

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.

Minutes

Submitted by Christa Hay
September 25, 2011, 12:00 Town Hall – Canaan, NY

Meeting called to order at 12:10

1. Introduction and greetings – President Bob Addis
2. Attendance:
Officers: B. Addis, P. Youngbaer, B. Folsom, C. Hay
Trustees: M Chu, K. Dumont, T. Engel, V. Kappler, A. Traino, P. Woodell, M. Ingalls, M. Warner
3. Absent without Proxy
 - Al Hicks – I authorize Bob to appoint a proxy of his choice. Bob has authorized Chuck Porter to be the proxy.
4. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
5. Vice President's Report –Peter Youngbaer – Attachment B
6. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
7. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
 - Status quo
 - Two electronic votes

Vote 1:

Youngbaer moved that the NCC pay Fred's Sanitation Service, Inc. \$465.26 (no tax) for land fill fees related to the cleanup of Baugh Cave (Invoice # 60395, dated 6/24/2011), and that we work to arrange a photo opportunity and check presentation at the Fall NRO, which is at the campground owned by Fred and Dawn Benninger of Fred's Sanitation.

2nd by Chu

For – Rest, Abstained – Woodell

Passed

Vote 2:

Addis moves the NCC donate all monies received from fund raising and donations received during the month of September 2011 including the profits from the October 1, 2011 Barn Dance to the victims of the August and September flooding event in Schoharie and Albany Counties. The NCC donation will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,000.00 by Thomas Engel. The money will be given to _____.

2nd by Hay

Passed unanimously

The blank is to be filled in at next meeting.

- May EC meeting minutes – Attachment D
8. Science Committee – Larry Davis – no report
 9. Acquisitions Committee Report –Chuck Porter
 - From email dated August 5th: Early this afternoon at law offices in Albany, the NCC finally closed on the Merlins Cave property in the town of Canaan, Columbia County, NY. Bob Addis and Chuck Porter were there with the NCC's attorney Christine Young, and met with landowner Mike Belknap and his lawyer Brad Allen.

As part of the agreement, Belknap will landscape the road frontage, build a gate (combination to be determined), and construct a road to the parking area. The NCC must build the parking area, a changing structure, and the trail to the actual 35-acre preserve. A deed stipulation is that no caving is to be done until this construction is completed. Belknap expects his contractor to begin work on his portion later this month.

We will need to set up work days, and arrange for parking lot stone and grading equipment.

Morgan Ingalls is completing the management plan, to be approved by the NCC Board.

It's a great relief to finally complete this complex and costly acquisition of a splendid marble cave. Hoist one for the NCC tonight.

10. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson
 - Nothing to report
11. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
 - Press releases went out for Merlins Cave purchase
 - Need to advertize for newsletter editor
 - Now that Merlins purchase is final I will be creating a new brochure and produce on good quality paper.
12. Fundraising Committee Report – Open
13. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
 - We have not had time to send out dues due notices but will be able to do so when Mike leaves on his road trip. No other problems or plans.
14. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis
 - I have not had time to stop by Knox but the only reports of problems there is that there is a lot of mud in the cave and it was obvious that water was up into the Gunbarrel.
15. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report – Thom Engel
 - Irene caused a number of issues on the preserve. A sizable chunk of old apple tree came down and some of the sumac came down. Kudos to Peter Haberland for doing the clean-up here with some assistance from me. In addition, a new hole is now present. At the edge of the corn near the apple tree, the hole is 6' deep and about 18" in diameter. It likely intersects the upstream end of the left-hand fork of the upper passage.
New management plan will be ready for the next meeting. In the meantime, after consulting with the officers, the new access policy has been initiated. Those wanting to visit the preserve e-mail a date and a list of people and I send a PDF of the permit. Seems to be working well. Hold up on the management plan is the presence of an official snowmobile trail over the property.
16. Sellecks Karst Preserve Report – Alan Traino
 - Parking area needs mowing. Telephone poles along the edges of the parking lot should be removed .So that we can get the farmer to hay the parking lot. Trail work also needs to get done. We have a new opening in the Natural Stone bridge sinkhole. Seeing it first hand, it is a hole along the right wall about 25 ft deep. Digging is in progress. Levy's could use a good cleaning out. Entrance is filled from flooding.
17. Clarksville Preserve Report – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
 - Irene had its impact here. Several new rockfalls were noted in the Lake Room and near the Slickenside Block Room. (The rockfall at the Lake Room was witnessed by A group from Québec, but no one was hurt.) Silt marks suggest that a portion of Perry Ave was flooded to the ceiling and it appears that the cave sumped at the Bathtub.

