

## Minutes

June 7, 2020 10:00 AM  
Online via Videoconference

Meeting called to order at 10:11am

1. Introduction and greetings – Robert Simmons

2. Attendance

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

Trustees: M. Chu, D. Hedges, R. Armen, M. Ingalls, K. Dumont, L. Hatfield, E. Nieman, J. Morris-Siegel,  
W. Russell

3. Absent with proxy: None

4. Absent without designated proxy: None

5. Nominating Committee Report on Trustee Elections (N. Berg)

See Attachment E

6. Simmons moves to thank Mike Chu and Wayne Russell for their service to the NCC.

*[Ed: Mike Chu is completing his **fifteenth** consecutive year on the Board, and continues his duties as Co-Manager of the Clarksville Cave Preserve and Chair of the Technology Committee.]*

Second by Morris-Siegel

For: All

*[Mike Chu and Wayne Russell have the NCC's thanks for their service]*

7. New Trustees are seated

Welcome to Riley Drake and Paul Rubin

8. Officers' Reports

President: Attachment A

Vice President: Attachment B

Treasurer: Attachment C

Secretary: Attachment D

9. Simmons moves to open the Committee of the Whole (CotW). The Vice President will preside. Items may be entered as new business.

Second by Berger

For: Rest

Against: Engel

*[The Committee of the Whole is opened]*

*[Engel's computer was unable to maintain a usable connection to the videoconference, so for much of the remainder of the meeting, he was either unable to participate in discussion, or absent; he was absent for all subsequent votes during the meeting]*

Topics:

9.1. Clarksville Cave Preserve Management Plan review (Engel)

*[Engel circulated this plan for review over e-mail. He notes that some minor factual info such as bat count results has been added, and that a significant change is a proposal to analyze the need for a gate at the Ward entrance due to illegal winter visitation. He specifically seeks input on what visitation threshold constitutes the need for a gate during this discussion.]*

Nobody raised any issues with the proposed content changes in the plan, so since the most substantial such change was the addition of a note that we should analyze the need for a gate, this topic was combined with Item #9.2.

9.2. Gating Clarksville Cave (Engel)

*[In light of the above discussion, Engel notes that J. Kennedy is scheduled to be in the area this summer, and asks if it's worth getting an estimate.]*

Simmons reports that last winter, the monitoring conducted as part of the NYSCPP scientific study project identified 14 occasions during which people took trips into the cave while it was closed. Hatfield inquired about what constituted a “trip” for the purposes of this count and whether it depended on group size, duration, etc. Simmons explained that numerous people were seen on the surface, and many briefly poked their heads into the entrance before deciding not to go further, and those were not counted; the count above includes only groups seen entering the cave and then being gone for some length of time before reappearing. Almost none of the participants in these groups looked experienced, and the group makeup varied widely - from kids to adults, to what appeared to be a father with five children whom he lowered into and raised out of the entrance. Simmons also points out that monitoring did not indicate that anyone entered either the Thook or Gregory entrances while the cave was closed.

Berger expresses some concern that at this cave more than most (because of how widely it’s location is known to, and it is visited by, the general public as opposed to primarily the more experienced caver community), there is a risk that if we place a gate, someone with exceptionally poor judgment might think it an amusing prank to lock others into the cave. While some were skeptical that this was likely, Nieman points out that this sort of thing has happened (though others note that instances we’re aware of were due to having miscounted group size and forgetting that someone had been left behind rather than malice or a poorly judged prank). Engel notes that the proposal is to lock the gate open so this can’t happen; Berger wants to be sure that if we attempt this, the way we do so won’t provide infrastructure for someone with their own lock and a chain to effectively lock the entrance.

Simmons says that he doesn’t really want to gate the cave unless we have to, and Davis notes that in some other states, she’s seen caves with a laser tripwire that sets off an alarm at some nearby location; we have volunteer members quite nearby that could receive such an alarm. Morris-Siegel adds that it’s easy to use a cell network to deliver such alarm notices, and Nieman points out that a camera could do this instead of a laser tripwire. Berger indicates that when groups without permits (at permit preserves) are encountered during the open season, they usually respond well to a polite attempt at an educational conversation, but the groups we’re discussing here are likely well aware that they’ve walked past a big red sign that makes it clear they’re violating federal law, and the risk of a more volatile confrontation is much higher; while volunteers and managers might choose to attempt to interact with groups they encounter, we shouldn’t ask anyone to take this risk. Nieman agrees, and also suggests that posting a notice of recording might be a viable alternative to a gate. Morris-Siegel also reminds us that if we encounter a group violating the closure, we’re not actually law-enforcement, and would have to call them to actually do anything more than talk, and it’s unclear whether they’d come out for this (though Berger points out that at this particular location, the local police department is just a few blocks down the road). Russell notes that his organization gets alerts related to the water supply, and has to pick and choose which of them to respond to, though they keep a database of images for later review and comparison. Hedges also mentions that many of those visiting illegally are young, and thus might not pose such a high interaction risk.

At this point, Berger recalled that when C. Herzog visited one of our meetings to share with us the news that the federal listing of the Northern Long-Eared Bat as threatened was going to require closures of many of our caves during the winter, he explicitly told us that the New York State (NYS) Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) did not expect us to handle policing or enforcement, and that so long as we closed the necessary caves and posted the appropriate signage, we would not be held responsible for others’ actions in violation of the closure. Rubin agrees with Nieman about the likely efficacy of a posted notice of recording. With respect to how much effort we put into finding and correcting the behavior of illegal visitors, Hatfield suggests that we should assess whether our motivations for the closure are predominantly to protect bats or because the government has told us that the caves must be closed (this balance likely relates to the data from bat counts in the cave).

Davis suggests that it might be useful to place a camera at the parking lot so that it can capture license plates. Morris-Siegel notes that our parking is shared with a diner, so it can be very difficult to tell which cars are related to cave visitation, though Davis is only referring to the upper parking area. Ingalls suggests that we might want to discuss with the DEC what their thoughts are. Simmons notes that the cameras placed for the scientific research project were fairly visible, and we might want to place others that are hidden. Hatfield suggests that if we post a notice of recording, it might be better to describe this monitoring as being conducted for scientific purposes, as that’s less likely to result in vandalism.

