

NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY, INC

Minutes

September 23, 2018 10:00 AM
Knox, NY

Meeting called to order at 10:10am

1. Introduction and greetings – Robert Simmons

2. Attendance

Officers: R. Simmons, T. Engel, M. Berger, B. Folsom

Trustees: M. Chu, D. Hedges, J. Morris-Siegel, P. Rubin, C. Young, W. Russell, R. Armen

3. Absent with proxy: None

4. Absent without designated proxy: A. Traino, M. Ingalls

The board may appoint a proxy from the members in attendance.

Young moves to appoint E. Nieman as proxy for M. Ingalls

Second by Berger

For: All

[E. Nieman is appointed as proxy for M. Ingalls]

Berger moves to appoint N. Berg as proxy for A. Traino

Second by Armen

For: All

[N. Berg is appointed as proxy for A. Traino]

5. Officers' Reports

President: Attachment A

Vice President: Attachment B

Treasurer: Attachment C

Secretary: Attachment D

6. Simmons moves to open the Committee of the Whole. The Vice president will preside. Items may be entered as new business.

Second by Young

For: Rest

Against: Engel

[The Committee of the Whole is opened]

Topics:

0. Thacher discussion

In the Thacher Park Committee report, Engel inquired "Considering the paucity of interest this year, is it worth renewing the permit for next year?" and we discussed at length. The conclusion was that we do want to renew the permit, but most of the conversation was about ways to make the project more successful.

Berger suggested that we need to "bootstrap" the work days with survey groups that are committed to doing certain projects and willing to take others along so that we can assure folks who are considering travelling to Thacher but don't have a survey group that they'll be able to work on a project with another group and won't risk showing up and being unable to do anything for lack of instruments, sketchers, training, etc. Young suggested that we work on our marketing of the work days. Hedges suggested that we communicate about our goals for the project and progress to date.

1. Alan Traino: Board seat (appoint replacement?), preserves (Ella & Sellecks temp managers?) (Simmons)

Folsom has seen Traino recently, reported that his recovery is going well, and that he had a message for us: "I'll be back." Engel proposes that we continue to appoint a proxy for Traino at each meeting as necessary as we've been doing, instead of treating his seat as a vacancy and filling it permanently. Berger mentioned that he had a conversation at OTR with someone looking for volunteer opportunities who might be enthusiastic about helping at Sellecks. There are other volunteers who've expressed willingness to step in as needed as well. Morris-Siegel suggests that these people might be able to help with preserve checkups, and Young suggests that they might be able to help with such things as posting winter closure signage. Simmons will handle communicating with people looking to volunteer.

2. Sellecks MP (due for review at December meeting, postpone to a later date?) (Simmons)

We concluded that we'll either postpone this, or review the existing plan and ask Traino his thoughts about it.

3. Officers reviews, postpone until later this fall, but before December meeting? (Ingalls)

The Governance Committee members have been overly busy and were unable to prepare for officer reviews at this meeting, and made the suggestion to postpone them. Folsom expressed skepticism that this would actually happen outside of a regularly scheduled meeting. Berger noted that the officers did a bit of self-reflection at the most recent EC meeting in preparation for the officer reviews. Morris-Siegel proposes that we schedule the officer reviews for an hour directly before the December meeting; this seemed to be the most agreeable plan.

4. 40th Celebration tickets (Davis)

36 are registered so far (we have 80 seats available). Davis asks if we can send a targeted letter to the life members who haven't already registered, with an attached reservation slip. She notes that the deadline (due to necessity to provide the caterer with a headcount) is October 12.

5. Barn Dance recap and going forward (Davis/Simmons)

Everyone had a nice time last night. G. Moore brought about 25 RPI students, and we had 75 total attendees. A severe windstorm the previous night destroyed one of the Speleobooks tents. The admission income was a bit lower than usual because so many of the attendees were students, but the auction income was higher than usual because the new concept of the Dutch auction was very popular. C. Hay and L. Hatfield have indicated that they're willing to help run the event again, and Davis may be as well, but wants to train someone else to take over. S. Madewell is interested, and Folsom will continue to handle advertisement and contact with the band.

6. Annual members meeting / appreciation day / dinner (Simmons)

The EC discussed the idea of this annual event (much lower key than the 40th anniversary event), likely a picnic of some sort, perhaps at Thacher. Berger described what some other groups like SCCi and WVCC do. The issue of parking fees at Thacher was discussed, and we considered the idea of working out arrangements with the park for the NCC to pay to cover the preregistered folks' parking. Davis noted that we could potentially have the event at her place. Young asked about considering having the event joint with CLC perhaps at Merlins, though the preserve doesn't really have an area (or parking) conducive to a large gathering. Rubin suggests holding it at Joralemon Park. Davis suggests we work Hailes Cave into the plan if it's at Thacher. Folsom asked how much to put into next year's budget as a placeholder, and \$500 was what was settled on.

7. Planned Giving (Simmons)

We will have something in the form of a brochure in time for the 40th celebration. Other land trusts are interested in seeing what we come up with, and we'll share it with them. It was also mentioned that we should all have wills naming the organization if we want to ensure its future. Engel, Young, Davis, and Warner note that they have all named the NCC in their wills.