On the surface, there was relatively little damage on the main parcel. The Gregory parcel is another matter. Water flowing down 443, and down the valley from the west and out of the cave caused considerable damage. As near as we can tell, a landslide occurred in the valley, water built up behind that and let go in a large pulse. This scoured out the culvert that carried the intermittent stream coming from this valley and deposited in downstream of Osborn. Additionally, the Gregory entrance was greatly modified by the storm. The mound of dirt at the entrance was washed away, and floodwaters from the cave as well as from the stream gully to the west have knocked over trees and piled rocks and debris between the entrance and the road. Trash should be removed and a path cleared to the entrance. Osborn has partially been filled with rocks.

The highway crew used the NCC parking lot as a staging area for supplies and equipment during repairs to Rte 443. Some material is still there, probably awaiting final work. Spill of some material (asphalt type) on the property.

One source of concern: when the contractor fixed the road, he placed a culvert outlet at the southwest corner of the property. When I asked the DOT guy why this was done, he claimed it was a replacement of a culvert that was washed out. Continued questioning on my part revealed that they thought the culvert that was for the intermittent stream had come from the road. (Sometimes it is better to ask a few questions than to know all the answers.) Anyway, I asked why they had not carried the pipe all the way to the stream bed, he had no answer.

We will be scheduling a work day in the future to help re-establish the trail at Gregory's and do other clean-up.

18. Bentleys Preserve Report - Jonah Spivak

- Regular maintenance was completed on the parking area and trail to the caves on May 29. The trail is in beautiful condition. A very small amount of trash was removed.
- Bentleys Cavern Preserve is OK after storms. Some trail work will be required this fall or next spring. Nothing major

Note: Only the interim management plan was approved. From the 2008 minutes: *The surface and cave biology section are copied directly from the Sellecks report and will be revised next year when the leaves are out and a biologist can get up and check out the cave and parcel.*

19. Ella Armstrong Preserve – Alan Traino

- I am very happy to report that the parking area for Ella Armstrong is complete. I would like to thank Ken Fortuin for his efforts to complete the project. There is now room for at least 4 cars off of the highway. All other maintenance is complete at the cave.

20. Merlins Cave Preserve – Morgan Ingalls (interim)

- Helped prepared draft management plan for board approval

21. Education Committee Report – Thom Engel

- Being summer, nothing to report.

22. Membership Committee – Donna Stanley

- Mike Chu will help with the export from office committee to online.

23. Website Subcommittee Report – Mike Chu

24. Legal Committee Report – Open

25. Special and Group Use Coordinators –Amy Cox - no report

26. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson

- Received the statement from the NSF. We lost just under 1% from April through the end of June. This is less than the market lost during the same period. The account looks to be about 38% in bonds, 51% in large cap stock funds, 11% in precious metals.

27. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler

- **Progress:** Members have reported a significant increase in volunteer hours this cycle. Year to date totals are 1069 hours with a total value of \$30,468.00 up from 426 hours and \$13,193.00 from my last report.

The web page to submit hours, http://www.necaveconservancy.org/add_vv.php is working very well and some members are using it regularly. I encourage all Officers, Committee Chairs and Property Managers to check it out.

Plans: I will send periodic VV reminders to the membership, monitor data collection, and try to answer questions as they come up.

Problems: None at this time

28. Ad hoc Committee – Surprise Cave – Bob Simmons

- The NY DEC sent me the signed copy of the AANR for Surprise Cave, so I've got a lot to work on it in the near future.

29. Ad hoc Committee- Tory's Cave – Bob Simmons - still looking for executive director

30. Ad hoc Committee -Merlins Cave - Chuck Porter - now transferred into a permanent committee

31. Youngbaer moved that Morgan Ingalls be voted in as the manager of Merlins Preserve.

2nd by Hay

For – Rest Abstained –Ingalls

Passed

32. Addis moved to approve the revised Merlins Management plan as submitted.

2nd by Youngbaer

Warner moved to name the trail to the cave Belknap Trail.

2nd by Porter

Traino moved to postpone to the December meeting.