### 9.3. 2020 Members Day (Simmons, Engel)

*[At our last meeting, we noted that the scheduled date is July 18 with August 8 as a backup, and that what we’d considered as the most desirable venue (the new Traino Preserve) didn’t seem right for the time due to the untimely passing of our neighbor. The world has changed rapidly since that meeting, making an in-person event like this in July seem implausible. This topic is to discuss what we plan to do - postpone, hold an alternative online event, cancel altogether - and also how to handle this year’s Certificate of Merit awards, which were to be presented at a small ceremony during the event.]*

Simmons says that the event is cancelled for the moment, though depending on how events unfold, it might be possible to do something in the fall. He feels that we should announce the awards at some point despite lack of the planned event. Hatfield suggests that we should send out a mailing to the membership, either electronic or via snail mail, letting them know that the Members Day event is cancelled due to Covid-19, but that we’re thinking of

them, appreciate their membership, etc., and perhaps we could use this mailing as an opportunity to encourage renewals and donations.

#### 9.4. Spring 2020 Northeastern Regional Organization (NRO) non-event (Hatfield)

*[We had agreed to host NRO, and at the last meeting, parceled out some responsibilities. Several people did significant work to plan the event, including Sassu-Laviero and Morris-Siegel. However, due to the pandemic, the event was cancelled. We were able to get the deposit on the venue back, but this is still a disappointing outcome, not just because of how the caver community looks forward to the event, but because this was a major opportunity to fundraise to rebuild our reserves after our two recent acquisition projects.]*

*Hatfield has proposed the innovative idea of hosting an NRO “non-event” where every paid registration to not-attend the event gets you a T-shirt commemorating it, and more! Folsom suggested at the EC meeting (see Item 8 in the EC Minutes in Attachment D) that we might consider something like a virtual auction.]*

Simmons inquired of Berger whether the upcoming Fall NRO was on or cancelled. Berger responded that when last he had heard, the Helderberg Hudson Grotto (HHG) was still planning it and had not formally cancelled it, though they hadn’t made firm location arrangements and weren’t certain whether the event would occur; he turned to those at the meeting more active in HHG. Hedges informed the group that as of two months ago, HHG’s overall sentiment was that a Fall NRO was unlikely to happen; however, there’s been some improvement in New York’s Covid-19 numbers since then, so there’s the chance that this sentiment is less negative now.

Berger mentioned an idea he’s had recently about something that could occur at a virtual regional event - there are several technologies frequently shown off in the caving community where caves have been scanned with LIDAR, and then reconstructed into a virtual reality world where individual people can put on a VR headset and “explore” the cave. It might be very interesting to see if any of these are amenable to being presented in a breakout room in some videoconference such that cavers could actually sign up and “go on a cave trip” *together* during the event. There was some enthusiasm for the idea.

Hatfield’s overall idea for the “non-event” is that people would pay a registration fee, split in the usual way between the Region and the NCC, and that included with this fee would be a commemorative T-shirt. This could probably be arranged for \$20, as there are several print-on-demand shirt suppliers, and we could also offer the option for registrants to pay for their own shipping if they wanted to help with the fundraising effort. D. Crusoe contacted Berger with a similar idea the day before this meeting, and is now in touch with Hatfield and Folsom; he’s even spoke with potential designers (and Ingalls indicates that Dunham would likely also be willing to work on a design).

Hatfield also has plans for a Saturday dinner event - it would feature a set of 5-15 minute presentations in place of the traditional speaking program (via videoconference screen-sharing, of course), and could also include cavers sharing their favorite suggested recipes that people could prepare to “share” a meal if they wish. During the program, we’d also be able to highlight the “non-sponsors” of the event (those vendors and others who regularly support our events, financially and otherwise, many of whom find themselves in difficult times due to what’s going on in the world - none of them would be asked to financially support this event). We could likely also have musical artists provide entertainment during the event.

Morris-Siegel suggests that we talk with V. Sassu-Laviero, who had been planning the original Spring NRO that had to be cancelled. Davis informs us that the NSS virtual Convention is going to feature an autographing event for Michael Ray Taylor’s new book, and that we could likely have the same signing event at our virtual NRO. Berger’s feels that Hatfield’s overall plan is stunningly fleshed out, and that even if we didn’t absolutely *have to* forego the in-person event, it would be incredibly cool to see this kind of innovative event happen. He asks whether HHG would want to partner in making that sort of an NRO occur, and Hedges says that he’ll find out. Simmons will talk with Sassu-Laviero about it.

#### 9.5. 2020 New York Land Conservation Virtual Conference (Hatfield)

*[This topic is for an update on the virtual conference that Hatfield represented us at and how to access workshop recordings. Of particular interest - “Fundraising in the Age of Covid-19.” Information passed along from the conference organizers follows:]*

*The 2020 New York Land Conservation Conference; Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities was converted to a virtual event. All session recordings are available on the LTA website: <https://www.landtrustalliance.org/conference/2020-new-york-land-conservation-virtual-conference>. It can take us a few days to process and upload them but usually they will be available on the website within three days of a workshop.*

*Topics covered include: Fundraising in the Age of COVID-19, Youth Empowerment, Healthy Forests (identifying oak wilt, kudzu, hemlock woolly adelgid, and southern pine beetle), Solar, Invasive Species, Municipality Engagement, Justice & Indigenous Lands, Alternative Farmland Conservation, Enhancing Visitor Experience through Maps, to name a few.]*

Hatfield tells us that the key topics she got something out of at this conference were fundraising in the current environment, and a presentation on invasive species. Folsom asked whether she felt it was worthwhile attending (Hatfield thought so). Berger inquired whether the conference provided the usual networking and interaction opportunities (which most of our previous in-person attendees have repeatedly found to be the most

valuable part of the conference). Hatfield explained that they did to an extent - while there weren't the usual breakfast/lunch/exhibitor-hall free-time interaction opportunities, at the end of each of the sessions, attendees were able to ask the presenters questions, or simply turn on their microphones and talk with each other.

9.6. New York State Conservation Partnership Program (NYSCPP) scientific research project grant update (Simmons, Hatfield, Ingalls)

*[This is the usual followup topic on progress with the grant project.]*

Simmons provided an update about the key findings he made in reviewing camera data collected over the winter. One was the amount of illegal visitation at the Wards entrance of Clarksville discussed above in Item #9.2. Another relates to the confidential topic that will be the subject of a Special Meeting. Aside from that, he's learned that the Merlins Cave Preserve is virtually a wildlife park, that there are several animals at the Thook entrance of Clarksville, and that there's virtually no activity to be seen at the Onesquethaw Preserve over the winter.