8. Updates from our representation at Convention, OTR, and NRO (Berger, Simmons, Folsom, Engel)

Morris-Siegel and Berger talked about the Cave Conservancies Roundtable they attended at Convention, and Berger noted that the NSS Cave Preserves meeting is seeking information from us about our insurance learnings - he will be talking with the NSS's insurance manager. Berger provided a description of some of the valuable conversations he had while representing us at OTR, one of the most promising of which was about a new member looking for volunteer opportunities. Various people described our NRO presence, which featured a training session on our acoustic monitoring devices, the auction which pulled in \$1,100, and generally a well-staffed tent with frequent visitors. Folsom inquires if we need to get a new tent. Hedges, Simmons, and Engel represented us at Clarksville Heritage Day, where what was really needed was a 10'x10' tent. We'll ask M. Warner to do some research into options so an item can be put into next year's budget.

9. NYSCPP Outside Influences on Caves project update (Berger, Davis)

We discussed some of the stumbling blocks encountered while scrambling to get this project underway after Davis, Warner, and Berger found themselves with much larger roles than they'd expected and in light of the delays caused by grant funding, unavailability and unsuitability of some of the hardware we planned to use, and the rapidly approaching cave closure deadline. Everyone was excited to hear that all of the acoustic installations were up and running the day after NRO, and that our second volunteer training session would be happening directly following this meeting.

10. Future Fall Board meetings in October to avoid the end of caving season? (Rubin)

We concluded that if it's the pleasure of the Board to push what is usually the September meeting into early October, there's nothing stopping us from doing so. There is a bit of concern over having the last two meetings of the year only two months apart. However, we'll consider this issue in March when we schedule the third quarterly meeting for 2019.

11. 4wd tracks up most of Bentleys trail (Hedges)

Hedges described that much of our trail is wide to make for a comfortable hike and to lessen the impact of overgrowth, but that this seems to be attracting unwanted 4wd vehicles driving all over our trails, leaving tracks, etc. He inquired if he can block this activity with logs, if we have to worry about people with logging rights, etc. Since much of the trail is an easement rather than fee-owned land, we would have to check what rights we have. Engel suggested perhaps placing a farm gate at our property line. Davis reported attempts at posting a different preserve, and following the trail of 4wd vehicles, which only led to an unreceptive neighbor. Morris-Siegel says in his experience, you just can't win this fight.

12. NCKMS 2019 (Berger)

Several of us expressed interest in attending next year. Historically, the NCC has sponsored the conference at the \$500 level (Berger has inquired about when the sponsorship levels will be available, and we'll have this as an agenda item for the next meeting). We discussed possibly presenting a preliminary paper on the NYSCPP project, and some other potential talks. Davis says registration is usually in the \$100 range.

13. Property insurance (Berger)

We're looking into obtaining property insurance to protect the large cache of scientific equipment we've purchased for the NYSCPP project.

14. Onesquethaw Management Plan proposed updates for bat exclusion (Engel)

Engel went over the updates that have been made to the draft revisions he circulated, based on feedback.

15. Clarksville fundraising (Folsom)

Thus far, we've raised \$7,734 of the \$12,000 we were hoping to. We're still waiting to hear back about the results of our applications for grants from the NSF and the NSS. The idea of fundraising at the 40th anniversary came up. Davis and others are uncomfortable with a hard push for donations at that event, but the suggestion of putting up a poster with a "cave thermometer" showing the new area of the cave to be protected and how far we are towards our goal was liked by all.

7. Simmons moves to close the Committee of the Whole.

Second by Morris-Siegel

For: All

[The Committee of the Whole is closed]

Old Business

8. Berger moves: The minutes of the March 18, 2018 Board Meeting are approved.

Second by Hedges

For: Rest

Abstain: Armen, Berg

[The minutes of the March 18, 2018 Board Meeting are approved]

New Business

9. Berger moves: The minutes of the June 3, 2018 Board Meeting are approved.

Second by Engel

For: Rest

Abstain: Berg, Nieman

[The minutes of the June 3, 2018 Board Meeting are approved]

10. Engel moves: The proposed revisions to the Onesquethaw Management Plan are approved.

Second by Berger

For: Rest

Abstain: Berg

[The proposed revisions to the Onesquethaw Management Plan are approved]

11. Engel moves: Appendix C (Research Policy and Procedures) is amended as shown on the attached.

Discussion: This comes out of e-mail discussions I have had with Larry Davis. The intent of this is to simplify and to speed project approvals. One of the main problems has been that the need for Board approval has resulted in either lengthy delays in approving proposals or the need for an electronic vote. (Which may take as long as 2 weeks.)

The idea of including the President in the process was to broaden the group as a number of preserves have only one Preserve Manager and in such cases without the President that would leave only two people to evaluate the proposal.

I included the President as the preserves are under that officer. Others have suggested that the VP should fulfill that role as the Science Committee is in that department. I can see both points and would be happy with either officer.

Second by Berger

For: All

[Appendix C (Research Policy and Procedures) is amended as proposed]

12. Berger moves: The Insurance Liaison is directed to obtain property insurance to cover at least our scientific equipment purchased for the "Outside Influences on Caves" project for a maximum cost of \$400 provided the deductible is no higher than \$500 per occurrence.

Second by Engel

For: All

[The Insurance Liaison is directed to obtain property insurance as described above]

Informational point: Next EC meeting will be Sunday, October 28, 2018 at 10am at HRP Associates in Farmington, CT.

Informational point: the Winter Board meeting will be December 9, 2018 at 10am at Speleobooks. Officer evaluations will precede the meeting at 9AM.

