



Western Cave Conservancy

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Minutes for the Fall Meeting of the Board of Directors on November 17, 2012

Held at the home of Eileen Belan in Sacramento, California

***Next Meeting (Annual Public Meeting)
tentatively scheduled for January 19, 2013, in the San Jose area***

Call to Order: 1:14 pm

Attending were: Marianne Russo, Jerry Johnson, Bruce Rogers, Eileen Belan, Pat Helton, John Moreno

Attending by phone (at various times): Kaedean Doppelmayr, Gretchen Baker, Jim Lakner, Dave Cowan, Mike Spiess, Neil Marchington, Kelley Prebil

Approval of the Agenda

Jerry Johnson moved, Bruce Rogers seconded; all in favor.

Approval of Draft Minutes of August 19, 2012, Meeting

Bruce Rogers moved, Jerry Johnson seconded; all in favor.

Officer Reports Discussion

Officers and directors briefly recapped their emailed reports and discussed any questions.

President's Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne made a presentation at the Western Regional; more than \$900 for the WCC was raised from the dinner put on by Kaedean Doppelmayr, et al. Matt Bowers told Marianne that we should receive the check in the next couple of weeks. He's sent the info to Gail McCoy (WR Treasurer) to process. Kaedean requested to be informed when and how much is received.

Marianne Russo, Mike Spiess, and Bruce Rogers had a phone conference call on Nov. 4, 2012, which is when today's meeting was originally scheduled. Marianne apologized for not holding that meeting as scheduled. She's now sent out most of the thank-you letters that needed to be sent to people who donated auctions items at the May Speleo-ed. She will be stepping down as WCC President in January. She wants to work on the Board Manuals.

Vice-President's Report: Mike Spiess

Marianne Russo has Mike Spiess' report. The only thing done is the conference call mentioned above. He strongly urges that we write up the manual & outline the duties for VP. He's really sick today but will call in for the budget discussion later.

Treasurer's Report: Mike Spiess

There were no deposits; no bills received; a total lack of activity. Marianne tried to get in touch with John Moreno, who's processing these items. He said there were only a couple received during the quarter. John plans to be present at this meeting but has not yet arrived.

Mike Spiess' concerned about not receiving input from the Directors for next year's budget. We need to work on a better system. Kaedean Doppelmayr said that the receipts for the WR dinner were very recently sent to Mike for payment.

Secretary's Report: John Moreno

None available at this time—John Moreno may join this meeting later.

When John arrived later, he handed out his report. There were no new members since he took over, and only two checks were received during the quarter. He wants to send out emails/letters to all the lapsed members—would that be better to do now in the holiday season or wait until next year? Marianne Russo: better to do now, before the end of the year, for tax purposes. Marianne gave John a couple of checks (from both Eileen Belan and David Weaver) to process. There was discussion about how the re-up letter should go out: do we have emails in the database? Some, but the list may need to be updated. We need to remind folks that they can re-up via PayPal. John will prepare the letter and review it with Marianne before sending them out. Some suggestions were made about what to include in the letter to entice people to contribute/join. Kaedean Doppelmayr would also like to see the letter, so John will send it to the Directors for a look & suggestions before sending it out (within the next 2-3 weeks).

Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee Report: Kaedean Doppelmayr

She has had a really bad couple of months with lots of family issues. She didn't get anything done except for the WR dinner, and that was a small miracle. She apologized. She submitted a written report for this meeting, but said that she'd omitted the fact that she will not be able to attend/prepare a dinner at the 2013 Western Regional at Trout Lake.

Acquisitions Committee Report: Bruce Rogers

Bruce Rogers has done lots of things with CEMEX (San Vicente Redwoods). They gave the most popularly known cave a different name (for security reasons). He presented a list of dates & activities he's had with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and Sempervirens (SVF) at the CEMEX (San Vicente Redwoods) property at Davenport.

“Western Cave Conservancy“ was mentioned numerous times during the recent filming at the cave with Quest. This will be shown on national TV soon, and it will be available on the KQED Quest Website.

Bruce hasn't yet connected with Santa Cruz Land Trust & Save the Redwoods League, who will be getting the conservation easement for the CEMEX (San Vicente Redwoods) property.

