



Western Cave Conservancy

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Minutes for the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors on Sunday, November 15, 2015

*Held at the home of Mark and Sharon Bowers,
4116 Loch Lomond Way, Livermore, CA*

*Next Meeting Saturday, January 23, 2016, at 1pm
at Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) Headquarters,
222 High Street, Palo Alto, CA*

Call to Order: at 1:20pm

Attending were: Bruce Rogers (President), Martin Haye (Treasurer), Chuck Chavdarian (Director of Land Research), Mark Bowers (Director of Public Relations), Marianne Russo (Secretary & Weller Preserve Manager), Pat Helton (Recording Secretary);
Advisors: Mike Davies

Attending by Skype/phone: Jake Davies (Member)

Unable to phone in: Mike Spiess (Vice President), Neil Marchington (Director of Special Projects)

Approval of the Agenda

Added items: None

Approval was moved by Martin; seconded by Marianne; all in favor.

Approval of Minutes of the August 22, 2015, Board Meeting at the Bowers' home in Livermore

Corrections: none

Approval was moved by Mark; seconded by Martin; all in favor.

Officer Reports Discussion

The reports were recently emailed to Directors and Advisors. Officers and Directors briefly recapped their emailed reports and discussed any questions.

President's Report: Bruce Rogers

With Chuck Chavdarian, signed the Sink Cave lease with the owner; wrote an article for the WCC newsletter & passed it on to David Weaver & Chuck Chavdarian for their commentary. Commented on the effects of the Butte Fire on Sink Cave & Cave of the Catacombs (CotC). He wrote a report that Mark read at the Western Regional. He will schedule work meetings for communication & newsletter articles. We're trying to decide where to hold Winter meeting—there was some discussion: Most of the people we know at POST have moved on to other jobs, and this might be a good opportunity to get our new contacts there more familiar with our activities if we have the meeting there again, as we did last year. Bruce will check with Neal Sharma, our new contact at POST. Mark suggested an

alternative: his ham radio club meets at Livermore Town Council hall which holds ~150 people. There's a good layout; good parking; a separate building with its own restrooms, etc. It's somewhat isolated from traffic but there are restaurants nearby. It's somewhat near the Library where we held the WCC public meeting two years ago. The meeting will probably be the third weekend of January. It might be nice to alternate between Livermore & POST Headquarters in Palo Alto.

Vice-President's Report: Mike Spiess

Unable to Skype/phone due to illness. No report.

Treasurer's Report: Martin Haye

Martin did the usual tasks as Treasurer. There were not many donations. He paid several bills including \$1 for lease of Sink Cave. We have no new conference phone yet; there was no work on investments. Mike Davies commented that he works with investments for his company and he may have some comments later on our "investment policy" as we develop it. He's being added to the finance committee, which now consists of Martin Haye, Mike Spiess, Mark Bowers, and now Mike Davies ("The Four M's").

The WCC is now worth ~a half million dollars. Ernie commented that our insurance is awfully high, but it really seems to be very reasonable. It's \$1600/year, thru the nonprofit insurance alliance, plus we got a \$100 dividend this year; thus it cost \$1500 this year. We can verify this info w/Martin.

The other expense this quarter was for WCC ballcaps, which is a good investment.

Secretary's Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne missed the August meeting, so this report covers six months. She processed all donations; thank-you letters were written & sent (except for one which requires looking for an address). Household memberships went down a bit—we now have 39 member households, where we usually have had about 75-85. This should go up when the annual appeal letter goes out later this year. Mark wants to coordinate that appeal letter with Marianne since he was planning to send something out as well.

Discussion followed about whether the caps are a gift to our donors or if they are purchased by them—do we need to charge tax? Do we pay sales tax on them? Martin said they are not a gift; they are being sold, and we (the WCC) will need to pay tax on them, but we don't charge tax.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The reports were recently emailed to Directors and Advisors. Committee Chairs briefly recapped their emailed reports and discussed any questions.

Acquisitions Committee Report: Chuck Chavdarian

[merged with Land Research Committee Report: Chuck Chavdarian]

All activities were focused on the two caves at Mt. Ranch—CotC and Sink Cave. We are planning to have Tom Gilleland gate CotC, and we have postponed that to possibly do both caves at once.