2nd by Engel
Passed unanimously

33. Addis moved up to \$1,500.00 be directed to the Columbia Land Conservancy, Inc. (CLC) for a conservation easement to be held by CLC on the Merlins property. If requested, the NCC shall forward a copy of the survey and the walking right-of-way into the property.
2nd by Youngbaer

Kappler moved to amend the motion to combine the number 33 and 34 motions to discuss as a whole.
2nd by Traino
For – Rest Against– Engel
Passed

Engel moved to amend the motion to delete “34 and”
2nd by Porter
Passed unanimously

Vote on original motion
For –Rest, Against – Kappler, Traino, Abstained – Dumont
Passed (the CLC easement was passed)

34. Addis moved \$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.
2nd by Traino

Folsom moved to postpone until the December meeting.
2nd by Chu
For – Rest, Abstain –Woodell
Passed

35. Warner moved that NCC funds donated for Schoharie hurricane relief be placed in an account titled "The Sunshine Foundation of Schoharie Valley Fund" to be dispersed at the direction of the board of that foundation for the purpose of providing relief for victims of the recent flooding. The Fund will be turned over to the foundation at a time when it is fully established as a 501(C) (3) and wishes to fully control the fund. In the interim, the NCC shall receive and acknowledge any charitable donations to this account and place the money in the fund.
2nd by Traino

Folsom moved to amend “funds donated” to donation earmarked..... fund replaces account.
2nd Engel
For – Rest
Passed unanimously

Youngbaer moved to amend motion to put a (.) after 501c 3 and wished to fully control.
2nd by Folsom
For - Rest, Against – Warner, Kappler Abstained: Engle, Dumont
Passed

Warner moved that NCC donations earmarked for Schoharie hurricane relief be placed in a fund titled "The Sunshine Foundation of Schoharie Valley Fund" to be dispersed at the direction of the board of that foundation for the purpose of providing relief for victims of the recent flooding. The Fund will be turned over to the foundation at a time when it is fully established as a 501(C) (3) and wishes to fully control the fund. In the interim, the NCC shall receive and acknowledge any charitable donations to this fund and place the money in the fund.

For – Rest, Against- Youngbaer, Folsom, Abstained: Hay, Chu, Ingalls
Passed

36. Addis moved to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice President will preside. Items can be entered as new business.
2nd by Folsom
Passed unanimously

- Kappler – fundraising appeal – currently has been at the end of the year. Would like to see over view and/or improvements. Discussions- we should have letters out just after thanksgiving. Also email correspondence works just as well as hardcopy letters.
- Mike T – parking area for Merlins –got prices for the parking lot materials and work.

- Davis – Barn dance volunteers for Oct 1 – around 1:00
- Engel – preserve managers approval – there was an issue with individuals stating that managers had to have a letter. Christa to do ids/business cards for the managers
- Youngbaer –Endangered bats in Vermont – broad interpretation of under Vermont state law, issues with even bat counts now. Any entry into a cave will need a Take permit during winter months.
- Ingalls – another Merlins work day in Oct. will be scheduled
- Addis – retreat- as many board members as possible. Long range planning. Start with a survey for board members.

37. Youngbaer moved to close the Committee of the Whole.

2nd by Porter

For – Rest

Passed unanimously

38. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the June 5, 2011 meeting.

2nd by Kappler

For – Rest, Abstained – Hay

Passed

39. Addis moved that Bob Simmons be voted in as the Chairman of the Nominating Committee.

2nd by Youngbaer

Passed unanimously

40. Addis moved the NCC support the local bid for hosting a North American Symposium on Bat Research to be held in October 2014 in the New York State Capital District.

2nd by Warner

Passed unanimously

41. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be held November 13, 2011 at 6pm- conference call

42. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be held December 4th at Speleobooks at 10:00

2nd by Traino

Passed unanimously

43. Addis moved to thank the Town of Canaan for use of their meeting room.

2nd by Porter

Passed unanimously

44. Addis moved to adjourn.

2nd by Dumont

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm

Attachment A

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Attachment A

9/23/11

Since our last quarterly meeting, the NCC has either attended or participated in several events. The NSS National Convention was held in Glenwood Springs, CO where we had our table top display. NCC members Mike Chu and Christa Hay each received the NSS Fellow Award for outstanding service over many years – Congratulations to both! The Old Timers Reunion in Dailey, WV saw the NCC tent gathering memberships and renewals. At the Fall Northeastern Regional Organization (NRO) weekend, the NCC tent was again present and a spirited auction of donated items netted slightly over \$700.