Our data dump submission for the first year of the project (with the one-year extension we obtained due to equipment difficulties with the light monitors) is due at the end of July, and Simmons will handle this. That report will summarize the data we've collected so far, and we'll apply for the second year of funding for the grant, which would include provisions for analysis of the data. Hatfield and Schwartz set up and maintained the acoustic monitors at four sites this past winter for the second year to enable us to do some of the correlation with visitation data that we'd hoped to achieve by pairing them with the nearly-useless light monitor data the previous year. Simmons believes that as a result, we have sufficient usable data that LTA should be pleased with the project's progress, and he credits Hatfield and Schwartz with having done 85% of the work.

Ingalls explains that when we place acoustic monitors at cave entrances, the echoes make it hard to perform species identification. She has lots of ideas, though, about putting the monitors elsewhere on the preserves. She wants to obtain the acoustic data and photos we've collected, and points out that we still have the temperature and humidity data recorders in all the caves. She's started writing for the July report, though she's looking for a better way to present some of the data than to just present 11 separate figures, one per monitoring site. Simmons raised the question of how to get better longevity of power supplies for monitors in the future to cut down on maintenance frequency and effort; Berger reminded us that Chu performed a mathematical analysis of the problem the prior year when he was trying to design an alternative lithium-ion battery solution to build into the acoustic monitor housings, and that he concluded with some surprise that we actually couldn't get the needed power density to increase battery life as much as we needed to while still fitting in the acoustic monitors' housings. Thus, to get longer life, we'd need to connect external power sources (which also means we'd have to invest in shielding those external power sources from the elements and vandalism). Some discussion took place on whether/when to rally the troops to go retrieve the temperature and humidity loggers; Ingalls's current location and lack of ability to travel because of the pandemic limits how useful pulling the recorders out now would be, and she'll communicate as she knows more.

9.7. NCC and Kingston Land Trust (KLT) draft "Access to Property Agreement" (Simmons)

*[An early draft of this agreement was discussed at length at the last meeting; this topic is to discuss updates and progress.]*



Morris-Siegel asks if there's been any progress on the Salamander closing, and Simmons responded that there's been some back-and-forth communication, but that Covid-19 has frustrated efforts to get together, and he hasn't been able to talk live with the lawyers involved.

9.8. Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) (Simmons)

*[This is to discuss progress on this partnership agreement, first discussed at the last meeting.]*

Youngbaer had been leading this effort, but has since taken a volunteer job, and now has nearly no time available. Simmons has asked Dunham if he could take over leading this effort, but unfortunately, he can't. Berger reminded us of his question at the last meeting about whether we had the available personnel resources called for by the draft agreement to provide at each karst property VLT has an interest in, where Dunham would have been a key resource; he asks whether Dunham's lack of available time to drive this project would also extend to his availability for karst consulting once the deal is hammered out. Simmons believes that Dunham will still be able to do the sort of light field consulting called for here. Morris-Siegel and Armen are also able to help with this sort of consultation, and we might ask if Moore and Flewelling would be willing to contribute as well.

9.9. Officer reviews at the next meeting? (Hedges)

*[The Secretary has placed this here as a reminder, as requested at the end of last year. We traditionally (at least as much as the last few years can be called "tradition") reserve some time during the September Board*

meeting for the Governance Committee to lead the Trustees in reviewing Officer performance, in advance of Officer elections in December. Everyone's busy schedules have thwarted this effort the past two years, so this topic is here both to remind us that it's coming up, and to ask whether we want to reserve the slot as usual (and how to adjust the meeting start time, if at all), or change the plan.]

The brief conclusion was that we will keep the slot reserved as usual, and the Governance Committee will try to find time to prepare for the review process.

#### 9.10. Virtual National Speleological Society (NSS) Convention representation (Berger)

*[The 2020 NSS Convention in West Virginia has been cancelled, likely to reappear in 2023. However, several of the Salons and some of the Sections and other Meetings are still planned to be held virtually. This includes the Cave Conservancies Roundtable. This topic is here to figure out who will represent us.]*

Berger is willing to represent us, Simmons informs us that he'll have to participate in the virtual Convention for other reasons anyhow, and will join in here, and Morris-Siegel is also willing to attend. A motion will appear later on the agenda to designate them as our representatives.

#### 9.11. Old Timers Reunion (OTR) 2020 (Berger)

*[As OTR is in early September, it's one of the events that may be, but hasn't yet been, cancelled. Last year, we were discussing new vendor terms and whether we could agree to them. The Robertson Association (TRA) has stated that it will make a final decision about holding this year's event on July 1, and posted a survey on June 3 asking people whether they would attend if it were held and what age group they fall into. We should discuss our plans in the event that it is not cancelled.]*

Davis believes that the event most likely won't occur, but in any case, she and Warner have decided that they cannot risk going. Berger would like to go to the event, but would probably only do so if by the time it rolls around, he had tested positive for antibodies, and so isn't in a position to commit. He expresses a bit of concern about whether we'd be in the position of losing our semi-permanent standing if we don't attend this year, because we would have then not formally attended as a vendor for two consecutive years, which the proposed new rules last year indicated would result in loss of a traditional space and priority. He asks Davis if Speleobooks has heard anything from the vendor coordinator about this year. Davis reports that they haven't heard anything substantial for vendors at this point, and doubts that given the situation, the two-year rule would be enforced against us.

As we're simply not in a position to commit, the NCC will not plan on formally attending OTR this year, in the event that OTR is held.

#### 9.12. Covid-19 issues: group size, group timing, permitted trips (Engel)

*[Does this topic really need an explanation? Berger suggests referencing the italicized text in the Knox Cave Preserve Report in Attachment A during this discussion.]*

Since we put out our notice, it seems to have been picked up locally. Berger mentioned that when some of his grotto learned that we were not taking formal action to close our caves as the NSS had, they asked if we were just less conservative than the NSS, and that he tried to explain that we didn't view it that way, but felt that state-provided guidance was the appropriate thing to be following, and that we needn't pile on additional restrictions, which we would then have to take formal action to repeatedly update as state guidance continues to be dynamic. Hatfield likes the sample language Berger has been using in replies to Knox permit requests; several others seem to as well, and it was suggested that we put this language (or a very slightly modified form of it) on our website.

