



The Western Cave Conservancy

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Minutes for the Meeting of the Board of Directors of October 23, 2010

Held at the Weller Preserve, Amador County, CA

Call to Order: 1:10 pm

List of Attendees

Directors: Rolf Aalbu, Eileen Belan, Jerry Johnson, Martin Haye, Marianne Russo, Mike Spiess, Bruce Rogers; Guests: Denise Aalbu, Pat Helton, Jim Lakner, Heather McDonald, Matt Leissring, Kelley Prebil

Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

May & July minutes were sent out via email. Marianne sent some corrections to Martin.

August minutes: Secretary's report said that Marianne suggested sending out a self-addressed envelope with the thank-you's but it should say it would be sent with membership renewal letter rather than thank-you letter.

Avalanche Report: Should say Fran Herbst rather than Fran ____.

Martin incorporated the changes into his files & will post corrected versions to the Website.

Moved to approve the minutes; all in favor.

Agenda: Martin added one item re donation/loan for Berome Moore Cave in Missouri.

Rolf also mentioned getting lots of spam via his WCC email address. There's really nothing to do about it except "delete" or change the address.

Moved to approve the agenda: all in favor.

Reports Discussion (50 min)

President's Report: Martin

Vice President's Report: Marianne

Marilyn Tierney, biologist for Tahoe Nat'l Forest asked Marianne about a species collection from Avalanche Cave at the Cal Academy of Sciences; Rolf said he didn't know of any collected species that were taken there. Jim Lakner recalled that Darryl Ubick (sp?) & others had collected some samples & those might be there. Rolf will check on it.

Treasurer's Report: Mike Spiess

Property Management Account (Weller) & Stewardship Account (Windeler) have been separated. Attached a budget based on the 2010 budget. At the Regional, we received a check for the WCC dinner there. We still have not received a check for the dinner at Speleo-Ed 2009. No big changes in budget or profit/loss. Mike will take care of moving the field house to a "fixed asset" based on the assessor's value (land: \$158,803; structural improvements [field house] \$6,324; welfare exemption for both = no property tax, only assessments for school, fire, etc. = \$23.20). Field house will be valued at \$10,000 (what we paid) for the accounting. Mike's still trying to contact Sierra Foothills Conservancy re Millerton Lake Caves

Profit/Loss overview: Martin asked to correct the insurance listing – just change the name of the category.

Martin also finished the financial statements for 2009. Mike reminded us that we should officially approve those statements, so it will be discussed/approved later today. Also, as long as expenditures are within budget, no approval is needed for them.

Secretary: Eileen

DropBox is working smoothly. No major mailings since last WCC mtg. Sent out 7 reminders to renew, resulting in 3 renewals. People always seem to appreciate the reminders.

PR: Marianne

Major thing was Regional fundraising dinner – check for \$1500; receipts for 400.91 + ~\$100, so profits were roughly \$1000. Barstow + Olema = ~\$2600, and Fofu Gonzales & Matt Bowers say the check will be coming very soon.

Issue at Dinner: We need to know how many dinners are being sold before the day of the dinner, so that the chef(s) can know in advance how much to prepare. We need to have a cutoff date & not allow more tickets to be sold after that. If people are turned away at the last minute, it reflects badly on the WCC, not on the hosting organization, even though it's not WCC's fault.

Some changes to the Website – Martin has been working with Kelley on updates. Still need to do quite a few more updates. Martin looking at using WordPress as an alternative to the current platform.

Weller visit by Peter Youngbaer – Feedback from him later was very positive.

Hoped to get a newsletter out but hasn't happened yet. Marianne's collecting articles for it. Eileen will help except the week before & week after Thanksgiving.

Budget for 2011 estimated at \$1450. Category #6 should include two dinners for next year (\$1100 for both dinners). Speleo-Ed will be at Sequoia over the May 21 weekend.

Research: Rolf

Need to do more surveys in caves. Talked about the bio-blitz that was held at Weller in June. Possibility of major news coverage. Doesn't have time to do land research (like Dan used to do); do we need a separate Director for this? When we let landowners know about us, there's a possibility that they'll seek us out—it will help them in this “down” economy.

Acquisitions: Bruce

Nothing much to report about possibly available properties. Bruce mentioned his conversation with [redacted]. We really need to update the brochure or come out with a “white paper” that we can share with POST, Sempervirens Fund & other such organizations. He hasn't yet talked with Peninsula Open-Space Trust (POST)—they seem to have a large fund to draw from.

Stewardship: Martin

Since Marianne's report covers Weller, Martin focused on Windeler.

Contact w/Beth and Phyllis (Forest Svc)- good resources.

[redacted]

Close to having the Management Plan ready. Grottos are taking their trustee-led trips. Possibly will have a restoration trip soon, and a rescue training trip.

Suggested that after the next year or so, after most who wanted to go to the cave have gone, we should look at having fewer trips per year to reduce impact.

Human Resources: Jerry

In January, he passed out an outline for the Board Manual for review/comments. Will make an effort to work on that soon.

Mike suggests we take a look at MarkSmily.com (sp?) for sample board manuals.

Sill have several Advisory Board members who are not WCC members—drop them as Advisory members? Bruce will contact Dell Quick and Joel Ledford.