Informational point: the late Winter EC meeting will be Sunday February 17, 2019 at 10am at Folsom's home on the Upper East Side.

13. Simmons moves: The NCC Spring meeting will be Sunday March 17, 2019 at 10am at MassWildlife in Dalton, MA.

Second by Young

For: Rest

Abstain: Morris-Siegel

[The NCC Spring Board meeting will be Sunday March 17, 2019 at 10am at MassWildlife in Dalton, MA]

14. Simmons moves to thank Amy and Russ Pokorny for providing the venue for this NCC meeting and the Barn Dance.

Second by Engel

For: All

[The NCC thanks Amy and Russ Pokorny]

15. Engel moves to adjourn.

Second by Young

For: Rest

Against: Morris-Siegel

[The meeting is adjourned]

Meeting adjourned at 2:29pm

**Attachment A
President's Report**

Things have been quite busy since the June meeting, My apologies for the lateness of the agenda, but my work has been overwhelming of late, here's the gist of things:

1. Acquisitions, the addition to the Clarksville is progressing well, waiting to hear on the approval of the lot line subdivision which has been applied for. The Salamander Preserve survey is being updated to reflect the area to be retained; otherwise the project is nearing completion, nothing new on [REDACTED] the possible donation of [REDACTED], the potential [REDACTED] or our discussions with [REDACTED]
2. Thacher Park work day (most recent) was yesterday 9/22/18.
3. Caves for sale: [REDACTED]
4. Good representation at the Fall NRO (thanks everyone) and at OTR.
5. Tickets for our 40th Anniversary Celebration are still available (35 of 75-80 sold as of 9/20/18), other issues are coming together well.

Cave Preserve Management Plan Review Schedule

Year	March	June	September	December
2018	Ella Armstrong	Knox		Sellecks
2019	Bensons	Merlins		Onesquethaw
2020	Spider	Clarksville		Bentleys
2021	Ella Armstrong	Knox		Sellecks
2022	Bensons	Merlins		Onesquethaw
2017	Spider	Clarksville		Bentleys

Note: With Alan down for the foreseeable future we should name interim Preserve Manager for Ella and Sellecks. Since the Sellecks preserve will be up for review this December, having an interim manager doing his MP review right away, would not seem to make sense and so postponing the Sellecks preserve to a later date should be considered. See discussion in the COTW.

CAVE PRESERVE REPORTS:

1. Bensons (Luke Mazza)

Progress: Inspected the property on 09/16 and walked the trail and boundary. Fallen branches were cleared from the trail. Mike and Emily already have, or are about to install two bat detectors on the property. 6 permits have been issued since the June report, with likely around 4 of those actually representing trips into the cave.

Issues: The right-of-way is due for another mowing and some brush clearing along the edges. It looks like either some trail markers are missing or my judgement has changed since I originally posted them - either way some more are needed.

Plans: Will return, possibly the weekend of the board meeting, to mow the right-of-way, clip some encroaching brush, and put up a few more trail markers. Attempting to arrange a training session with Mitch to understand the maintenance needs of the two bat detectors.

2. Bentleys (Devon Hedges)

Plans: Replacing signage at kiosk, rock cairns for trail junctions near old logging paths and areas with sparse overhead foliage, driveway gravel project. Potentially clearing out plastic siding debris

Problems: Driveway ruts from drainage are negotiable but may be significant for some visitors. Determination on historical interest of plastic siding debris should precede removal. Signage includes out-of-date contact information, also shows moisture damage.

Progress: Three dead/down trees cut and removed from trail. Stinging nettle growth is sparse; clearing was much easier than last summer. Parking lot & driveway measured to solicit work estimates. Seasonal closure signs re-mounted; going forward, they'll be left up year-round.

Found while installing bat arrays, 4wd tracks up most of Bentley's trail.

3. Clarksville (Thom Engel)

We've had many groups and visitors to the preserve, but no problems have arisen. Chuck Porter writes that, "we're finishing up the Crookes land acquisition. The Minor Subdivision Application is now pending County approval Sept 20 and Mike Bourgeois has a little more survey work, then we can have a closing."

4. Ella Armstrong (Alan Traino) No Report

5. Knox (Mitch Berger)

Progress:

- Trail checkup has happened
- Winter DEC bat count is scheduled
- Acoustic detector deployed by Hedges and Madewell
- Approximately 21 permits issued since the last meeting

Issues:

Travel has kept me away many more weekends than usual this season, and the late blooming of the plants has allowed the trail to become far more overgrown than I like (Cantello made a generous offer to help out a bit on that front)

The Great Divide still has that rope of unknown age/origin

There have been an impressive number of people confused about whether a permit is required this season (including some experienced folks confused by the website)

Investigation of poison ivy and possibly poison parsnip on the trail still hasn't happened

Plans:

- Periodic property inspection and trail maintenance
- Put up winter closure signs
- Possible graffiti removal in Knox and investigation of methods
- Addition of trail markers and re-posting of property
- Boundary marking
- Removal of the Great Divide rope
- Investigation of troublesome plant species

6. Merlins (Morgan Ingalls & Jacob Morris-Siegel)

It has been a slow summer on the Merlins Preserve. Since the June NCC meeting only two groups have requested trips into the cave and one of those trips was unable to do the cave due to high water in the entrance.

