to Nate Ermer at DEC Region 3 Wildlife. I will be setting up a meet and greet with him later this summer to affect the hand off from Pat Vissering. I will then try and affect a meeting between Nate, the NCC and the other two administrators at DEC Region 3 to discuss the possibility of reopening the cave to limited recreational uses, as well as our ongoing plans for the cave. These people are Ted Kerpez in Wildlife and Lisa Masi in the Endangered Species Group.

As an aside, I have written to Stanley Janeczko, the owner of the two lots on the hillside under which most of the cave lies, to see what his future intentions for the property might be. I have not heard back from him as of this writing.

I have been in communication with John Gumbs of the NJIRT concerning setting up a rescue pre-plan and subsequent local training (possibly an OCR) at the cave to include NY State DEC Rangers, Local EMS and area Cavers.

Thacher Park

Thom Engel, Chairman

Work day on 6/6. A new park manager has been hired. Her name is Maureen Curry. (Not sure of spelling.) I am not sure when she will start. I will provide an update on the day of the meeting. John Lowe, the acting manager, has been most helpful.

**Attachment C
Treasurer's Report**

**NCC Treasurer Report
May 29, 2015**

Balance Sheet	05/29/2015
As of May 29, 2015	
	<u>May 29, 15</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	1,525.00
Money Market	27,004.67
NSF Account	<u>54,994.89</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>\$83,524.56</u>

The 2014 federal tax forms were completed by Ayzha Wolf and myself and submitted prior to the 5/15 deadline. Thank you Ayzha for your continued dedication to the NCC!

The annual paperwork to keep the NCC registered with the NY Charities Bureau was completed and accepted.

The NCC's Guidestar listing was updated also. We are currently listed at the Silver level. Adding an Impact Statement would get us to the Gold level.

The above 3 tasks aid the NCC in applying for grants as well as promote our transparency as a non-profit.

Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc		05/29/2015
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual		
January 1 through May 29, 2015		
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget 15</u>
	<u>Jan 1 - May 29, 15</u>	<u>Budget 15</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	1,286.00	2,500.00
Donations - Other	<u>1,763.54</u>	<u>4,760.00</u>
Total Donations	3,049.54	7,260.00
Interest Earned	4.44	5.00
Membership Income	<u>840.00</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>
Total Income	3,893.98	11,765.00
Expense		
Acquisitions	0.00	2,000.00
Bank Charges	13.58	30.00
Development	0.00	500.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Easements	0.00	0.00
Education	0.00	100.00
Executive		

President	0.00	150.00
Secretary	0.00	75.00
Treasurer	0.00	275.00
VP	0.00	75.00
Total Executive	0.00	575.00
Insurance	0.00	1,450.00
Legal Fees	0.00	1,000.00
Licenses & Permits	60.00	50.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00
Postage	48.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bensons	0.00	250.00
Bentleys	0.00	600.00
Clarksville	50.00	300.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	100.00
Knox	2,000.00	200.00
Merlins	0.00	200.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	1,000.00
Sellecks	0.00	200.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	2,050.00	2,850.00
Printing	0.00	500.00
Promotion/Fundraising	30.00	1,100.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	50.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	110.00
Sponsorships	200.00	500.00
Taxes on Properties	121.19	300.00
Total Expense	2,522.77	11,765.00
Net Ordinary Income	1,371.21	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	1,576.48	0.00
Volunteer Value	28,868.00	0.00
Total Other Income	30,444.48	0.00
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	28,868.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	28,868.00	0.00
Net Other Income	1,576.48	0.00
Net Income	2,947.69	0.00

Fundraising Chair – Jose Martinez:

I am working on a couple caving gear vendors where they will donate goods for our auctions, both Barn Dance and NROs.

I also stand ready to organize a BBQ when the right situation comes up.

Barn Dance Subcommittee (Emily Davis and Mike Warner):

Progress: Date locked in, September 19. Band locked in, Leslie on board, Christa On board
Plans: Get our new fund raising chair involved in helping Leslie get good items for auction. Advertise with grottos soon.
Problems: None at this time.

Membership Committee – Peter Youngbaer:

Progress: This was a particularly active and productive quarter. We continue to set new records for NCC membership, jumping up to 191 from last quarter's 172, over 40% increase since my baseline in April, 2012.

We had an excellent NRO. Thanks to Speleobooks for setting aside prime space for us to handle memberships and sale of promotional items, as well as displaying some of our preserve posters. Special thanks to Thom Engel for again donating a Life Membership to be raffled off. I made a large poster for the raffle and displayed it on an easel, and it proved a good incentive for drawing in both new members and for lapsed members to renew (and then buy a raffle ticket or two). We had 11 new members join, including one new Life member, not counting the winner of the raffle. We sold 33 raffle tickets at \$5, for a total of \$165, not including the new membership dues. We also sold 10 of the new hats at \$25, a popular item, and 3 polo shirts @ \$20, plus took in another \$35 in donations for the lanyards, biners, and window stickers.

