

Nittany Grotto Inc.

Minutes from Nittany Grotto Annual Membership Meeting, June 9, 2012 at 6 PM at the Rupert Cave Preserve

Members Present: Joe Turchick, Gary Dunmire, Brian Crowell, Cynthia LaCoe, Brian Huylebroeck, Katherine Thorwart, Hope Brooks, Anna Byers, Dave Ader, Cherie Schock, Maria Andrews, Jon Burns, Andy Hardiman, Dwight Kempf, Dave Seasholtz, Bette White, Will White, George Bange, Karen Bange, Christopher Catherman, Terrance Lovell, Paul Winter, Jason Huff, Keith Wheeland, Shawn Daugherty

Proxies: Ira Sasowsky, Ariel Lyons, Keith Christenson, Joshua Keepports, Jim Vomero, Jim "Crash" Kennedy, Marc Khouri, Nevin Davis, John Boswell, Kiya Wilson, Gordon Dayton, Eric Pelkey, Patrick Nollen, Jennifer Macalady, John Groh, Jeff Jahn, Geoff Eckess, Jeff Morrissey, Jenevieve Clauss

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 11, 2011 (Members), May 6, 2012 (Board), and June 8, 2012 (Board) meetings were read and approved by the Secretary, Andy McKinnon.

Finances: The Treasurer, Andy McKinnon, reported that there was approximately \$200 in the cash account and approximately \$4000 in the checking account for a total of \$4248.33.

President's Remarks and Other Reports: Mr. Crowell welcomed the members and thanked those in attendance as well as those who had named proxies. He discussed the need for vital life in the Grotto in the form of periodic new officers and encouraged interested members to run for office.

The Chair of the Rescue and Safety Committee, Terrance Lovell, reported that he, Gary Dunmire, Anna Byers, and Kyle Rybacki had attended the NCRC training in Alabama in May.

The Newsletter Editor, Katherine Thorwart, announced she would be publishing two Nittany Grotto Newsletters by the end of June.

The Conservation Committee Chair, Paul Winter, said that new locks would be placed on Wobble Cobble, Chime, and Miller Caves. He also said that White Nose Syndrome (WNS) had decimated the bat population in Sugar Valley, where only two pipistrelles had been found on the latest bat survey. The bat population in Sharer Cave had also been wiped out. Finally, only 36 bats out of a former population of 35,000 remained in the Canoe Creek colony. Mr. Winter reported that Greg Turner of the Pennsylvania Game Commission was pushing for blanket open status of caves testing positive for WNS. However, Mr. Turner recommended maintaining the current winter moratorium on caving in caves with hibernating bat populations. Finally, Mr.

Winter reported that he had reviewed a few cave management plans and would try to make an inventory of those plans for caves controlled by NGI.

Old Business:

Contribution to MAKC. Andy McKinnon moved to increase the previously agreed upon donation of \$100 to \$123. This would allow for a \$15 annual grotto membership in the MAKC as well as a large commemorative brick with a bat graphic. The motion was seconded and approved with all yeas except for one nay and one abstaining vote.

J-4. Gary Dunmire provided an update to the negotiating process between Graymont and NGI for control of access to the cave. He reported that the last contact with Graymont was at the beginning of May when the company reviewed our proposal. At that time liability insurance, especially relative to total acreage of the site, as well as parking, were discussed. Although Graymont wished to reach an agreement with NGI by the end of May, Mr. Dunmire felt that the end of summer might be a more realistic goal.

Sharer Cave. Paul Winter moved to reopen the cave from May 15th to September 15th, the traditional access season before the advent of WNS. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

New Business:

MAR Bulletin 21. Will White announced that this publication – Karst of Sinking Valley and Kookan Cave, Huntingdon and Blair Counties - is now available for a purchase price of \$27.50.

File Storage. Dr. White announced that there are two file drawers of cave reports currently at the White residence that need a new home. Mr. Crowell suggested asking MAKC if they would like to store the reports. He remarked that some reports, possibly including some of those currently stored in his basement, actually belong to MAR and NGI. Christopher Catherman asked if all of the reports should be stored in a centralized location. Cherie Schock advised that we should gain permission from MAR and other relevant entities to donate the reports to MAKC.

NSS Headquarters Donation. Keith Wheeland suggested that NGI should donate money to the NSS for their new headquarters. He moved to make a donation of \$250. Dr. White seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Elections. Paul Winter was elected President, replacing Bryan Crowell. Gary Dunmire was reelected as Vice President and Andy McKinnon was reelected as Secretary-Treasurer. Joe Turchick was reelected as Director at Large and Hope Brooks was elected as Director at Large, replacing Terrance Lovell.

Final Business.

Clarification of NSS Donation. Keith Wheeland clarified that the \$250 donation to the NSS would be in the form of five \$50 blocks.

Bobcat Cave. Mr. Wheeland encouraged Mr. Winter to provide a report of his recent trip to this cave in Virginia. Mr. Winter reported that five cavers spent 150 hours in the cave and surveyed 250 feet of new passage. Two camps were set up in the cave. A contest was arranged whereby the first caver to make it to camp twice got the most cheese. Mr. Winter's team succeeded in making the most trips in one day to the Turnpike, a remote section of the cave.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Andy "Karst" McKinnon, Secretary/Treasurer