Early summer there was a couple of dig days at the Dome 12 sink and we expect to do some more dig days there this fall.

I have made a couple visits to the preserve this summer have seen little evidence of use other than maybe the occasional neighbor walking the trails

7. Onesquethaw (Thom Engel)

So far this year I have issued 19 permits. Mean group size is 6.5.

I met with Carl Herzog on 31 July at the cave. He thinks a bat exclusion feature will allow us to open the cave in winters. This would be like a curtain. It would have to be over the entrance from 8/1 through 11/1. During this time, visitors could still visit the cave.

Because of the timing the cave will NOT be open during the winter of 2018-19, but could be open 2019-20. Attached is a revised Onesquethaw management plan that will permit us, but doesn't commit us, to carry out this project. (Red text shows new wording. Strikeouts show text being eliminated.)

8. Sellecks (Alan Traino) No Report

9. Spider (Kevin Dumont) No Report

OTHER COMMITTEES (PRESIDENT):

Acquisitions (Chuck Porter)

The Crookes land purchase at Clarksville is nearing completion. A Lot Line Adjustment application has been submitted to the Town of New Scotland and is pending approval by the Albany County Planning Board at their Sept. 20 meeting. Surveyor Mike Bourgeois will modify his draft map based on Town requests, after which we will be ready for the closing.

The Salamander Cave in Kingston survey was completed. We met with the Donors and discussed the area in the rear of their residence and rather than a lot line adjustment, will grant them an easement of use. The easement area is being picked up by the surveyor and we will then be ready to move to close, [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Nominating (Norm Berg)

The Vice-President and the Treasurer will be elected at the December meeting, and soon I'll begin the process of finding candidates for these positions. I'll also be working on the voting system for the Spring 2019 Trustees election.

Risk Management (Mitch Berger)

Progress:

- Worked with Bob on CoAI for the anniversary celebration, and it's been issued
- The invoice we were hunting for at the last meeting finally arrived, and has been paid
- Acquired information about what we need to do to insure our new scientific equipment

Issues:

None

Plans:

- Pursue property insurance, if so directed by the Board at this meeting
- Work on our annual Terrafirma renewal in December
- Participate in the annual risk-management training LTA requires for Terrafirma discounts
- Assemble the rest of the Committee membership
- Pick up other issues that were in-progress with the former ad-hoc committee

Torys Ad hoc committee (Bob Simmons) Nothing new since last meeting

40th Anniversary Ad hoc committee

Committee still looking for volunteers to help coordinate set up and run the event.

Venue and date are locked in; invitations to Founders letters have gone out, Beer and swag ordered.

Workman's Comp and disability insurance issues addressed, waiver from New York approved.

Budget set, menu and prices set continuing to publicize on Facebook, newsletter and via Mailchimp, announced at NRO. Gifts for Founders in, special guests invited, program set.

To Do: Sell more tickets as last count was only 35 of the 75-80 seats, Board commitments to be there?

Bat Hibernation Ad hoc committee (Emily Davis, Mike Warner, Morgan Ingalls)

Thom Engel is working with NYSDEC on a plan to possibly open Onesquethaw next season (fall winter 19/20).

We have launched into operations on the grant program studying cave activity by people and bats. We are behind the initial timeline. Bat monitoring equipment should be in place within a week. However, in-cave components are still pending hardware. We are feeling a little under the gun because of the scope of this project. I am not sure the NCC gave much/enough thought to everything entailed to make this a successful endeavor. Doing what we can to move this forward. The in cave portions of the project are still at a standstill (due to equipment issues).

Governance ad hoc (Devon Hedges)

Nothing new to report

Attachment B

Vice President's Report

Bylaws Committee (Joe Levinson)

Nothing to report.

Education (Thom Engel)

Nothing new to report.

Science Committee (Larry Davis)

Larry and I have worked to stream-line the science approval process. This motion for revisions to Appendix C of the NCC Board Manual is on the agenda.

Paul Rubin has submitted a science proposal which involves the sampling of a small amount of sediment from Clarksville Cave. This project has been "approved" by all three Clarksville managers and by the science coordinator.

Special Use (Thom Engel)

As of 09/11/2018, I dealt with 181 requests so far. (I do not anticipate many more, especially since this last week is almost fully booked at Clarksville.) Of these, 154 or 86% were for Clarksville Cave.

103 or 57% were in July and August.

Only three (3) permits were denied this year. This is down from 20, last year.

The last 2 years I have restricted groups from reserving more than 2 slots per cave per day in July and August. For 2019 I plan to shorten is period by 1 week and shift it one week ahead (back?), so that the restriction will be in place 6/23/2019 through 8/17/19. This refines the period when things are most busy.

Surprise Cave Committee (Al DeMaria)

I did a couple of walks up to and around Surprise entrance but none of the sinkholes seem to have changed from our recent rains.

[Redacted]

I (Thom Engel) will add that in my discussions with Carl Herzog at Onesquethaw, he indicated unsolicited that he felt Surprise should be open for general caving during the non-hibernation period. He'd also like a new gate on the cave.

[Redacted]

Thacher Park (Thom Engel)

Work days were held on May 19, June 23, July 14, and August 25. Nobody attended the first two dates. Two new members attended July 14. We did some work on the Onondaga in the vicinity of Daddy Longlegs. Only Al DeMaria came on August 25.

With only two people, we decided not much could be done.

