

# Nittany Grotto Inc.

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## **Minutes from Nittany Grotto Annual Membership Meeting, June 11, 2011 at 6 PM at the Rupert Cave Preserve**

**Members Present:** Karen Bange, George Bange, Gary Dunmire, Joe Turchick, Bryan Crowell, Rachael Kane, Dave Ader, Dave Seasholtz, Geoff Eckess, Keith Wheeland, Dwight Kempf, Dutch Sanders, Cherie Schock, Paul Winter, Terrance Lovell, and Andy McKinnon

**Proxies:** Jim Kennedy, Will White, Bette White, Nevin W. Davis, Christopher Catherman, Jeff Morrissey, Anna Byers, Kathleen Kerrigan, Marc Khouri, Garrett Czmor, Katherine Thorwart, Dan Donohue, Andy Hardiman, G. Warren Smith, James Vomero, and John Groh

**Call to Order:** There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order by the President, Bryan Crowell, at 6:00 PM under the pavilion at the Rupert Cave Preserve.

The minutes of the June 12, 2010 (Members) and July 21, 2010 (Board) meetings were read and approved.

**Finances:** The Treasurer, Andy McKinnon, reported that there was \$129.22 in the cash account and \$2472.86 in the checking account for a total of \$2602.08.

**President's Remarks and Other Reports:** Bryan Crowell thanked the members for their attendance and also thanked those who named proxies.

### **Old Business:**

*NRCS.* Terrance Lovell discussed the formation of the NRCS with CREST.

*J-4 Committee.* Gary Dunmire summarized the status of efforts to address the potential physical closing of J-4. The recently formed J-4 Committee is in the process of writing a proposal for submission to Graymont including a request for a lease, gating the cave, controlling access, and writing a management plan for the cave. Communication with Denny Whitesell, local Graymont representative, is ongoing. Gary reported that about 200 bats have recently been counted in the cave. Various parties have been contacted about potential gate construction. Joe Schock asked if a burglar system has been considered to deter trespassers; Keith Wheeland stated that this has been discussed. George Bange asked if next steps have been identified. Paul Winter shared that the Committee is working with two pro bono lawyers in framing the proposal. Gary Dunmire stated that Ira Sasowsky had conducted a study revealing a geomagnetic reversal in the cave. George and Karen Bange shared that the Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy may fund construction of the gate if installed. Gary Dunmire shared that Denny Whitesell suggested that a letter from the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) might

help to prevent closure of the cave. Terrance Lovell stated that the PGC had communicated with Denny but he did not know the content of their correspondence.

**New Business :**

*Conservation Committee / Sharer Cave.* Bryan Crowell suggested the formation of a conservation committee. Paul Winter supported this idea, stating that the PA Dept. of Agriculture was contacted concerning efforts to conserve Water Tower Cave (later renamed Wobble Cobble Cave). Dave Ader cited need to conserve approximately 500 slides by digitally scanning them. Cherie Schock shared that Cumberland County library has a digital scanner and Paul Winter offered to contact the library. Gary Dunmire stated that the PGC had removed the White Nose Syndrome (WNS) monitoring system after the fungus had not been found. He motioned to open Sharer for resumed access. Keith Wheeland asked why the hurry in reopening the cave; Andy McKinnon suggested that bats have already been strained by past flooding and should be given maximum opportunity to thrive, that is, the cave should remain closed. Gary Dunmire revised his motion to have the cave open only from June 15th through August 15th. The motion was not seconded. Terrance Lovell submitted a counter motion to create a committee to look into the issue. Paul Winter asked if a conservation committee should handle cave management issues and motioned to form a Cave Conservation Committee. The motion was put to a vote and the yeas won. Bryan Crowell appointed Paul Winter as Chair of this new committee.

*Elections.* Bryan Crowell was reelected for another term as President, Gary Dunmire as Vice President, Andy McKinnon as Secretary/Treasurer, and Joe Turchick as Director at Large. Terrance Lovell was elected as a new Director at Large.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andy "Karst" McKinnon, Secretary-Treasurer