#### 9.13. Barn Dance (Hatfield)

Hatfield asked about the possibility of holding the Barn Dance as a virtual event where Paul Rosenberg and Tamarack would perform live from the Octagon Barn, but we wouldn't be physically there - the popular boat rowing dance could still be taught with everyone participating via videoconference, we could hold a virtual auction, etc. Dumont asks if Hatfield is willing to reach out to Paul to inquire, and Davis notes that Folsom has been the point of contact for many years, and suggests that we should stick with that arrangement (though Folsom has been unable to attend the event for the past couple of years and thinks that might mean it's time to change primary contacts). Davis notes that given the hard times that have fallen on many of the small local businesses we often ask to contribute raffle prizes, she's not comfortable with the idea of us asking any of them to donate this year.

The point was raised that if we're contemplating a virtual NRO and a virtual Barn Dance, we should ensure that if both are held, they're very different events from each other. Hedges notes that Tamarack has very few uncancelled events on their page, so there may be availability, though of course, we're not certain how they'd feel about holding non-interactive events. Hatfield suggests that if they were willing, they could broadcast from the Octagon Barn, and we could plug the Barn Dance's past supporters.

#### 9.14. Fundraising (Hatfield)

As suggested in the Members Day topic above (Item #9.3), Hatfield asks about sending a letter to the membership. Simmons says that from the previous discussion, he concludes that this idea should be a done deal, and he'll make it happen - stay tuned.

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

Second by Morris-Siegel

For: All

[The Committee of the Whole is closed]

#### Old Business

11. Simmons moves: A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at a time to be determined by a Doodle poll.

*[The President has notified the Board of the need for a Special Meeting for the primary purpose of discussing a sensitive issue in Executive Session. We need to decide on the timing of this meeting. "At the conclusion of this meeting" is a possibility.]*

Second by Hedges

For: All

[A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at a time to be determined by a Doodle poll]

#### New Business

12. Berger moves: The minutes of the March 3, 2020 Board Meeting are approved.

*[The Secretary would like to thank Folsom, Morris-Siegel, and Dumont for sending in their reviews.]*

Second by Hedges

For: Rest

Abstain: Drake, Rubin

[The minutes of the March 3, 2020 Board Meeting are approved]

13. Simmons moves: The proposed revisions to the Clarksville Cave Preserve Management Plan as discussed and amended during the Committee of the Whole are approved.

*[See topic #9.1 in Committee of the Whole]*

Second by Armen

There was some brief discussion about whether to proceed with this in Engel's absence. It was noted that Engel had circulated his proposed revisions to the Board in advance for comment in the hope that they would be approved at this meeting, that during discussion item #1 in Committee of the Whole, nobody had expressed a desire to alter anything in Engel's proposed plan revision, and that the Preserve Managers can always request approval of further revisions any time they wish to make a change.

For: All

[The revised Clarksville Cave Preserve Management Plan is approved]

14. Simmons moves: Devon Hedges is appointed Chair of the Traino Preserve Management Committee.

*[This motion was withdrawn at the last meeting, as insufficient time had passed since advertisement of the available committee chair position.]*

Second by Morris-Siegel

For: Rest

Abstain: Hedges

[Devon Hedges is appointed Chair of the Traino Karst Preserve Management Committee]

15. Engel moves: E. Schwartz and C. Hay are appointed Co-Chairs of the Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Management Committee.

*[Engel had expressed interest in taking on co-managers with the thought of transitioning responsibility over the next couple of years, and the availability of these positions was advertised to the membership.]*

Second by Morris-Siegel

Hatfield noted that Schwartz is seeking an in-cave orientation to the preserve in preparation for these new responsibilities; Davis has offered to help provide this.

For: Rest

Against: Folsom

[Ellen Schwartz and Christa Hay are appointed Co-Chairs of the Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Management Committee, serving alongside Thom Engel]

16. Simmons moves: Jonah Spivak is appointed Co-Chair of the Bentleys Preserve Management Committee.

[Hedges has been seeking help and people to transition to given his new responsibilities at the Traino Karst Preserve; this interest has been advertised to the membership.]

Second by Hedges

For: All

[Jonah Spivak is appointed Co-Chair of the Bentleys Cave Preserve Management Committee, serving alongside Devon Hedges]

17. Hedges moves: Berger, Simmons, and Morris-Siegel will represent the NCC at the National Speleological Society (NSS) Cave Conservancies Roundtable during the virtual Convention proceedings.

Second by Ingalls

For: Rest

Abstain: Morris-Siegel

[Berger, Simmons, and Morris-Siegel will represent the NCC at the NSS Cave Conservancies Roundtable]

Informational point: Next EC meeting will be Sunday, August 23, 2020 at 10 AM, location to be determined (likely virtual).

Informational point: the Fall Board meeting will be Sunday, September 20, 2020 at 10 AM at HRP Associates (pandemic pending).

Informational point: the late Fall EC meeting will be at a time yet to be determined, due to the unknown world situation and unavailability of input from Engel at this meeting.

18. Simmons moves: The NCC Winter meeting will be Sunday, December 6, 2020 at 10 AM at a location to be determined (possibly at Speleobooks, if conditions allow for that).

Second by Nieman

For: All

[The NCC Winter meeting will be Sunday, December 6, 2020 at 10 AM at a location to be determined]

19. Simmons moves to thank Mike and Cristina Chu for originally offering to host this NCC meeting, and for confirming that the offer still stood if we wished to have it in-person in a socially-distant manner.

Second by Berger

For: All

[The NCC thanks Mike and Cristina Chu for offering to host this meeting, and for keeping their home open to us even in these challenging times]

20. Nieman moves to adjourn.

Second by Dumont

For: All

[The meeting is adjourned]

Meeting adjourned at 2:18pm

**Attachment A  
President's Report**

1. I had applied for NYSCPP Transaction Grants for both the Traino Preserve purchase and the Salamander Preserve donation. [REDACTED]
2. Board Elections (see Nominating Report): we had five quality candidates for three positions, good job everyone.
3. This year's Members Day had been tentatively scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup> (alternate of August 8<sup>th</sup>), has been postponed indefinitely due to COVID 19. We may still try to coordinate with a formal dedication ceremony of the Traino Preserve at some point in the future.
4. Acquisitions activities have been minimal during COVID, hoping to do a letter campaign to select cave owners to get our name out there/in front of them so that discussions may take place as soon as the COVID 19 restrictions allow face-to-face interactions again.
5. We need to find a representative in Vermont to push forward several initiatives on a local basis.
6. Game cameras identified an incursion into one of our caves over the winter. Please see separate memo, to be treated as confidential, pending additional information and discussions.