I will provide a verbal update for the September 22 session.

[Ed: The verbal update was that the September 22 session was attended by Thom and two others.]

Considering the paucity of interest this year, is it worth renewing the permit for next year?

I have gotten no response from regional staff on a proposed management plan.

Attachment C

Treasurer Report



Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc
 Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
 January 1 through September 19, 2018

09/19/2018

	<u>Jan 1 - Sep 19, 18</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Donations		
Auction		
Donations	3,106.61	2,400.00
Donations - Other	12,512.14	7,170.00
Total Donations	<u>15,618.75</u>	<u>9,570.00</u>
Grants	26,000.00	6,000.00
Interest Earned	16.04	10.00
Membership Income	2,775.00	3,500.00
Total Income	<u>44,409.79</u>	<u>19,080.00</u>
Expense		
40th Anniversary	200.00	2,000.00
Acquisitions	4,000.00	2,000.00
Bank Charges	80.46	50.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Dues	250.00	350.00
Education	0.00	50.00
Executive		
President	0.00	100.00
Secretary	0.00	50.00
Treasurer	0.00	50.00
VP	0.00	50.00
Total Executive	<u>0.00</u>	<u>250.00</u>
Grant Expense	19,943.03	0.00

Insurance	1,993.00	2,000.00
Legal Fees	0.00	1,000.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	50.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Meetings & Conferences	0.00	170.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	54.00	100.00
Postage	0.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bensons	0.00	1,000.00
Bentleys	0.00	1,100.00
Clarksville	0.00	1,350.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	500.00
Knox	0.00	1,100.00
Merlins	0.00	600.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	600.00
Sellecks	0.00	700.00
Spider	0.00	600.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	0.00	7,550.00
Printing	0.00	1,000.00
Promotion	154.16	1,300.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	50.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	110.00
Sponsorships	0.00	300.00
Taxes on Properties	11.24	200.00
Total Expense	26,685.89	19,080.00
Net Ordinary Income	17,723.90	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
In Kind donations	0.00	0.00
Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	-471.01	0.00
Volunteer Value	34,672.00	0.00
Total Other Income	34,200.99	0.00
Other Expense		
In Kind Out	0.00	0.00
Volunteer Value Exp	34,672.00	0.00
Total Other Expense	34,672.00	0.00
Net Other Income	-471.01	0.00
Net Income	17,252.89	0.00

Barn Dance Subcommittee - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:

Problems: Current staff, Leslie, Emily, Mike and Christa are all retiring at the end of this dance. Only 4 board members or officers has donated items so far this year.

Plans: Christa will be planning and preparing the food. Tent set up will be early in week because Mike will be going to VAR. Need staff to show up at 5 or 5:30 for site set up.

Progress: Raffle donations are with Leslie. Cider has been crushed and bottled.

40th Anniversary Dinner – Emily Davis:

Problems: Still do not have answers on pint glasses.

Only 36 people have reserved. Several trustees have not reserved. We need 50 to break even. All dinners must be reserved by early October 12 with a final cutoff of the 17th.

Plans: Keep moving forward. Need list from Bob of our comp guests and who is coming. Will be meeting with the college October 12. Need to get tickets for drinks.

Progress: All decorations, food and speakers are in place. Knox Cave Beer will be delivered and set up by Helderburg Brewery.

Investment Committee - John Fioroni:

Status Quo

Membership Committee - Peter Youngbaer:

Progress:

Membership Renewals and New Members:

All renewal notices for memberships up through October 17 have been sent, a second and third notices, as appropriate. The data base is current as of today, September 18.

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

September 18, 2018		April 22, 2012 (baseline)	
Life:	63	Life:	18
Family Life:	9	Family Life:	0
Benefactor:	10	Benefactor:	10
Regular:	71	Regular:	88
Family:	19	Family:	16
Institutional:	8	Institutional:	3
Total:	180	Total:	135

Institutional Members: We held steady at eight, which was up two last quarter: Boston Grotto, Central Connecticut Grotto, Met Grotto, Northern New Jersey Grotto, Helderberg-Hudson Grotto, New Jersey Initial Response Team, and Camp Echo Lake, with a new member (former), Cornell University. VCA is overdue from July 15 (dunned twice now), so I expect them to be current shortly, which would make 9. If your grotto or organization isn't listed here, please urge them to renew or join. Thank you.

Problems:

No problems to report.

Plans:

Normal Operations: Will continue to send renewal notices, as well as second and third notices, as applicable.

NCC 40th Anniversary: I continue to put 40th Anniversary info in all membership communications.

Office Committee Report - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:

Problems: Still struggling with the purchase of "people loggers"

Plans: Keep moving forward with purchase of goods for the grant work.

Progress: Bat detector items fully purchased and delivered to grant project.

Publications – Christa Hay:

Progress: Newsletter uploaded to website and emailed to the membership before Board meeting. Several emails sent to the membership on work days, 40th and barn dance.

Plans: Any other swag needed please let me know. I believe there is some left in the budget. Treasurer will need to confirm. 40th anniversary email to membership again if the 40th committee requests.

Problems: The usual need for timely articles and information for the newsletter. Would be good if the board members stepped up and provided some input and I would still like to see our preserves highlighted in our newsletter.

Technology Committee Report – Mike Chu:

Status Quo

Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler:

Progress: Year to date totals: 979 hours of volunteer work for NCC projects for a total value of \$34672.00. Members also reported traveling a total of 9155 miles to work on NCC projects.