Tom Gilleland was here this week to look at the Davenport property for gating. He measured the entrances & got other info needed to submit proposals and estimates to do the work.

Bruce has a preliminary MOU written up for WCC-Davenport property. It needs to be reviewed by WCC Directors before proceeding & letting them make changes. When it's signed & in place, the oversight goes into WCC Stewardship.

POST also has coastal landholdings, some with sea cave resources. That could be a separate WCC project to work with them on the sea caves.

Bruce's also looking at getting people together who have historic information about the CEMEX property & the caves there. CEMEX actually provided no historical information to the conservancies when they purchased it. He'd also like to get a bat biologist in to look at the residents there, as there's evidently a rather large bat colony in one of the caves.

Matt Bowers attempted to arrange a meeting with the Bureau of Reclamation to talk about the project that the WCC proposed to do with them at New Melones. They told him that they need to have a meeting to arrange for a meeting with us. It's now on hold until the Bureau is able to arrange for their meeting.

There's not been much progress on the Rippled Cave map because of so much time devoted to CEMEX right now.

Tom Gilleland mentioned several other caves in Arizona that the WCC might be interested in.

Kaedeann Doppelmayer: When she was visiting in Arizona, someone at Colossal Cave there was willing to take them into several caves in the area.

Dave Cowan asked about an update on Avalanche Cave: Marianne Russo updated him on that – need to request access for a trip several months in advance, and even then it may not be granted. There is an older woman who held the mining claim there—could we purchase that from her and use that to trade with the Forest Service to buy the cave? Marianne agreed that she or Bruce need to get updated on that situation.

Dave Cowan: What about the mining claims for Crystal Cosumnes Cave? Marianne Russo: Road conditions are much worse and it hasn't been visited in some time—again, someone should check on the latest status there.

Marianne Russo commented on the potential media interaction after the airing of the Quest film. She spoke with Matt Bowers. It is his recommendation that we need to look at our website (now it's by cavers, for cavers) and make changes to appeal to the general public. We should look at the Sierra Club site: it's very people-friendly & possibly a good model for us. Marianne agreed that we should look carefully at our site and figure out

what it does for us and how it's used. Before the film comes out, we should make sure that there's something on the front page that is most effective for non-cavers going there. All agreed. Bruce Rogers said that the trogloraptor publicity a year ago produced a lot of hits to our site, but that's all—no donations or new members. We need a “why and how should non-cavers get involved” area prominently shown.

Property Stewardship Committee Report: Kelley Prebil

Kelley Prebil joined the meeting later (3:00) by phone and gave her report (written report already submitted). There's no longer an MOU with the US Forest Service (USFS), but now a different type of agreement—a “Challenge Cost Share Agreement” or CCSA—which tracks our work as dollars. We have a formal MOU with them for another 5 years. There were problems with the lock at Windeler, but it's now fixed. Matt Bowers wants to take some of the NSS BOG members there for a visit next March when they have the national BOG meeting here in the Bay Area.

Weller Preserve Manager's Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne Russo recapped her submitted report. They haven't done a lot there in the past couple of months because of home projects that needed to be done before winter. All looks good at Weller, with nothing disturbed between their visits there. Matt Bowers suggested having grotto trips to Weller Preserve as “work trips.” Marianne is starting to contact a couple of grottos now. They could come and work for one day, camp over, and then cave the next day. There are lots of jobs that need to be done, mostly best done with small groups of just a few people. This could help acquaint nonmembers with the Preserve and with the WCC, and probably get new members.

Volunteer Resources Committee Report: Jerry Johnson

As Marianne Russo already explained, Jerry Johnson said that they haven't done a lot in the past couple of months because of urgent home projects. We still need to get the Board Manual completed. Jerry will be calling people, getting people together to work on this. There were some issues that have come up that would not have been an issue if we'd had a Board Manual which would already cover the situations. This just underscores the need for the Manual.

Special Projects Committee Report: Neil Marchington

Neil Marchington joined later by phone and gave this report. He's in Medford, OR right now and has talked with the USFS person who would be our liaison if we get an agreement in place about CND. He's still working through the MOU stuff with the cave near Bend. He would like to see the Windeler agreement; Bruce will send it to him, as well as sending the Draft MOU for CEMEX (San Vicente Redwoods) to the Directors for review & comments. Neil thinks having a couple of agreements in hand will help when they approach the USFS to discuss a new agreement.