**Cave Preserve Management Plan Review Schedule**

Year	March	June	September	December
2020		<b>Clarksville</b>		Bentleys
2021	Ella Armstrong	Knox	Traino	Sellecks
2022	Bensons	Merlins		Onesquethaw
2023	Spider	Clarksville		Bentleys
2024	Ella Armstrong	Knox	Traino	Sellecks

Note: Minimal changes to the Clarksville MP are proposed.

**CAVE PRESERVE REPORTS:**

**1. Bensons (Luke Mazza)**

Progress: Walkthrough and maintenance of the Bensons property was performed on May 19th. Access ROW was mowed, encroaching brambles were clipped back, and a small fallen tree on the path was sectioned up and removed.

The property, kiosk, etc. are all in good shape for the 2021 season.

Issues: Some of the property boundary signs are starting to have issues staying attached.

Plans: Will return with spare boundary signs and nails in the near future to do a more thorough assessment and replace where necessary.

**2. Bentleys (Devon Hedges)**

Problems: Visitors discovered using cave in off-season could suggest increased signage; endangered species signage from DEC is already installed at parking lot and along trail within 5 yards of the entrance. What more could be done? Kiosk at parking lot has been broken from postholes in the ground. As no plowing has been done in off season, I'm guessing a combination of wood-rot and possible impact from a vehicle are at fault. No damage other than it no longer being fixed in the ground. I've left it leaning against a tree near where it is normally installed. It is functioning much as normal nonetheless. COVID19 has complicated efforts and time commitments substantially.

Plans: Kiosk can likely be reinstalled without rebuilding; it'll be a bit shorter but viability of that plan can be assessed, adjusted as needed, etc. Work day with posthole digging tools, possible spare lumber for bracing are needed. Board display documents should be reproduced and installed before next season. Will reach out to neighbors to inform them about contacting property owners for hunting permission.

**3. Clarksville (Thom Engel)**

The "Cave Closed" and "Restricted Area" signs were removed on May 1. Leslie or Ellen or both removed the signs by the cave entrances. Paul Rubin visited the cave May 1. He reports: "*I worked to recover all debris in Perry Avenue and remove it from the cave. This included 67 cyalume sticks, a flare, and few other items. A few cyalume sticks were hung from the ceiling a bit before the Lake*



Room. Other than a can I removed from near the crawlway entrance into Gregory, I saw nothing else debris wise. Someone did scratch initials on the ledge that sticks out into the Big Room. Also, there is some pink paint on boulders close to the Slickenside Block above where water was pumping out today. Hmm, I think there was a tad of green paint somewhere as well." Two broken, plastic, Adirondack-style chairs were left in the changing area. (They were there yesterday, but not two days earlier.) The machete made quick work of them and was very therapeutic.

#### 4. Ella Armstrong (Erik Nieman)

Progress: No property survey available. The approximate property boundaries have been drawn out using the deed.

Issues: Property boundaries are not currently marked that I am able to see from walking the preserve.

Plans: To flag/mark property boundaries. Periodic trail and parking maintenance. A sign-in log will be placed at the kiosk for 2020.

#### 5. Knox (Mitch Berger)

Progress: I drafted some text as part of a reply to a permit request to attempt to navigate the somewhat difficult conversation about whether it's okay to go caving, trying to strike appropriate balances in discussing risk, avoiding liability exposure, encouraging people to follow current-and-ever-changing state-provided guidance without our having to pile additional formal policies on top of them, etc. I ran the text by the officers to see what they thought, and am offering it here as a starting point for other managers trying to figure out how to discuss the topic. Feel free to edit or plagiarize as you see fit:

*We do expect you to follow all the guidance related to Covid-19 precautions that are in effect at the time of a trip, both in New York and in your own states (if members of your party are coming from outside New York). If they are incompatible with caving, we expect that you will postpone your trip. We also ask you to consider what will happen in the event that a rescue should become necessary - those likely to respond come from different households across several neighboring states, and would be working in close quarters and large numbers not appropriate to current social distancing expectations. While you should always call for help if it's needed, we ask that if you must go caving, you do everything in your power to avoid taking risks that might make the likelihood of a rescue more than miniscule - while the need to recreate is understandable, this is not an appropriate time for challenging, limit-pushing, or fast-paced trips. Conservative, easy-going, and risk-averse are where it's at.*

Also, for the first time in several years, I did not find myself flooded with requests to visit for dates between May 1 and May 14, which I usually have to respond to with apologies that the cave isn't open yet. I wish we'd have gotten to this point absent a pandemic, though.

I permit has been issued for the season so far (to a small cohabitating group). There is one pending permit request for late July from a non-cohabitating group that I have indicated will most likely be granted, but that due to the ever-changing nature of state guidance, I would prefer that they ask again when the date is 2-3 weeks out. This is the request for which I drafted the above text, and unfortunately, they don't seem to receive my mail and keep sending "SECOND REQUEST" e-mails and asking Engel how to reach me.

Issues: The pandemic and certain events going on in my life that several of you are aware of have thus far prevented me from travelling to New York, and thus I have not visited the preserve in longer than I'm comfortable with. More recently, reopening policies at work have added pressure to avoid leaving the state. I hope these pressures will be relaxed in the coming weeks, but in the meantime, Morris-Siegel is likely to visit the preserve in the near future and check up on it, perhaps doing a bit of trail maintenance, and his offer is much appreciated.

The Great Divide rope is [presumably] still there.

Engel and Berger still need to investigate what may be poison parsnip plants.

Plans: Periodic property inspection, and trail maintenance during the open season.

Possible graffiti removal in Knox and investigation of methods.

Addition of trail markers and reposting of property.

Boundary marking.

Removal of the Great Divide rope.

Investigation of troublesome plant species.

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

Problems: Need culvert

Progress: Cleared trail to Merlins and Loop trail of larger branches. Tied Dragon Bones into the surface survey. Surveyed Dragon Bones. Assessed property boundary markers.

Plans: Install culvert at Dome 12. Complete Preserve map for the kiosk. Replace chewed property boundary signs. Add trail markers to loop trail.

Special thanks to Larry Bernier, Amy St Germain, and John Dunham for work done in early March!