Two committees (Treasurer and Office) were the only ones to respond but there was an increase in individual members reporting what they worked on. Many thanks to Paul, Devon, for their special projects and to Morgan, Mitch, Mike, and Emily for their work on the NYSCPP grant. The officers should reinforce the importance of reporting the time members spend working for the benefit of the NCC especially now as managers begin to secure the preserves for the closed season and many members are currently working on the barn dance and anniversary dinner.

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

Problems: None at this time.

**Attachment D
Secretary's Report**

**EC Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2018, 10:00am
Speleobooks**

Called to order: 10:02am

Present: B. Simmons, T. Engel, M. Berger, B. Folsom, E. Davis, M. Warner

1) NSF Grant

As described in mail Mitch sent to the Board, he presented about our \$3,000 grant proposal for the Clarksville acquisition at the NSF meeting during Convention. Due to lack of remaining available funds in their budget this year, they have postponed the vote on our grant until their Fall meeting (at which time they will be in their next fiscal year), and we should know the result by November. Response to the proposal seemed quite positive at the meeting, and based on later one-on-one conversations.

2) NYSCPP Grant and associated project work

a) Equipment: When Mike contacted the iButton data logger manufacturers, he found out that they're no longer making the model we sought to buy, but that those are being replaced by one that is supposedly of better quality "in a couple weeks," but we haven't heard back from them since. Bob will call them again. We discussed whether to also proceed with orders for the light and acoustic sensors (those had been temporarily put on hold as we attempted to sort out whether we'd be allowed by LTA to extend the timeline for the grant in light of the delay caused by waiting to hear back about the Wildlife Acoustics grant before ordering equipment). The conclusion was that we do want to order the rest of the equipment and have it shipped to Speleobooks.

There will be a training session given by DEC staff at Speleobooks on Thursday, September 6 for the SM4BAT acoustic monitor. Emily is concerned about destruction or theft of equipment once installed at the caves. The question of whether our insurance will cover damage or theft if we follow the DEC's placement and protection recommendations was raised, and Mitch will find out. We will be ordering a bunch of the equipment from Amazon, and some of the people monitoring equipment from Omega. Emily thinks this can be done before she leaves for OTR, and wants someone to specify which weather-resistant locks to buy.

b) Management: We discussed how to select who would handle the equipment management tasks at each of the preserves, whether and how much to expect the Preserve Managers to do, whether designating specific people for each preserve versus using available people on each weekend to hit multiple of the preserves makes the most sense, etc. Placement of each type of data logger was discussed – human visitation loggers need to be disguised and can be near the entrance in the dark zone, temp/humidity sensors require scientific advice about placement, and the acoustic monitors require both science and protection input on their placement. We think we can get everything in before October 1, though Christine has been told we can almost certainly get a 3 or 6 month extension. The training on the 6th is largely for people to learn about placement and securing of the devices, etc. The biweekly technicians don't necessarily need to be here that day, but could.

3) 40th Anniversary

The venue is secured. The price has been set at \$32/person, with specifics for the menu yet to be selected. Nice jackets for the founders have been ordered. The program has been discussed a bit, but is in Bob's hands. Cocktails will be served for an hour or so, likely including trays of smoked salmon on toast. The final menu selections don't have to be selected until October 8, but suggestions may be sent to the EC soon so that we can include the menu in the advertising. The breakeven point is 0 (zero) attendees, as the event is going to cost ~\$3k and we have \$3k for it.

Bandanas have been ordered, and cost \$2 for printing on blanks that cost \$1.10, so the cost is between \$3 and \$3.50. Gifts on the tables include blue or green bandanas with the (non-anniversary) logo in half-fold (160 were purchased, so there will be 80 extra for sale) and Knox Cave Ale pint glasses (gifted by the brewery) or ordered pint glasses with scattered names of all the preserves (cost is \$3 each, and we'd order 144 for a price break, with the leftovers for sale after the event). Dinner will come with two drink tickets (cash bar after the two included drinks, and the prices are relatively low). We have the space from 5pm-10pm, and will need Board members to help with cleanup at the end. There will also be a plant on each table, which someone at the table will win. And there will be batfetti. Music will be provided by a guitarist (Bob's son) and probably also an accordionist.

We should ask the Board to make their reservations and pay soon – they should all be attending. Posters from the Barn Dance should either be moved to the event or reprinted for it – if Bob can get the files, he can print them at work.

Speakers will include Bob Simmons as emcee – we need to ask if there's a microphone and podium (Emily will take care of this with Evelyn Davies). Invited guests (besides founders plus one): Bob already invited personally (written invitation to follow) the Salamander owners, we want to invite two people from each family that has donated a cave to the NCC, Thom asks about Mark King (Onesquethaw, Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy), Bob asks about Columbia Land Conservancy, Bill asks about the Pokornys (Octagon Barn owners), Emily points out that we really need RSVPs for these (we only have 80 seats). Emily wants to ensure that we have a "planned giving" brochure on the tables. As far as the founders, we know that Art and Jim will both be there, and hope to know whether Bob will as well soon. We discussed having the founders talk, perhaps roasting each other for a few minutes. Hosting arrangements for Jim can be made at Speleobooks.