Science Committee Report: Unfilled Position

*Break – Will re-convene as Committee of the Whole for general discussion. --
Reconvened at 2:23p.*

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

General Issues and Potential Projects:

- 1) Investing \$ in an NSS Fund: (Spiess) Mike has contacted the National Speleological Foundation (NSF) in regard to investing a significant portion of our assets into one of their accounts where it would earn interest.

Mike Spiess' waiting to hear back from the NSF after their Directors' meeting, because they have to vote on accepting this from us. He needs to work out some details with them before we take the plunge. Our revenues have been falling at rather an alarming rate—we really need to bring that back up so that we don't dip into our savings for paying regular bills.

John Moreno: does the Board need to approve Mike's placing our funds there? Should we decide now to approve that? Mike Spiess: it takes about a month to get the money back if we decide to withdraw it (e.g., to buy a cave). John: what's a CD rate compared with that investment? (CD's can be cashed in quickly even if we have to forfeit the interest.) Mike thinks the NSF generally does better than the market. Marianne Russo thinks that's where the WCC's money was originally & turned \$70K into \$90K. It's not FDIC insured, so we could lose on the investment. There are lots of questions about how the funds are invested. Mike will continue to look into this investment as an option—how safe & how available would our funds be?

2013 Budget: Mike Spiess didn't have a lot of input, but he came up with a budget. It has some holes: will we print & mail out newsletters? Any expenses for Windeler? Kelley thinks it should be roughly the same as last year. New gate for Windeler? Chuck Lee has the design, but Kelley Prebil doesn't know when that would start to happen or how much it would cost. Mike White had some stainless steel plate that won't be available any more. Other expenses should be about the same.

Mike Spiess expressed serious concerns about the significant drop in income. John Moreno said that the letter he'll be sending out will undoubtedly generate renewal income.

Marianne Russo to Mike Spiess: How can we "fix" this problem & get more info to Mike about our budget needs? Mike just needs numbers from the Directors planning for their next year's needs. Marianne underscored the need for everyone to get info to Mike when he needs it! We can always ask for more money during the year if something comes up, and approve it right away. But we need to communicate with Mike so that he has some information to work with!! Mike also pointed back to the job descriptions—they should include a budgeting responsibility, to submit a budget to Mike each year for the needs of each Director's project work.

The budget Mike Spiess developed for this meeting is just based on what he had, some from last year. He urged everyone to submit info to him so that we can have a more accurate/realistic budget for the January public meeting.

Kaedeane Doppelmayr pointed out that there's nothing in Mike's draft budget for printing & mailing the Newsletter. She also mentioned that we're talking about developing & printing a new brochure. Those costs should be included in the new budget.

Kaedeane Doppelmayr reminded us that she won't be able to do a meal at the 2013 Western Regional at Trout Lake, WA (Aug. 30-Sep. 2, 2012); Neil Marchington said that there's a kitchen available there and that he can help put on a dinner. Perhaps this one can be done by someone other than Kaedeane—she will talk with Neil and work something out.

Re Newsletter: Bill Papke is the editor of the WCC Newsletter and if we (thru Marianne Russo) send him articles, he will produce a newsletter. Neil Marchington will work on something for CND, and he said it would be good to have a newsletter to hand out at the Trout Lake event, to get new folks acquainted with what we've done & what we do. We all need to write some articles about what's going on (and include some photos) so that a 4-page newsletter can be done!

Mike Spiess said we need to send the cost these items for him to add into the budget:

- Expenses & income for dinners
- Brochure printing; newsletter printing & postage costs
- Weller Preserve & Windeler Cave expenses (mostly for maintenance)
- Website; liability insurance- Mike Spiess pays those bills each year
- \$1.05 for interest income
- Letterhead? John Moreno said we already have ~4 boxes of letterhead.

