

**NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC.**

**DRAFT Agenda**

December 8, 2013 10:00am Speleobooks Schoharie NY

Meeting called to order at 10:05

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. Traino, P. Youngbaer, A. Hicks, M. Berger, P. Woodell, M. Ingalls
3. Absent with Proxy
  - Bob Simmons proxy for Peter Youngbaer
4. Absent without Proxy
  - Al Hicks
5. Board votes Luke Mazza as proxy for Al Hicks
6. Nominating Committee Chairman Bob Simmons announces the results of the Officers' election search.
7. Addis moves to convene a meeting of the Trustees to elect Officers. Alan Traino will preside over the elections as Chairman of the Trustees and will report.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Woodell  
**Passed Unanimously**
8. Officers are seated
9. President's Report – Bob Addis- Attachment A
10. Vice President's Report –Vince Kappler – Attachment B
  - waiting on liability issues numbers for adding in Bensons
11. Treasurer's Report –Bill Folsom - Attachment C
12. Secretary's Report – Christa Hay
  - Status quo
  - Helped with setting up baseline and also with the survey for Bensons,
  - November EC meeting minutes – Attachment D
  - Electronic Vote

Addis moved up to \$1,000.00 is allotted for a land survey of the Benson's property prior to donation acquisition.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Hay  
For: Rest No Response: Dumont  
**Passed**
13. Science Committee – Larry Davis
  - Nothing to report
14. Acquisitions Committee –Chuck Porter
  - Nothing to report
15. Bylaws Committee Report – Joe Levinson
  - Status quo
16. Publications/Publicity Committee Report - Christa Hay
  - Status quo
  - Looking to have the preserve managers on a schedule to send reports/articles to the editor so we have a preserve mentioned in each newsletter.
17. Fundraising Committee – Open
18. Office Committee Report – Emily Davis / Mike Warner
  - Status quo.

19. Knox Cave Preserve Report –Emily Davis
- *Problems:* None
  - *Progress:* Gave our neighbors permission to hunt again this year. He is aware the Crossbones may be visited. Mitch updated visitation information in the NE Caver. New Posted signs have also been put up at Knox.
  - *Plans:* We plan to clear the crossbones trail during the winter so it is not so overgrown in the spring.
20. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve – Thom Engel
- 9 permits have been issued since the last meeting. A work day will be scheduled in the spring.
21. Sellecks Karst Preserve – Alan Traino
- Status quo
  - Sellecks Management plan review – plan wording was updated last year in reference to modification methods
  - Alan has some updates to bring to the next meeting.
22. Clarksville Preserve – Mike Chu, Thom Engel, Chuck Porter
- Things have been quiet at Clarksville. Devon Hedges and Shirley Madewell assisted Thom Engel in uncovering the top of the original lip at the Osborn entrance. This showed about 15" of fill – a mixture of rocks, sand, and clay. Steve Crooks, our neighbor, used a bulldozer to create a level area from which to work with his backhoe and then used the backhoe to remove what he could. He will bring down his trackhoe when he's done using elsewhere.
- It is Steve Crooks who is clearing and placing shale on the property between the Gregorys parcel and Jake Moons. Long-term plan is to turn the old grange hall (on the south side of 443) into a coffee shop/baked goods place. Parking would be on the north side of 443. Upper lot is for temporary storage of vehicles. He plans to put a chain-link fence around it.
23. Bentleys Preserve Report - Jonah Spivak
- I've not been to the property recently. I've been in touch with a few cavers who have emailed me, and they have reported the usual trash which they have cleaned up. One group expressed an interest in doing a cleanup, and I followed up with them but have not heard back. I'm assuming the cave will be considered "open" this winter as it has in the past. Let me know if there is any particular work I need to attend to, otherwise I will report back later this winter. I plan on checking the property/cave after thanksgiving. Boston Grotto is planning a cleanup.
24. Ella Armstrong Preserve – Alan Traino
- Status quo
25. Merlins Cave Preserve – Morgan Ingalls
- I've had 2-3 requests from local folks to go visit the property, and I've just been saying that they should park in front of the gate, especially since they aren't large groups. I'm hesitant to give it out the combination to everyone because I'd like to think that it helps cuts down on "sneak trips" to the cave during the hibernation season (I'm not sure it really does). I did talk to a reporter from the Chatham Courier and I'd expect a few more requests once that article gets published.
- The management plan will need updating now that the CE is in place. This should probably include signage both on the gate, and in the parking lot, as well as some more detailed language about above ground visits to the property. And Chuck and I talked about putting in a little interpretive trail that points out karst features, the charcoal circles etc., which could find a place in an updated MMP as well.
- Need to do a work day for the trails in the spring.
26. Education Committee – Thom Engel
- Attended the Thacher Fall Fest, EMS Club day, and Hollow-een at the Hollyhock Hollow Preserve of New York Audubon
27. Membership Committee – Peter Youngbaer
- In addition to the regular membership renewal and database updates, I spent a lot of time this quarter preparing and submitting the Parks and Trails New York Grassroots Capacity Building Grant application. Thanks to Bob, Bill, Vince, Christa, and Thom for assisting in gathering the necessary support materials, bid quotes, and support letters.
- The application was submitted on November 12, and decisions will be announced January 16. This grant is designed to build membership in our organization by updating our brochures, table displays, and web materials. Total amount requested was \$2730. We committed \$1300 of NCC funds: \$1000 from the Development line of the budget and \$300 from the \$800 promotion budget and 122 hours of in-kind time as the required match. Please remember this when voting on the 2014 budget proposal.
- Let's keep our fingers crossed. If we get funded, we'll need (and want) to begin work in earnest at the beginning of February. In the meantime, we can already be working on the new brochure. We need one anyway. It's out of