By far the biggest news and one with the most impact in our caving area has been Hurricane Irene and followed closely by Tropical Storm Lee. Their affects on our caves was absolutely minimal considering the terrible devastation they caused the area. At the Clarksville Preserve, the Gregory Entrance which used to be a climb down 8- 10 foot pit is now a walk in entrance, the waters blowing out the side of the pit. Historically this is interesting in that the Gregory's Entrance was a walk in access during the early 1800's when visitors paid 10 cents to walk down a few steps into the cave. Apparently sometime since it had been filled in. One of the few deaths caused by the storms in the Northeast took place in the Village of Clarksville approximately across from the Gregory's Entrance. A lady came out onto her porch to watch the flooding of the small creek when a sudden burst of flood waters swept her away to be drowned.

Our neighbors and cave landowners in the Schoharie Valley fared much, much worse. I don't need to repeat details of the flooding; I can only encourage you to go and look for yourself. It is truly unbelievable. Perhaps a firsthand view of the disaster area will convince you to donate – money, materials, or your own personal labor. Volunteers of all sorts have been pouring in – 1500 one weekend, 700 another – to help residents and businesses clean up and get ready to rebuild or refurbish. Several NCC members have been donating their time to the clean up, one even from out of state. Seven cavers from the NRO Weekend spent Saturday helping clean basements. Without electricity or running water, this was the perfect environment for cavers with helmets and lights! I understand that this weekend cavers are going in to muck out the crawl space under the library.

Of significance was an electronic vote of the NCC Board to donate all fund raising and donations received during the month of September including the October 1 Barn Dance to flood relief. Two other members put up matching grants up to \$1,250 where one dollar raised is matched with one dollar from them. The NCC has always tried to be involved in the communities near our Preserves and this is a commitment on our part.

The closing for the purchase of Merlins Cave, Columbia County was on August 5, slightly over four years from the start of negotiations. Merlins has been our largest and most difficult acquisition to date, and we would be glad to share the reasons why it took so long with anybody with the endurance to listen! Due to the flooding event we postponed our initial work day until September 11 when several cavers could show up and help. The 3,000+ foot trail was rough-cut, the perimeter of the 35 Acre parcel had boundary markers installed, and the parking lot was also rough-cut and ready for the heavy equipment work. The Seller has nearly completed his part of the Purchase Agreement – installment of barrier rocks, a nice stone driveway and a metal farm gate. According to the Agreement, the NCC must do their part before any caving can occur and we may not be able to finish before winter sets in. Local contractors all seem to be busy working on flood-related damage and not able to do a low cost, low profit job for the NCC. The committee will continue with hand work and may not be able to erect the kiosk due to its dependence on the location of the unfinished parking lot. Although the cave will close to caving on October 2, surface visitation can continue.

Attachment B

Vice President's Report for September 25, 2011 Board Meeting
Peter Youngbaer, Vice President

The summer has been exceptionally busy with all the hustle and bustle surrounding the successful final closing negotiations for Merlins Cave. Hundreds of emails and phone calls proved worth their while. Congratulations especially to Bob and Chuck for their diplomacy and perseverance. Thanks also to Christine Young, our attorney for the transaction, for her excellent and timely work.

As Vice President, I also arranged for the NCC to pick up the bill for Fred's Sanitation and highlight the role the NCC played in the cleanup of Baugh Cave. Thank you all for your votes on that motion. While I was unable to attend the check presentation ceremony at the NRO, I trust the photo op went well.

I've replied to numerous WNS inquiries to the NCC, including communications with cavers and NYDEC over Eagle Cave. The news that the Little Brown population there has doubled from some 2000 bats to @ 4200 is a welcome island in otherwise troubled waters. Since our last meeting, I've also given several WNS presentations, including at the NSS Convention at just this week at the annual convention of the National Caves Association in Luray, Virginia. Thom Engel and I will be representing the NCC at the National Caves and Karst Management Symposium the first week of October. I'll be giving a talk on WNS as a challenge for cave and mine managers, and using our NCC experiences as a base for that presentation.

While Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee wreaked their havoc in the prime NY caving areas of Schoharie and Albany Counties, Vermont has also been extremely hard hit – from the spring through these latest storms. Every county in the state has been declared a federal disaster area. Hundreds of roads and bridges remain washed out and won't be repaired until next summer. This makes travel from home to the Albany area difficult for me. In addition, most of you know my own clinic was wiped out in the storm of May 27, when 6.17 inches of rain fell in less than 6 hours on grounds already saturated by the second snowiest winter on record and the wettest spring on record. Just for context, Lake Champlain had more than 63 more square miles of surface area than normal for more than two months. I've spent nearly every day – 12-14 hours a day, seven days a week – working with staff, volunteers, and contractors to clean, decontaminate, and renovate our clinic, which finally re-opened Aug.31. We have spent more than \$60,000 on the project, and while FEMA has declared us eligible for grant funds, their budgets are tied up in Congress. The administrative part of the cleanup will continue for several more months. Having lived through this, my heart goes out to those in NY's prime caving area, who are just still at the beginning of the long road to recovery.