2) *Officers/Directors: Several discussion points as follows:*

a) *Nomination of new President to fill vacancy in January 2013.*
Marianne nominates Bruce Rogers for President.

b) *Most of our directors terms will be up in 2013, we need to find out who is interested in being reinstated and who is not.*

Terms started out staggered, so they're not all up at the same time. Neil Marchington is in until 2015. John Moreno, Kelley Perbil, and Kaedeane Doppelmayr are all up in Jan 2013 (they had one-year terms). Are they interested in continuing? Kelley: yes. Kaedeane: very busy but would stay on for just another year; said that we really need to have someone with experience in PR/advertising. Discussion—Chuck Chavdarian is interested in working on the Board and may be very good at PR, so Bruce Rogers will continue to talk with him. Kaedeane would be willing to stay on to do Special Events. John Moreno: interested in staying on? Yes
Mike Spiess' term is also up in Jan. 2013 [also Bruce Rogers]—both are interested in staying on.

- c) *Secretary duties are not being fulfilled; we need to find a solution.*
John Moreno will work more closely with Mike Spiess to make sure documents are going across properly. John has put the property tax bill in the dropbox within the past 3 days or so. John then asked Mike about a City of Santa Cruz tax based on the number of employees—there’s probably a need to at least file the form, indicating “0” (zero employees). Marianne Russo suggested John call Martin Hays about what we’ve done in the past.
- d) *Chuck Chaudarian is interested in volunteering for the board; we need to find a good job for him.*
- e) *We need to set a date for a working meeting to revise some of the job descriptions such as Stewardship, Special Events and Secretary, update others and create one for the Science Director.*
- 3) *Schedule Work Meeting: In addition to job descriptions we need to tackle at least two other jobs ASAP. These are the Board Manual and additional work on the membership database. The most important task with the database is acquiring email addresses for everyone so that we can start sending out renewal notices and other communications electronically to as many people as possible.*
- 4) *Annual Public Meeting 2013: We are waiting to hear from Jim Lakner about the possibility of using a meeting room at the Lexus dealership in San Jose. David Weaver has been looking into potential places in Livermore. We should discuss other possibilities, publicity to the caving community (via Website, FaceBook, email lists, etc.), and activities/refreshments etc.*

Jim Lakner reported that Lexus of San Jose has two rooms for meetings: a small and a larger (~40 people) room. They need a certificate of insurance (no problem). We must have a phone hookup plus power for people’s computers; Wi-Fi is nice. They have two dates available for us (January 19 & 26). Cost: none. Jim will meet with the rep there next Friday to see the rooms.

Bruce Rogers: David Weaver also checked out libraries in Livermore: two rooms for 40 people; phone access; A/V facilities; all day for \$100-120; food no problem.

Our preference is for San Jose, but we can do Livermore if San Jose falls through.

- 5) *2013 Budget: There are several directors who need to use WCC funds for various goods and services to fulfill their responsibilities. Mike sent out a couple of requests for our estimates of what we would need for next year and received very little feedback. We are also still very lax in getting our receipts turned in, in a timely manner. What can we do to improve this situation?*

This has already been discussed—see above.

- 6) Possible WCC campground in Mother Lode for cavers: During a recent telephone conference between Mike Spiess, Marianne Russo, and Bruce Rogers, we kicked around the idea of buying some property that cavers could use during visits to the Mother Lode. What do folks think of this idea and does anyone want to do some research?

There was much discussion about this possibility, with optimistic results. John Moreno mentioned the idle Cataract Quarry on Camp Nine Road. Marianne Russo said that they're required to do some restoration/remediation before it can change hands. Could we take the responsibility for the restoration in trade for the property? We could do some work, but... Would this be toxic remediation? Could possibly be, because there was a structure, which could have spilled fuel etc that we'd want remediated before we would take over.

Dave Cowan suggested looking at OTR.org to see what can be done.

Maybe we should talk about this with Dan Snyder, since he's looked at a lot of property in the area when he was looking to buy caves.

John Moreno is a licensed realtor, so he could handle our side of a purchase.

- 7) Other items as presented at the meeting: None not already discussed above.

Our scheduled break was not needed here, as we had no motions to craft. We proceeded to find dates to get together & work on the Board Manuals. Decided to meet December 1 at Bruce Rogers and Pat Helton's to organize and decide what needs to be done; then again at Bruce & Pat's on Jan. 5 to continue/finalize the work we've gotten done during that month.

Neil motioned to adjourn; Jerry seconded; all in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will take place at (most likely) Lexus in San Jose (at Santana Row) on Sunday, January 19, 2013.

Meeting adjourned at 3:56 pm.