## **7. Onesquethaw (Thom Engel)**

Ellen Schwartz and Leslie Hatfield helped me place boundary markers on/along the southeast boundary of the preserve. Actually I just pontificated and they did the actual work. (I was able to direct how the line should be set.) The "Restricted Area" sign has been removed for the season. The field has been planted and one of the posts was hit. I straightened it and used a sledge to hammer it in a little deeper. Whoever did the planting tried scooting on to our property between the posts. I might place four posts between the five now-existing posts. I have issued two (2) permits so far for the 2020 season. Both Ellen Schwartz and Christa Hay have offered to be Onesquethaw co-chairs. I would suggest BOTH be approved. That way when I leave there will be two co-chairs already in place.

## **8. Sellecks (Joey O'Reilly)**

*Progress:* Trail and lot are cleared. Looks like potentially someone other than me had gone through earlier in the spring and done a cut/clearing, but I am not sure who as I don't recall being contacted about it. This was my first visit of the spring because of COVID developments.

*Problems:* No problems with the preserve itself. The road it is on is being paved this upcoming week, so we will see if there is any impact on the entrance to the preserve.

*Plans:* Regular trail and lot maintenance will continue here on out.

## **9. Spider (Kevin Dumont)**

*Progress:* Nothing to report.

*Problems:* None to report.

*Plans:* Creation of a trail along both the base and the top of the escarpment is planned for 2020 or 2021.

## **10. Traino Preserve (Devon Hedges)**

*Progress:* Neighbor Mark Hunter has been met again, oriented to the Conservancy's plans and intents for low-impact visitation; he had concerns about it turning in to a Clarksville and I assured him that isn't the intent and that the Conservancy plans to keep it from becoming so.

*Problems:* Trail signage, kiosk, changing area all need installation. Website should be updated with "[traino@necaveconservancy.org](mailto:traino@necaveconservancy.org)" or similar address forwarding to preserve manager email. Page should be created and management plan should be uploaded. Have not yet communicated with neighboring farmers (Stanton) that hay the field adjacent to the proposed parking area; I intend to help them understand our use of the area and build a relationship there. Additional neighbors worth meeting: Tryon via Thom Engel. COVID19 has complicated efforts and time commitments substantially.

*Plans:* Plan out supplies and personnel for eventual workday for kiosk, changing area. Check with Technology Committee regarding online content. Send a letter to Stanton. Access map and visitation guidelines need to be edited for public information on the web and other.

[*Ed: As discussed at the last meeting, "traino@" could be confusing due to its similarity to a recent individual address, and traino\_preserve@necaveconservancy.org was set up instead.*]

## **OTHER COMMITTEES (PRESIDENT):**

### **Acquisitions (Chuck Porter, Bob Simmons)**

Salamander Preserve

COVID has stalled progress here. I have emailed the donors attorney to get things restarted. Taking the Board's comment on the draft agreement with KLT, I am going to propose a mutual access agreement as an easement.

Vermont Land Trust

Peter Youngbaer has had to step back from this as lead due to other work conflicts. I spoke with John Dunham about taking the lead and working on initial issues including the MOU between organizations and a cave property in Arlington. John has indicated he will not be able to take on these tasks.

[REDACTED] nothing new to report.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Nominating (Norm Berg)**

See attached Nominating Committee Report of elections

**Risk Management (Mitch Berger)**

Progress: Received policy renewal documents for our General Liability and Property insurance coverage (renews 6/19/2020)  
Obtained a quote within budget for Volunteer Workers Accident coverage, requested binding as of 6/19/2020

Issues: None

Plans: Add insurance coverage (G/L and Terrafirma) for Salamander if/when we close.  
Assemble the rest of the committee membership.  
Pick up other issues that were in-progress with the former ad-hoc committee.  
Collect Conflict of Interest Policy forms from new Board members and annual CoI Disclosure forms at this meeting.

**Tory's Cave ad hoc committee (Bob Simmons)**

Nothing new since last meeting,

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

Game cameras (9) deployed at preserves: Clarksville (3), Onesquethaw, Bentleys, Bensons, Knox, Ella & Merlins. All cameras retrieved first weekend of May, not much other than incursion mentioned in separate report.

**Governance ad hoc (Devon Hedges)**

Progress: None  
Problems: Haven't given the committee due attention  
Plans: Revisit committee goals, outline areas of interest and share with Board

**Attachment B  
Vice President's Report**

**Bylaws Committee (Joe Levinson)**

Nothing to report.

**Education (Thom Engel)**

Shenendehowa Science & Health Discovery Night (the successor to SAGE) was cancelled due to Covid-19. Nothing else to report.

**Science Committee (Larry Davis)**

Nothing to report.

**Special Use** (Thom Engel)

All scheduled trips between May 1 and September 26 have been cancelled by the requesters. I have not heard from any summer camps yet which is very unusual.

Groups are already scheduling trips for the fall and for next year (2021). Normally I don't make up the next year's schedule until October, but I did so this year due to the unusual circumstances.

**Surprise Cave Committee** (Al DeMaria)

No report received.

**Thacher Park** (Thom Engel)

We have this year's permit in place. It is unclear when normal activities in the park will resume. The Visitor and Nature Centers are both closed at this time and rock climbing is currently closed.

**Cave Protection** (Thom Engel)

No action. Once the NYS legislature passed the budget all other potential legislative initiatives were set aside due to Covid.

**Attachment C  
Treasurer's Report**



**Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc  
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual  
January 1 through May 29, 2020**

05/29/2020

	<u>Jan 1 - May 29, 20</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
<b>Donations</b>		
Auction Donations	0.00	1,800.00
Donations - Other	3,283.39	7,741.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<u>3,283.39</u>	<u>9,541.00</u>
Interest Earned	2.92	10.00
<b>Membership Income</b>	<u>980.00</u>	<u>2,700.00</u>

Total Income	4,266.31	12,251.00
Expense		
Acquisitions	150.00	2,000.00
Bank Charges	21.00	75.00
Donations-outgoing	0.00	200.00
Dues	0.00	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	0.00	250.00
Grant Expense	399.00	0.00
Insurance	812.00	2,516.00
Legal Fees	2,454.80	1,000.00
Licenses & Permits	0.00	125.00
Meeting Expense	0.00	100.00
Meetings & Conferences	135.00	300.00
Membership Expenses	0.00	125.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	100.00
Office Expense	56.00	100.00
Postage	0.00	100.00
Preserves-Maintenance		
Bensons	0.00	310.00
Bentleys	0.00	160.00
Clarksville	0.00	160.00
Ella Armstrong	0.00	160.00
Knox	0.00	160.00
Merlins	0.00	460.00
Onesquethaw	0.00	110.00
Sellecks	0.00	160.00
Spider	0.00	160.00
Traino	0.00	360.00
Total Preserves-Maintenance	0.00	2,200.00
Promotion	0.00	1,500.00
Publishing		
Mailings	0.00	50.00
Website	0.00	60.00
Total Publishing	0.00	110.00
Science	0.00	500.00
Sponsorships	0.00	250.00
Taxes on Properties	283.33	300.00
Total Expense	4,311.13	12,251.00
Net Ordinary Income	-44.82	0.00
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		