Attachment C
Treasurer's Report
 September 15, 2011

	Sep 15, 11
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	3,674.60
Money Market	10,030.99
NSF Account	43,994.57
PayPal Checking	327.85
Total Checking/Savings	58,028.01
 Total Current Assets	 58,028.01

The Onesquethaw Cave Preserve is now off the tax rolls. The Merlins Cave Preserve will be next, after the NCC pays the first year tax bill.

The 2012 Budget will be prepared before the next Board meeting including input from each Committee Chair/Officer. Please try to anticipate your expenditures for next year so that the Board can vote on the Budget promptly.

Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

09/20/2011

January 1 through September 15, 2011

	Jan 1 - Sep 15, 11	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	300.00	1,000.00
Donations - Other	3,897.71	3,350.00
Total Donations	4,197.71	4,350.00
Donations Restricted		
Merlin's Cave Fund	175.00	0.00
Donations Restricted - Other	0.00	0.00
Total Donations Restricted	175.00	0.00
Interest Earned	190.50	180.00
Membership Income	3,121.20	5,000.00
Total Income	7,684.41	9,530.00
Expense		
Acquisitions	0.00	500.00
Bank Charges	20.68	15.00
Development	0.00	1,200.00
Donations-outgoing	465.26	200.00
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	450.00	2,000.00
Licenses & Permits	355.00	250.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00
Merlins Expense	88,453.44	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	0.00	100.00
Postage	106.00	200.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bentleys	0.00	100.00
Clarksville	0.00	300.00
Ella Armstrong	36.00	1,100.00
Knox	0.00	25.00
Merlins	0.00	500.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	25.00
Sellecks	0.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance - Other	0.00	0.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	36.00	2,150.00
Printing	0.00	200.00
Promotion/Fundraising	30.00	780.00
Total Promotion/Fundraising	30.00	780.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	200.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	260.00
Sponsorships	500.00	600.00
Taxes on Properties	111.14	300.00
Total Expense	90,527.52	9,530.00
Net Ordinary Income	-82,843.11	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value	30,468.00	0.00
Total Other Income	30,468.00	0.00
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	30,468.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	30,468.00	0.00
Net Other Income	0.00	0.00
Net Income	-82,843.11	0.00
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	-735.57	
NET Income after NSF Fund Gain/Loss	-83,578.68	

Attachment D

EC Meeting

05/04/2011

Conference Call

Conference call: Bob, Bill, Peter, Christa,

Merlins: Heard from Mike Belknap on April 11 stating he would get back to us – Bob to send an email to him to get an update.

Cave openings – May 15th or ice out- Caves opening as scheduled put this on website

Membership Chair – data from Emily's database has been cleaned up and is now on the on line membership.

Elections – Bob Simmons recently sent out an email blast to test the email election process. Election ballots will be coming out soon.

Onesquethaw Cave – the paper work is all final and the NCC now owns the cave. Lawyer has been paid. Need to send out a press- release. Peter will talk to Thom and they can work on a draft. Try to get a photo to send out with press-release. Bob will see about contacting Jill Knapp. Now need to file for tax exemption with the town of New Scotland. Bill will deal with this year's tax issue. I need to get section block and lot number to Bill.

Southern Michigan University – the group came without the proper permits and did not do WNS decon even after being told the process last year. Letter went out to professor and university stating the procedure. We will also make the website clearer for groups use.

BSA – they have a change in their policy – now have to be 14 to go on cave trip.

NCKMS – we are providing our EIN for the event for sponsors.

NRO – I will send out an email for remembering your items for auction.

Northeast Bat Working Group - they are working on having USFW realize that decon within a solid WNS area is not needed. Need to be flexible and to watch the policy – tracking the science and not shutting down all caves.

NSS convention - Peter, Bob and Christa are going

Website updates- add Thom to education chair, add colleges/university to cave visit

Next board meeting – June 5th – do a good work day on the 4th and meeting on the 5th. Need to find a meeting place.