The owner's edits to the Sink Cave lease were reasonable and we all agreed to the edited version. There are two entrances to the cave: one stoop-in and one large skylight drop-in. In the past we've done rappelling practice from the skylight; we decided not to gate the skylight at this time. The gate on the stoop-in will not need to be extremely strong, as there are residents nearby, plus the property may be sold within the next three years or so (and we're being considered as possible purchasers). Marianne asked about putting a fence or something around the skylight entrance just as a safety measure. There is some there now, and we will look at adding some more. He gave a recap on events of the fire: the Sink Cave owner's house and also neighboring CotC owner's cabin were not burned although land around was burned. Kudos to the firefighters! We finally met with the owner & signed the Sink Cave lease (1 year). The CotC lease is a renewable 5-year lease.

Those two checks (yearly lease payments to the two owners) have not yet been cashed, and we discussed that we need to be able to prove that we did pay them (even if they don't cash the checks). Mike Davies suggested that we should send these payments via Certified/Return Receipt so that we can prove that we have paid them.

In addition to Saclan Cave, Chuck also has a couple of leads on caves in the East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) area: Vasco Caves; Brushy Peak; etc. Bruce explained about taking the tour there some time ago, as Chuck and Selena have also done. He noted petroglyphs (concentric circles) there as well as the known pictographs (thunderbird, etc.), and commented that one site even contains an early settler's burial. Chuck knows of other locations, including a real cave. It would be good PR for the WCC to help with projects like locating & documenting the caves & features they have.

Chuck also mentioned Little Yosemite and wants to return & find whether it's a rock shelter or cave. Bruce also mentioned Indian Joe Caves in that area.

Side discussion: It was decided to use well-known cave names like Sink Cave & Cave of the Catacombs in the minutes but no directions/locations.

Chuck is planning to work with Mark Bowers on more WCC shirts etc.

Marianne mentioned that this sort of arrangement could work out for "King Tut's Cave"—perhaps the owner would be amenable to a lease (the entrance is owned by a neighbor, though, who permits a certain number of visits per year). It may be worth looking into this. Bruce also mentioned three small cave(s) near Stevenot homestead.

Public Relations Committee Report: Mark Bowers

a) General Report on Activities: Mark Bowers

Mark said he did not complete as much as he wanted to this quarter. He did attend the Regional and gave a report for the WCC. Some at the Regional commented that they didn't think the WCC was doing anything anymore, so it was good to have the report done. Matt Bowers is working with getting access to caves near Mitchell Caverns; some commented that the WCC should be working with those getting the access, to help further the WCC name and lend credibility to the project. Should this be under Special Projects? Other?

He sold 7 hats at the Regional by putting out a signup sheet and a box for the payments. We took in \$150 at the Regional, with \$210 received for sale of hats (at \$15 for members, \$20 for nonmembers).

Western Region announced that they're looking for an editor to replace Geo; Mark Bowers followed up by announcing that WCC is looking for an editor & we're willing to pay \$250 per edition.

Mark has a Newsletter ready to go; we should review it & give feedback before we leave today.

He has a second mining claim ready to go for the second parcel at Windeler.

He will send Website updates to Kelley, with a cc to Bruce.

We need to start on our booth for the Convention next year; it will be a great opportunity for fundraising, publicity, selling things, etc. We will need (young & energetic) people willing to spend time & effort there at the booth!

He's been working on a video about the WCC, but it needs finalizing. This would be good to show at the Convention as well as use in the meantime.

b) WCC Newsletter: Vacant Position, but Mark Bowers is putting together the current Newsletter.

How to distribute the newsletter? Marianne would like to send out some printed ones in addition to putting the link on the Website. Martin suggested we should do a major mailout of printed ones with a reply envelope. We haven't done that in several years, so it would be a good time to do this. Everyone seems happy with the printer company Mark used for the last brochure, and would like to use them again; this would be approximately 250 printed at a cost of about \$1.00 each. Who to send the newsletter to? Marianne suggested anyone who's been a member in the past 3-4 years, and others agreed.