date in terms of membership info, info about our properties, and liability issues. It's a great chance to really do this well. Let's hope they agree.

All renewals and new memberships have been acknowledged and entered into the data base.

All October, November, December notices were sent Sept. 22. Lapsed August, September, and October memberships were sent a third reminder.

As of information reported to me by Nov. 13, 2013, our current membership stands as follows, compared to the baseline of April 22, 2012:

November 13, 2013	April 22, 2012
Life: 29	Life: 18
Family Life: 0	Family Life: 0
Benefactor: 12	Benefactor: 10
Regular: 95	Regular: 88
Family: 16	Family: 16
Student: 3	Student: 0
Institutional: 7	Institutional: 3
<b>TOTAL: 162</b>	<b>TOTAL: 135</b>

28. Website Subcommittee – Mike Chu

- Status quo

29. Legal Committee Report – Open

30. Special and Group Use Coordinators – Thom Engel

- A year-end report will be sent after January 1. As of 12/08 for the entire year, 318 groups had been issued permits. 248 (80%) were for NCC caves. The remaining 63 were for NSS caves. Clarksville was the busiest with 202 (65%). Knox was a distant 2nd with 33. The greatest percentage at Clarksville are summer camps (52%) even though most of those are issued for the period 7/1 to 8/6. Secondary schools are a distant 2nd with 16%.

31. Financial and Investments Committee – Joe Levinson

- Status quo

32. Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler

- Year to date totals: 11,633.5 hours of volunteer work have been reported and members drove 16,890 miles for a total value of \$58,807.

33. Nominating Committee – Bob Simmons (see officer elections)

- start looking for candidates, all board members should be asking for candidates as well

34. Thacher Park Committee – Thom Engel

- Permit as been renewed. OPRHP has indicated an interest in entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NCC regarding the caves and cave management in the park.

35. Surprise Cave Committee– Bob Simmons NO LONGER AD HOC

- See email

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

- Very quiet over the fall. They approached with questions on signage and public outreach.

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

- Nothing to report
- If PTNY grant is approved we will work on appropriate wording and we will get it on kiosks as well.

38. Mohawk River Basin Karst Ad hoc committee- Chuck Porter and Art Palmer

- Nothing to report

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

2<sup>nd</sup> by Engel

**Passed unanimously**

- Engel – Thacher Park., The state issued their final report. Comments made by the NCC and Engel were not addressed. Hoping this will all be worked out during the MOU process.

- Filming in Clarksville – approached to film a movie. They want exclusive visits but we cannot do that. They cannot change it all. Figure it will not happen when they do come to see the cave.
  - Bensons draft management plan
    - Discussion of management plan
    - Straw vote for gate: for: woodell, simmons, engel addis, Opposed: rest, Abstained: Maza, Ingalls
    - Gate issue should be pending legal
    - Open caving – for: traino, ingalls, simmons, folsom,
    - Permitted: for: hay addis, berger,
    - Abstained:
  - Hay - GeoCaching – what are we doing with this?
40. Folsom moved to close the Committee of the Whole.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Ingalls  
**Passed Unanimously**
41. Hay moves to accept the minutes of the June 2013 meeting. Place holder – I have to recreate the minutes. Laptop crashed,  
2<sup>nd</sup> by  
  