Net Gain or Loss from NSF Fund	-6,674.73	0.00
Net Gain or Loss Vanguard Life	28.40	0.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>-6,646.33</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>-6,646.33</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-6,691.15</b>	<b>0.00</b>

I assisted Lesllie Hatfield in applying for a \$1000 membership outreach grant from Network For Good. Note our NSF-managed funds took a hit in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter as is to be expected. The Life Membership Fund is holding steady as it was not actively invested in the market (in a holding pattern in money market fund).

**Barn Dance Subcommittee - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:**

**Plans:** Cancel for this year

**Problems:** Covid

**Progress:** Plan for 2021

[Ed: Hatfield proposed the idea of holding the event virtually - see Item #9.13 in Committee of the Whole.]

**Investment Committee - John Fioroni:**

No report received

**Membership Committee - Peter Youngbaer:**

**Progress:**

**Membership Renewals and New Members:**

A fair amount of time was spent during this period working with Norm Berg and Mike Chu getting the database ready for sending the trustee ballots. A successful test of the balloting system was run, and any new members and renewed members were captured in time to be sent ballots. Membership remains steady, with a few new members coincident with the NCC trustee elections. All renewal notices for memberships up through the end of May were sent prior to the NCC trustee election ballots being sent. March notices will go out this weekend (8 current members renew in March). The data base is current as of today, May 28.

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

May 28, 2020		April 22, 2012 (baseline)	
<b>Life:</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>Life:</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Family Life:</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Family Life:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Benefactor:</b>	<b>5 (-2)</b>	<b>Benefactor:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Regular:</b>	<b>76 (+1)</b>	<b>Regular:</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Family:</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Family:</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Institutional:</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Institutional:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>178 (-1)</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>135</b>

**Note:** Total in February was 179; November was 173; September was 175; June was 176; March was 178; November, 2018 was 173; September, 2018 was 180. High point was 209 in March, 2017.

**Institutional Members:** Boston Grotto, Central Connecticut Grotto, Vermont Cavers Association, Met Grotto, New Jersey Initial Response Team, and Camp Echo Lake. If your grotto or organization isn't listed here, please urge them to renew or join. Thank you.

**Problems:**

None

**Plans:**

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

*Peter Youngbaer, Membership Chair      Reminder: email address: [pyoungbaer@gmail.com](mailto:pyoungbaer@gmail.com)*

**Office Committee Report - Emily Davis & Mike Warner:**

Problems: None  
Progress: Status Quo  
Plans: none specifically

**Publications – Christa Hay:**

I don't have much to report. Working non-stop at the NY state EOC, which is running 24/7 since March.

Sent out Bob's statement via MailChimp and also requests for newsletter and election information.

**Technology Committee Report – Mike Chu:**

Status quo; no issues to report. Online voting system was changed to a Google-based system, run by the Nominating Committee (Norm Berg); no problems with it that we're aware of.

**Volunteer Value Committee – Vince Kappler:**

Vince Kappler  
[volunteervalue@necaveconservancy.org](mailto:volunteervalue@necaveconservancy.org)

**Progress:**

Year to date totals: 199.5 hours of volunteer work on NCC projects for a total value of \$8,531. Members also reported traveling a total of 2431 miles to work on projects.

Although VV totals were severely impacted by the coronavirus lock down, some members were still able to record time working for the NCC. The Treasurer, EC, and Office committees reported on their work from home or virtual meetings held to conduct NCC Business; Jacob reported on his GIS project while several others reported on a work detail at Merlins.

**Plans:**

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

**Problems:**

None at this time

**Attachment D  
Secretary's Report**

The next major project the Secretary plans to undertake is a long-overdue overhaul of the Board Manual.

**EC Meeting Minutes  
April 26, 2020, 10:00am  
Online via Videoconference**

Called to order 10:12am

Present: R. Simmons, B. Folsom, T. Engel, M. Berger, D. Hedges, J. Morris-Siegel

**1) Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHLC) and Hollyhock Hollow**

Engel got an e-mail from MHLC's Stewardship Manager yesterday, mostly about introductory stuff. They're initially working on getting the preserve rebranded and cleaned up, and are looking for resources on the area. They're looking to put a new type of fencing around the big sinkhole at the back end of it that Engel and Rubin dug from 15' down to 40' many years ago. Engel is going to offer his services, and wonders if the NCC wants to offer to help. Our conclusion was that closer ties with another land conservancy can't hurt. Hedges inquired about MHLC's usual volunteer complement. Engel didn't have much detailed knowledge of the answer, but notes that they have a large membership (and Simmons adds that they also have professional staff). They acquired the preserve in February. Folsom asks if we should have a Memorandum of Understanding to cement the relationship. Engel thinks this is likely where we're heading, but that we're not there yet.

**2) Alan Traino Karst Preserve press release (Covid-19)**

**3) Covid-19 press release / Caving reopening**

*[These two topics were combined]*

We obviously can't do serious project work for a while to get the infrastructure at the new Traino preserve done. We also can't have a dedication ceremony for a while. Folsom notes that there's a lack of information the community has about the new preserve, and caving from our perspective. Hedges was fielding requests into February that reached him organically despite lack of clear contact info on the website. Even if we weren't knocking on the door of May 1st, an announcement for the Traino Preserve was really due. Simmons has the comments everyone provided about his draft of a general announcement about our policy on caving and preserve access during this strange time, and he'll add a little text specifically for the Traino Preserve. The main crux of the conversation the Board had was that we need a separate simpler statement to throw on the website, as opposed to the detailed draft he's written, which is more appropriate for the membership at large. Simmons asked if we've been receiving Special Use requests, and Engel replied that there have been, but only to cancel trips that had already been scheduled. The only Special Use permits not yet cancelled by their holders were those for the NCRC Weeklong, which is scheduled for June.