4) Cave Conservancies Roundtable recap

Mitch and Jacob attended this meeting at Convention. Chairship of the session has been passed along to Paul Winter, and Mitch expressed hope that this will bode well for the future of the group. At this session, they discussed planned giving, as well as Board and meeting structures of the various conservancies. The session was shortened to 2 hours to split time with the NSS Preserves meeting, which Mitch got pulled into by Emily. The Preserves group wants to know more about our experience getting to an insurance carrier that doesn't require us to maintain waivers, and Mitch will be talking with Ted Kayes (who manages the NSS's insurance coverage) when he's back home from Convention in about a month. Bob is considering attending the next BOG meeting.

5) Planned Giving

Bill Stringfellow (SCCi) suggested that we all make use of the examples of successful planned giving solicitations many of us have received over the years from schools we've attended, etc. He's going to gather up such stuff to share with the group from the

Conservancies Roundtable. Bob has also gathered up a bit of such material on a thumb drive and has given it to Bill. We're not going to spend money to print this (Bob can handle it gratis).

6) Clarksville fundraising

We've raised \$7,234 so far (not counting the half-matching contribution Thom will make). Maybe we will also receive \$3k from the NSF grant we've applied for in November.

7) Acquisitions

Clarksville – we can fundraise at NRO or the dinner. Mitch mentions maybe a presentation sketching out the new trail we'll be adding, showing what we learned from Thom's 2-year study about surface use, etc. would help at these events. The landowner went out after Mike B. (our surveyor) was there, and moved one of the pins a bit. He requested a pin between the existing Gregory parcel and his parcel at the road (it got wiped out in Tropical Storm Irene), and Mike says such a new pin just won't last, but we'll do it anyway. The next step is to get the lot line adjustment through the town approval process. Chuck is working on it, but hasn't reported results yet, though we didn't expect roadblocks. We're hoping for a closing in September, as we want it to be done before the dinner, and it would help with ability to pass the hat.

Salamander – at the end of April, we entered into a contract with the surveyor, who said it could take a couple of months. But we didn't have the finished survey at the end of June. Bob got tired of asking “where is it?” (we did pay \$3k up-front), and has told them that if this doesn't get done, we might lose the deal and we need to know if we need to make alternate arrangements. Two days later, the survey appeared (that was a couple weeks prior to this meeting). There are a few other issues yet to be dealt with – [REDACTED]. There's a triangular flat section at the end of their backyard that they're using, but is part of the lot they're giving us. We could do a lot-line adjustment to give that back, or grant them an easement; we've agreed to an easement with them because they'd like the process to go faster. [REDACTED]

8) Update on the shared legal risk analysis documents

After all of our previous conversations about how we could go about sharing our legal risk analysis documents with other conservancies seeking to learn from our experiences with insurance and similar topics, and Bob obtaining approval from the lawyer who wrote the documents along with caveats to be provided with those documents, Mitch did some time ago share them with the leadership of the Butler Cave Conservation Society, which had asked questions and sought info on these topics at last year's Cave Conservancies Roundtable. At the time, they had been looking into an acquisition possibility that ended up not panning out. However, they have just recently entered into an agreement to purchase a new preserve, and the info may be useful in that endeavor. They've thanked us both for sharing our learnings, and jumping through all the hoops to be able to do so.

9) Website confusion

Mitch mentioned that there is more confusion over Knox's rules than clarity among all the folks who've e-mailed about the preserve this season, and wondered if the same was true of the other preserves. Thom says maybe we should find some time to sit down with Ramon and work through what needs to be updated. Bill had discussed the idea of rearchitecting our data with Ramon after the last Board meeting, because that wasn't really what we hired Jersey Nerds to do with the website; that was an aesthetic redesign, not focused on changing content.

10) Question on Special Use documents for Scout troops

Mitch was recently asked a question by the Boston Grotto member who has typically led Scout groups on trips upon request for many years. In light of this year's new paperwork packet for Scout groups, he was unsure whether he was supposed to request the permit and treat it as if he's leading a trip for a third party (the Scouts), or if the Scout leader should request the permit and no third party existed, but the Boston Grotto leader would simply count against their party size. Thom says that the Scout leader should pull the permit, and the grotto person isn't involved in the paperwork (except that he might be listed as a leader on the BSA form and is part of the count).

11) OTR plans

Bob won't be going. Mitch and Peter Y. are planning to. Bob currently has the tent, and it's unclear whether it will fit in Mitch's car along with Bob&Bob stuff he's toting for Speleobooks. Maybe we can find an NCC member who's going and would like to arrive a day early – maybe Mike B. or Mike M.? Craig C.? Bob will solicit.

12) NCKMS 2019

Mitch and Mike W. will likely be going and then disappearing down to TAG Fall Cave-In at the end of the week. It is October 7-11, 2019. Do we want to be a sponsor? (This needs to be discussed by the Board.) We'd like to push to have major representation at this conference. It's attended by state and government cave managers, NGOs, and conservancies. Papers are presented, and there's a field trip.

It was suggested that Mitch might look to present a Risk Management paper, and we might also put one together on visitation results (early ones, at least) from our science grant project. Thom and Bob are also thinking of going. Maybe Thom could re-present the Clarksville study (which thus far has only been given at an NSS Convention). Mitch will contact Wil Orndorff (the event organizer) and ask when sponsorship levels will be available, and we can put it on the Board agenda to consider sponsoring (also to encourage papers). Maybe we'll consider hosting NCKMS in 2021? (NCRC is in our area in 2020 and will consume many of our resources, but the years won't collide.)