Discussion about membership list & date of renewal—should they all be different or renew at the same month each year? Much discussion. Finally decided to have annual drive at the Regional (~Oct). Need an article for the newsletter about how “we're trying to simplify our lives and yours”. Need a resolution.

Kaedeane has asked to join the Advisory Board. Suggestion also to appoint Kaedeane as the Official WCC Banquet Coordinator (Marc is willing to hand that over). Need resolutions for both items.

Weller Preserve Manager's Report: Marianne

Pleased at how many different things have gone on at Weller this past year. Lots of multiple use. Road gate moving project is finished. Will soon start the winter clearing & burning. Budget of \$1200 for next year.

Suggestion: Need a tally of how many people visited at Weller/purpose: educational, recreational, scientific, etc/ when/how many hours/volunteer hours/etc. This would be useful as an annual report, also might be useful to include “xxx volunteer hours last year” in a proposal to other funding sources. Marianne agreed & will set that up.

Jerry reported on the bones found in Rippled, including a complete fox. Coyote, bobcat, ringtail cat, gray fox, skunk, (with some fox & skunk hair), band-tailed pigeon humerus, magpie humerus, jack rabbit, porcupine, humerus+femur from some unidentified animal, and parts of two pestles in the Big Room (of the type historically used by the Miwok in this area). They also found that the drop-in portion does connect to the walk-in entrance area (too small for humans). Jerry/Marianne also found an artifact by the tree next to the driveway: an old “flint”? Not yet identified. Jerry also found that the limestone extends farther than previously believed.

Committee of the Whole

Berome Moore

Cave group in Missouri needs \$10,000 to make surface improvements to preserve the cave there in order to buy it. They can use donations more than a loan. We can make a donation to the grotto there (or directly to the conservancy?). It was suggested & agreed to send them \$500.

Rolf suggested that the NSS should have a pool of funds for conservancies like this.

Review and approve 2009 financials (MH)

No comments

Clough Cave project 2011 (MR)

Marianne is organizing a work trip to install gate (Th, 24 March; Fr moving equipment; Sat installing vertical bars). Restoration: will take place ~next October or so.

WCC brochure questions (BR/MR)

Are we upgrading one to hand to Sempervirens Fund? Marianne/Bruce/Pat can get together to work on this.

Avalanche cave access (BR)

Don't go without approval.

Adopt prelim budget (MH)

Comments: Should have a budgeted amount for holding dinners & revenue expected from them. (See Marianne's budget for PR) Misc expenses were based on last year. Bottom line ~\$6,000.

Contributions/Donations vs Memberships Events – Mike explained why he differentiated among them. Membership as an expense? Covers thank-you letters, postage, printer ink, etc. Discussion about whether to approve the budget now or wait until the January public meeting. It was agreed to pass it now & simply report in January that it was passed today.

Year end appeal, membership goals (MS)

Marianne reminded us that it's the job of all of us to try to raise money for the WCC. Just add a note to all members asking them to renew & to consider adding more \$ as a donation. Suggestion to post an appeal on the NSSwest list.

One suggestion was to do a membership drive at Speleo-Ed in addition to the Regional annual drive. Speleo-Ed could solicit for additional donations besides their membership. MS also suggested using PayPal & send out email reminders with a form & link to PayPal. We don't always have info about people who hand us a check...need to collect better/more complete contact info.

Martin wants to use WordPress for the Website, which will include a blog area—that can be kept always up-to-date, and postings can be made from a phone. Page updates can be made by any of us, e.g. Director bios. The Webpage can automatically keep our FaceBook page up to date.

NO YEAR-END Appeal this year.

Close First Citizens credit card processing account due to high fees? Also, report on reducing number of bank accts. (MH)

Cost of this processing is quite high. Discussion of options. Agreed to close this account. PayPal is a very good option. Eileen will work w/Martin & Mike to reword the letters she sends asking for donations/membership payments.

Also discussed accepting payment for more than one year at a time. Yes, we can do that if someone donates, say, \$100 and specifically asks that it be for 4 years.

Misc

From Gale Beach: "I'm on the track of the owner of a 2.0 6ns, foldable glasses set in an orange case labeled Callaway Golf V... I noted the WCC Board meeting in May. At your next WCC meeting could you ask if anyone claims the glasses..." Nobody knew anything about the glasses.

New Business

- 1) Resolved that Kaedean Doppelmayr is hereby appointed to the Advisory Board.
Passed.
- 2) Whereas Marc Hasbrouck is stepping down as WCC Banquet Coordinator, be it resolved that Kaedean Doppelmayr is hereby appointed the new WCC Banquet Coordinator.
Passed.
- 3) Resolved that WCC membership will henceforth extend from January through December and that our primary membership drive will be conducted in October-November, conducted in the same time frame as the Western Regional.
Passed.
- 4) Resolved that WCC will donate \$500 to the effort to purchase an entrance to Berome Moore Cave in Missouri.
Passed. Contact info was given to Mike Spiess, who will send them a check.
- 5) Resolved that the 2009 Financial Statements are hereby approved,
Passed.
- 6) Resolved that the 2011 budget presented by the Treasurer is hereby adopted.
Passed.
- 7) Resolved that WCC will close its credit card processing account with Echo/Intuit/First Citizens Bank.
Passed.

Next Board Meeting

Annual public meeting: date, location

Discussed—will be decided via email after consulting individuals' calendars.

ADJOURNMENT: 5:00 PM