Minutes are not recoverable.
42. Hay moved to accept the minutes of the September 29, 2013 meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Engel  
For Rest,; Abstained: Hay  
**Passed**
43. Folsom moved that the NCC accept the 2014 budget as presented at the 12/09/12 Board meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Dumont  
**Passed Unanimously**
44. Addis moved to accept the Bensons management plan as discussed.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Berger  
**Passed Unanimously**
45. Addis moved to accept the donation of the Bensons parcel subject to no problems resulting from the survey and title search. The President will sign at the closing.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Folsom  
**Passed unanimously**
46. Addis moved to create the Bensons Cave Preserve Committee. Addis appoints Luke Mazza as interim Preserve Manager. The position will be also be advertized and voted on at the next Board meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Traino  
For: Rest Abstained: Mazza  
**Passed**
47. Informational Point: Executive committee meeting will be February 11 at 7:00pm. NCC Conference Call: 605-475-6111, Access Code: 814008
48. Addis moved that the next NCC Board meeting will be March 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:am at HRP Associates, 197 Scott Swamp Road Farmington, Ct.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Simmons  
**Passed unanimously**
49. Addis moves to thank Mike and Emily for hosting the meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Berger  
**Passed Infamously**
50. Addis moves to adjourn.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Dumont  
**Passed unanimously**

Meeting adjourned at 1:30

## Attachment A PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Stealing from my End Of The Year letter:

1. **Benson's Cave Preserve #8.** In late October a call came offering to donate Benson's Cave and the surrounding 6.5 Acres to the NCC. Acting quickly since it is a first-step requirement, a Management Plan has been drafted, it is being reviewed by the Board, and a motion to pass it will be on December's agenda. Following that will be a motion to accept the donation of the property subject to a land survey and no conflicting landowner disputes or other issues.
2. **Thacher State Park.** Working under a permit with the NYS Office of Parks and Recreation, the NCC was asked to locate, inventory and mail all caves in the Park. September 14 was the second project days in 2013, and this will be an ongoing effort for NCC members. As well, several NCC members assisted in the construction of a bat-friendly gate for Hailes Cave. After our input at a public hearing, the Thacher Park Master Plan came out in November and the NCC was named as leading the Cave Management section. This partnership between the NCC and a State agency is a significant accomplishment and one which will forward our Mission Statement in new areas.
3. **Parks & Trails Grant Application.** I believe that this is the NCC's first competitive venture seeking public grant money. In October we submitted an application asking for \$5,000 for two items of educational purpose: 10,000-20,000 new NCC brochures designed by a noncaver graphic design person to target the noncaver population, seeking membership and donations. (Recent studies have indicated that many noncavers are using our Preserves and we should reach out to them.) Second, we want two of the smaller, more mobile display units which pull up from a base unit. We will hear about the grant request in mid-January, 2014.
4. **Merlins Preserve Conservation Easement.** As a requirement of the original purchase contract, the NCC had a closing for this on September 25 and paid our share of the continuing maintenance and annual survey costs to the Columbia Land Conservancy. An unexpected benefit of this has been a heightened awareness of the obligation to offer our Preserves to the public and what kind of outdoors person might be hiking on our lands. This has lead to a plan of action for a new NCC brochure – see No. 3 above.
5. **Events-Activities-Outreach**
  - i. -Old Timers Reunion booth
  - ii. 9/28: Thacher Fall Fest table
  - iii. 9/28: Knox Barn Dance fund raiser
  - iv. 10/4&5: EMS Club Days table
  - v. 10/26: Hollyhock Hollow-ween" table

## Attachment B Vice President's Report

NCC Manual

Edits were made to the manual to reflect actions taken by the Board at the September meeting. The updated version of the manual was sent to Mike C. on October 1 and was posted on the website.

EC Conference Call 11/13

The recent EC conference call touched on many topics ranging from the end-of year President's Report to parking at Merlins. But the most time was spent discussing the Bensons acquisition and how to move the process of acquiring that property forward. The discussion was long and wide ranging and included: need for a property survey, possible inaccuracy in the deed description, hiring an attorney, cave gating, the management plan, property taxes, property cleanup, a DEC bat count, and getting the property covered on our liability policy. During the conference call - on which at least three board members joined the EC - the consensus decision was to start the formal process to acquire the property.

Since the EC call, I participated in multiple follow up email threads which discussed different aspects of the Bensons proposal. As a result of those discussions, several preliminary steps necessary to start the acquisition process have been taken: a motion and on-line vote to approve funds for survey/legal work was conducted, an attorney has been retained, a draft management plan has been circulated (many thanks to Thom for preparing the draft MP), and a contract to transfer the property to the NCC has been prepared.