**4) Acquisitions updates**

**Salamander:**

[REDACTED] Connors's attorney is not going to be back until later this week; maybe then we can get a closing scheduled.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**5) International Year of Caves and Karst 2021**



There's been no motion on this yet, but we assume it'll still happen. Berger still plans to get us registered.

#### **6) Board elections and candidates**

Simmons got an update from Berg. He has two confirmed candidates (Ingalls and Rubin). There are strong indications that Errandonea and Woodell will also throw their hats in the ring. Simmons received a schedule back from Berg - mailings will go out in May, with voting mid-late May for seating in June.

#### **7) Members Day (keeping it on our radar)**

Unless we want to reschedule it for late in the year or late in the caving season as a project day, we don't see a great way to schedule it given the Covid-19 situation... maybe we could hold it in August at the earliest. Folsom notes that our membership and the caving community in general are starved for activity and good news; maybe we can put out a message saying something along the lines of "when this is all over and done with, here are some things to look forward to."

#### **7a) Certificate of Merit implications**

Simmons thinks we should announce the winners despite what's going on with the likely absence of the Members Day at which we'd planned to have an award ceremony.

#### **8) NRO**

The Spring NRO deposit got refunded. We're going to end up missing out on probably a couple thousand dollars of income. The Fall NRO is being planned by HHG, but no commitments for a location are in place. We might want to make contingency plans... maybe a virtual auction?

#### **9) NYSCPP project updates (cameras, or in general)**

Hatfield and Schwartz have been handling acoustic detector maintenance all winter at the three Clarksville entrances and Onesquethaw. Simmons had trail cameras up at several preserves, and if he can travel next weekend, will change out the batteries and see if we got any data.

#### **10) Grant application updates (Salamander & Traino)**

#### **11) Ella & Knox survey filing status update?**

We've confirmed that Knox's survey was never filed. Simmons is requesting from Nettleton at CT Male prices for two things - fileable mylar copies, and adding the other pins at the corners of the northern strip of land. Morris-Siegel says it will require an additional five pins. Engel asked about the conditions on our use of that strip of land that we own; Berger explained that the deed carries an encumbrance that requires us to erect and maintain a sturdy fence between our land and the neighboring land if we ever clear that strip of land for use. Simmons says the surveyors will need to reestablish the corners by redoing some survey work, and Berger notes that this will involve notification to our neighbors, so we may want to pre-manage potential concern.

#### **12) Update on Cave Protection Law?**

Engel reports that nothing new has happened here, and probably nothing will this year since both houses of the New York legislature have decamped to home. Other than passing the budget, not much legislation is likely to occur. Simmons asks if any action is needed from us, and Engel responds that there isn't any at this time.

#### **13) Reports schedule for the June 2020 Board meeting**

Berger would like the Officers' attachments by May 29, the Officers would like their committee reports in by May 22, and a request for reports should be sent to committee chairs on May 15th.

#### **14) Onesquethaw (and Bentleys) co-Manager candidates**

Hay and Schwartz have expressed interest in co-managing Onesquethaw. Engel would like to put both forward so there are still two when he retires. Simmons thinks he was supposed to reach out to Spivak about Bentleys, but hasn't yet. Hedges mentioned Bernier; Morris-Siegel says that Bernier isn't interested. We could ask Armen. Co-managers should be on the June agenda for approval. The permanent Traino Committee Chairperson can be approved as well in June. Folsom inquired whether anyone had asked Chu about his plans with respect to participation in managing Clarksville given that he's stepping down from the Board; Hedges indicates that he believes Chu is still planning on being active in his preserve management role.

#### **15) Management Plans on Website**

Engel raised this topic as a result of Morris-Siegel submitting a mock-up for a new sign at the Merlins Preserve, and discovering that the most recent plan on the website for the Preserve was N years old. It would be nice if the managers could check the website and get a PDF of their most recent plan to whoever needs it for posting.

**16) New York Land Conservation Conference**

The in-person conference has been cancelled, and they're going to be holding it virtually instead... and you have to pay for it to attend. Hatfield has registered. Simmons and many others find the networking and person-to-person aspects of this conference most valuable to us. There's always something to be gained, though, so it's good to have someone representing us.

**17) Network for Good \$1,000 grant**

Folsom says that Hatfield agreed to write up an application for it, and it's been submitted. We didn't commit to buying their software. This money, if we get it, has to be used for fundraising efforts. One idea is a physical mailing to our membership (which hasn't happened since Youngbaer's membership survey a few years back), but nobody's yet raised their hand to execute on this if we get the money.

**18) Kingston Land Trust agreement update**

This was covered under Acquisitions.

**19) Insurance renewal update**

Berger received our Commercial Policy (General Liability and Property Insurance) for next year from our agent (next term starts on 6/19), and the Office received some sort of paperwork related to it. Berger needs to finish looking over the policy, check to make sure the premium is in line with what we expected, and check with the Office what exactly they ended up with a physical copy of. He has also not yet handled obtaining a quote for Volunteer Worker's Accident coverage, but will do so in time for this year's renewal as directed at the last Board meeting.

**20) Vermont Land Trust Memorandum of Understanding update**

Simmons hasn't heard back from Youngbaer lately. Engel sent some wording suggestions to Youngbaer, and hasn't yet really looked at what he got back, but will pass it along to Simmons. Youngbaer is trading water on several other non-NCC commitments right now that are competing for his time.

**21) NSF contract?**

[REDACTED] We received the last unaudited statement from the NSF; the investments are down about 11.2%, which amounts to about \$8k for us, due to what's going on with markets during the pandemic.

**22) June meeting**

It's currently scheduled for June 7 at the Chu residence - that's probably not going to happen. What was "Plan B" (videoconference) is now the new "Plan A." We're going to have to get everyone familiar with the interface. We'll have people try it out before the meeting, perhaps with an orientation session at 9:30am.

**23) Roundtable checkin about how everyone's coping with the situation**

This topic was what it looks like. Notes were not taken about people's life stories for the minutes.

End: 12:53pm

**Attachment E  
Nominating Committee Report**

Below is a list of the candidates and votes received:

Riley Drake	40
Morgan Ingalls	32
Paul Rubin	30
Francois Errandonea	27
Paul Woodell	24

To see all recent board members and their terms:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1WpAVBKx8lCx761vEBtzSNOOj-MtynIc0Bmfu-cDOplk/edit?usp=sharing>

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact me.

Norm Berg  
NCC Nominating Committee Chair  
[nominating@necaveconservancy.org](mailto:nominating@necaveconservancy.org)