13) Upcoming officer assessments at the Board meeting

The committee that does the officer evaluations includes Christine and Morgan in leadership roles; they're both swamped. Mitch will drop a note to them reminding them that it's coming up. At this EC meeting, since those evaluations will be coming up soon, we did a bunch of self-reflection on how we're doing and some challenges we've faced, though this took place as a short freeform conversation, and we made a point of not looking up the template of questions, because we didn't want to do what amounted to practicing our answers. The conversation, which Emily and Mike were present for much of, also wandered to discussing a more frequent member appreciation day event (perhaps annual) that's less of a big deal than the anniversary banquet (and this lower-key event would likely be free). Speleobooks could host it, which would place it near an NSS preserve, or we could try doing it at Thacher (assuming we'd work out the parking fee issues there). This member appreciation day topic should become an item for the next Committee of the Whole.

14) Alan Traino

We discussed what to do about Alan's seat on the Board of Trustees, as it's unlikely that he'll be in a position to participate during the remaining ~6 months of his term. We can just appoint proxies at each meeting, or we could fill his actual seat as a vacancy for the six months, at the Board's option. Bob thinks we might want to suggest that the Board consider having a New Jersey representative, and notes that Francois has been the next-highest vote-getter a couple of times. Mitch raised a question about whether the officers really should be pushing the Board in any particular direction on this topic. As to the matter of the preserves Alan is Manager of, Bob wants to pull in people who aren't doing stuff presently, and wants to get two people, one per preserve.

15) NRO

Mike can bring the stuff we need; Emily will stay home, and Thom likely won't come down, either. We will need an auctioneer. Emily could come down just for that, or Bill could do it. Bill has agreed to step up. [Ed: Due to the rescheduling of a Thacher work day (see item 19), subsequent to this meeting, Thom notes that he may make it to NRO for Saturday after all.]

16) Onesquethaw Management Plan & Bats

Thom sent out proposed revisions, and received two comments – Paul said “let’s do it,” and Jacob requested a minor wording change. The changes only allow us to move forward and do something without obligating us to. The curtain under discussion would need to be in place from August 1 through November 1, so we have probably missed our shot for this year. In the event of a large flood, it would have to be moved out of the way, and perhaps we’d put floats on it. This might require a stream disturbance permit.

17) Streamlining the Science Project Approval Process

Thom e-mailed Larry, who agreed with his proposal. Rather than approval by entire Board, the suggestion is to have science projects approved by a group consisting of the Science Committee Chair, the President, and the Manager or Managers of the Preserve(s) involved. This removes the Board from the blocking path. Mitch noted that we’ve had an issue in the past with ensuring that we get the results of science done in our caves, and that moving the approval process to a smaller group than the full Board would mean there are fewer people (and not always the same set) to remember if a potential researcher has failed to deliver on this promise in the past, and we’d want to try to address that issue. A motion will come before the next Board meeting to change the relevant Appendix in the Board Manual. [Ed: Thom notes that he has circulated a revision to Board Manual Appendix C.]

18) Book Sale

Chuck has received a personal collection of (mostly non-Northeastern) cave literature whose former owner would like the NCC to sell for its benefit, and has requested assistance in making such a sale, likely online, occur (there is explicit desire not to simply put them up for auction at NRO, as it’s expected that they’d disappear for far less than their true value if we did that). Emily says, upon a quick glance at the inventory list Chuck has prepared, that there’s not much value in a good number of the books, and that they could be sold through Ebay (anything else like an online auction house would take something like a 40% cut), but it’d be a ton of work to enter all the descriptions. Thom says we could instead price it, box it up, and bring it to Consignment Sales at the NSS Convention. Mitch mentions the OTR garage sale, but Emily notes that others there will likely have half these books sitting out and competing with us. Emily is willing to do an appraisal of the books, which will take an hour or two.

19) Barn Dance

Leslie has agreed to do some of the prizes, contacting Stewarts, etc. Emily will get gift certificates from Carrot Barn and Apple Barrel, and would like the Board to solicit prizes (she can provide a donation letter). It could be something you regift. Christa will do food. The Pokornys are on-board for the Octagon Barn for two days (the event evening and the meeting the following morning). As far as setting up the tent, we will need to make sure it comes here. The Knox Cave wall will come over, and there will be no silent auction. We’ll have the Squeeze box. Paul (Tamarak) is on-board. This event is for community outreach rather than profit, so we’re keeping the budget the same. It will be on September 22nd. We had a Thacher work day scheduled for the prior weekend, which conflicts with NRO; Thom will talk to the park manager about moving it to the day of the Barn Dance, which might give people two reasons to come on that date. Christa, Leslie, and Emily all say it’s their last Barn Dance (it’s been done for 10 years). Emily is willing to partner with or assist someone or do the food, but she wants to *attend* the next one; we need to find a volunteer to *run* it. Bill will ask Paul to put it on his site (Homespun).

20) Clarksville on Facebook

There’s a rogue page we suspect is autogenerated (it’s a local business page) that has a bunch of info and lots of people (many of whom should know better) are posting on it. The phone number associated with it is Amy Cox’s (former Special Use Chair). Bill will try to obtain control of the page. We had some discussion of whether to then maintain it, kill it, or redirect it to our website (this sounds best to avoid it coming back under someone else’s control).

Adjourned: 3:14pm