Liability Insurance

I contacted our insurance broker and inquired about adding the Bensons property to our policy. After several email exchanges, the broker has the info necessary to work up a quote to add the new preserve to our policy.

**Attachment C  
Treasurer Report**

**Balance Sheet**  
As of November 25, 2013

11/25/2013

Nov 25, 13

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Checking 2,423.80

Money Market 15,679.47

NSF Account 48,746.07

PayPal Checking 171.30

Total Checking/Savings 67,020.64

The paperwork necessary to get the NCC off the Town of Canaan's tax rolls (Merlins) was resent via certified mail on November 5<sup>th</sup> and again on November 20<sup>th</sup> when the Assessor requested that a different form be used. I have a fax verification report that proves the original paperwork was indeed successfully transmitted to the Town of Canaan on 2/14/13. I will be following up with them to ensure we are properly designated as exempt from paying taxes forward.

**Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual**

11/25/2013

January 1 through November 25, 2013

	<u>Jan 1 - Nov 25, 13</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction Donations	2,250.00	2,000.00
Donations - Other	3,135.98	6,000.00
Total Donations	<u>5,385.98</u>	<u>8,000.00</u>
Interest Earned	7.43	5.00
Membership Income	5,184.55	6,500.00
Total Income	<u>10,577.96</u>	<u>14,505.00</u>
Expense		
Acquisitions	0.00	500.00
Bank Charges	49.13	20.00
Development	0.00	1,000.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Easements	3,416.00	2,500.00
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
Executive - Other	0.00	0.00
Total Executive	<u>0.00</u>	<u>575.00</u>
Insurance	952.32	1,100.00
Legal Fees	3,150.00	5,300.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	150.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00

Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	100.00	100.00
Postage	44.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bentleys	0.00	100.00
Clarksville	270.00	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	100.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	<u>270.00</u>	<u>900.00</u>
Printing	0.00	100.00
Promotion/Fundraising	430.00	800.00
Mailings	0.00	100.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Sponsorships	0.00	500.00
Taxes on Properties	1,874.23	100.00
Total Expense	<u>10,285.68</u>	<u>14,505.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	292.28	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value	39,373.00	0.00
Total Other Income	<u>39,373.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	39,373.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	<u>39,373.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Other Income	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Income	<u>292.28</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	2,575.36	
<b>NET Income after NSF Fund Gain/Loss</b>	<u><b>2,867.64</b></u>	

**Attachment D**  
**NCC EC Conference Call Meeting**  
**Minutes by Bob Addis**  
**11/13/13, 7-8 PM**

Attendees: Bob Addis, Vince Kappler, Bill Folsom. Directors Berger, Woodell, and Youngbaer

1. **Benson's**
  - Contract 1<sup>st</sup> revision has gone from Christine Young to Jim Harbison
  - Tentatively, land surveyors will look over the property 11/16
  - Agenda will have a motion to accept the newly-prepared mgmt plan
  - Agenda will move to have up to \$1,000 for survey incidental costs
  - Agenda will follow with a motion to accept Benson's pending survey & title search
  - Agenda motion to appoint an interim Preserve Manager and advertise the position
  - Discussion of a property cleanup this winter
  - Discussion of gate repair and whether we needed a gate
  - Discussion of DEC bat survey this winter – EC had no objections
  - Benson's would have to be added to our liability insurance policy - Vince
2. **Thacher State Park**
  - Final Master Plan out & NCC named as implementers of Cave Mgmt, Section 8.
  - Park wants comments from partners for news release - Bob did it
3. **PTNY Grant**
  - Submitted 11/12 for \$5,000
  - Know if we got it by mid-January 2014
  - If yes, start work on the brochure in Feb. Printed by Earth Day, 4/22
  - Quantities of 10-20,000 to be distributed to all Preserves and elsewhere
4. **End of Year Letter**
  - Bob is writing it
  - Vince will personalize for 33 Life Member mail out
5. **Hollyhock Hollow Fencing**
  - Thom will talk to farmer for vehicular access to haul materials
  - Spring project?
6. **Horn's Cave, Remsen, NY**
  - Thom has been talking to the owner's new lawyer about required regulations
  - Town started repairing old storm drains destroyed when sewer line was installed
7. **Merlin's Concerns**
  - Vince will coordinate with Morgan and CLC on proposed changes to the mgmt Plan to fit new Conservation Easement
  - Discussion of promoting public access to the property
  - Led to discussion of locked road gate and general access
  - Bob to ask CLC their expected usage & if they needed to open the road gate
  - A: CLC's usage will be slight. No gate access required.