On May 4, I gave a presentation to the Waterbury, Vermont, Boy Scout troop on caves and caving. It started with a PowerPoint presentation, then moved to hands-on. It included materials on the NCC, our properties, and cave conservation, as well as a demonstration of my "go" pack, and then a knot tying workshop, where they got to take home ropes and printed material from "On Rope" with which to practice. I would not be surprised to see a trip to an NCC preserve later this summer.

For NCC Board elections, I coordinated membership data entry with Bob Simmons and Mike Chu, so that election ballots were sent to all voting members current and in good standing as of May 20.

All renewal notices for memberships up through June have been sent, and new memberships and renewals have been acknowledged and entered into the data base. It is current as of May 27. Second reminders were sent to all April and May renewals who had not yet responded. We continue to send lapsed notices (third notices) to those whose membership expired in the last six months.

Our current membership stands as follows, compared to the baseline of April 22, 2012:

May 27, 2015	April 22, 2012
Life: 39	Life: 18
Family Life: 6	Family Life: 0
Benefactor: 9	Benefactor: 10
Regular: 114	Regular: 88
Family: 19	Family: 16
Student: 0	Student: 0
Institutional: 4	Institutional: 3
TOTAL: 191	TOTAL: 135

Plans: The usual schedule of renewal notices will continue to be sent out over the summer. Many people renew at the Old Timers' Reunion (OTR), so the timing of those notices takes that into account. We also have another group of folks who typically renew at the Fall NRO, which will take place a month earlier this year, so whether or not we have those numbers included for the next NCC Board meeting will depend on the date that meeting is scheduled.

I will plan to offer input and feedback on the new membership brochure as that develops and drafts become available. Having our updated dues information on it, and attracting the non-caving users of our preserves is key to our membership growth.

Problems: While we continue to make good progress expanding our membership within the caving community, we have much to do with the general public and surface users of our preserves. In the Parks and Trails New York grant application we worked on two years ago, we envisioned outreaching to this group in both our printed materials and at our preserves themselves. I would strongly suggest we follow the plan in that application to install weatherproof brochure holders on the kiosks at all our preserves. I passed along information on these with all the PTNY materials. On the kiosks, we can display both our membership brochure and the preserve brochures, when they get produced. Including a QR code graphic on our kiosk posters is another tool we should use to reach out to potential new members.

Office Committee Report - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:

Progress: Working on making sure all deeds are in one location and copies of maps are in hand.
Plans: Continue with above project
Problems: Location of a few maps
Otherwise status Quo

Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler:

Progress:
Year to date totals: 900 hours of volunteer work and drive time for NCC projects for a total value of \$32,384. Volunteer hours were accumulated by cavers working on the Bentleys and Sellecks Preserves in addition to the hours reported by the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Office and Membership Committees.
Plans:

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

Problems:

None at this time.

Attachment D Secretary Report

It was a very hectic few months with many emails due to Knox Cave. Several electronic motions were sent to the board. The outcome of those votes are in the body of the minutes above. I attended the Thacher Park Center ground breaking. Thom Engel and Emily Davis were also present and Thom introduced us to Rose Harvey, Commissioner and Maurren Curry, Park Manager. During the Commissioners speech along with the all the improvements they mentioned the NCC and caving.

Publications: Christa Hay (Publisher, Publicity)

Website is currently being worked on to make it mobile friendly. Seth Perlman volunteered to help. I will be sending in more photos and possible text rewrites. I will be contacting people for their input. This will be done in sections to not over burden Mike and Seth.

I asked for board bio updates and forwarded to Mike the ones I received. I also contacted our new trustee for his photo and bio and will be passing those along when received.

Newsletter was delivered to members

Request for photos went to members and I received numerous responses. These have been forwarded to the brochure design person the portable display company. Text is currently being worked on and will be reviewed by the board via email.

Contacted Speleobooks to ask if we could share the use of their tent at NRO which was appreciated by all.

I ordered more baseball hats and created posters for the Spring NRO. T-shirt design is in the making. Will coordinate with fundraising .

Subcommittees:

Newsletter Editor: Danny Brass – no report

Webmaster – Mike Chu – no report

Bylaws Committee: Joe Levinson

Nothing to report

Nominating Committee Interim Report: Bob Simmons

Elections for the Board are underway and voting will continue (on-line) through May 31. Alan Traino and Thom Engel stood for re-election while Peter Youngbaer stepped down from the Board this cycle. Jacob Morris-Siegel is the only other candidate to come forward for this election cycle. I will provide an updated report following the close of the election this Sunday.

EC Meeting

05/03/15

Conference Call

Conference call: Bob, Vince, Christa, Paul, Mitch

Thacher Park – updated display information. We are to help with fundraising and design.

Meetings: setup meetings two meetings out.

Advisor Committee: who are we getting? Reach out to the folks?

Send out reminders for meeting and management plans and reports. Already in the works for this week.

Knox cave discussion in executive session.