Marianne & Martin suggested sending a stack to each grotto and ask them to distribute at their meetings. How many? Some should be sent to each WR grotto, not just the ones in California. This should prompt many people to rejoin, and also encourage others to join.

Science Committee Report: Vacant Position

No director; no report.

Special Projects Committee Report: Neil Marchington

Not present; Bruce recapped Neil's written report.

Perhaps we can borrow the sand blaster to clean the entrance to CotC? The blaster could also be used for demonstration purposes at the 2016 NSS Convention in Ely.

Stewardship Committee Report: Kelley Prebil

Not present; no report.

a) CotC Project: Chuck Chavdarian [was David Weaver]

David Weaver has regretfully stepped down from his position as Project Director. This project is now being managed by Chuck Chavdarian.

b) Sink Cave Project: Chuck Chavdarian

No report submitted. Chuck gave an update already.

c) Weller Preserve Manager's Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne's report covers two quarters. She did lots of work at the Preserve before her surgery & after she was up & walking again. The sheetrock was finished last winter with help from Redwood Grotto. The spackle/sanding/etc. is finally finished and ready for painting. She also did work in the stool & tool sheds. Replaced the chain across the driveway by the road. Posted entire property with "No Hunting/No Trespassing" signs. Jerry donated a 100' extension cord (to reach stool & tool sheds) and a ladder (extension or folds to A-frame). Installed a deadbolt for the tool shed. Installed a screen door for main building, which required replacing the door handle as well. Jerry spotted a coyote on the property. There were no problems with the neighbors.

What about camping at Weller? We need to have a written policy, but camping is not allowed at this time. Noise could be a problem for the neighbors, and we need to be careful of that. Weller is not to be used as a "free camping spot" as some cavers have asked. Sanitation is another major issue. There's also a fire hazard for much of the year. There were concerns about accepting donations at Weller Preserve.

d) Windeler Cave Report: Kelley Prebil

Martin: Several recent trips were cancelled either by participants or the trustees; Martin will soon be taking a group from MLG & some from SFBC. Ron Davis was leading a trip yesterday or today. There was some discussion about recruiting new trustees, and Martin will talk with Kelley about adding an SFBC trustee (Mike Davies). Mike Davies commented that there's not much talk about Windeler & trips there, and perhaps some of the newer cavers would be interested if they knew about the trips.

e) San Vicente Redwoods Project Report: Bruce Rogers

For science research projects on the cave biota & monitoring instruments, Bruce worked on the cave map of "White Moon Cave". A trip with a major POST donor was postponed until next spring. Jessica Oster's grad students will put the new black box in about mid-December during the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco. Bruce needs to get to Hollister to talk with BLM about access via their road. He needs sketchers & surveyors to help at the quarry. He announced that he now has a Lieutenant to help with the work at San Vicente: Mike Davies, as well as his 2nd Lieutenant: Jake Davies, Mike's son (who called in to the meeting via phone).

Volunteer Resources Committee Report: Vacant Position (Brevet Marianne Russo)

No report.

Board recess (10 minutes) at 3:33pm, then reconvene 3:55pm as Committee of the Whole for general discussion of issues.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

General Issues and Potential Projects:

Scheduled Work Meetings:

After the success of several small working group meetings, we should schedule more work meetings to continue working on the Board Manual, Job Descriptions, etc. **BRING YOUR CALENDARS!!** There are several items that need work in the near future, including re-writing the VP position and looking for new Volunteer Resources and Science Directors.

Yes, there is interest in having a work meeting in early December. (The MLG party is Saturday evening, December 5; the SFBC party is on Saturday evening, December 12.) After some debate, we agreed on Sunday, December 20, at 1pm at the Bowers residence in Livermore.

Investment strategies:

Tabled for now.

Other Items Presented At The Meeting:

Communication list: We need a members@westerncaves.org email list. Mark sent an email to Mike Spiess to set that up.

2016 NSS Convention Plans: How can the WCC participate?

There was no further discussion about this.

1/4 to 1/2 hour break to craft motions arising from discussions and reports as needed.

NEW BUSINESS (Board reconvenes):

MOTIONS:

Moved that Mike Davies be appointed to the WCC Advisory Board, effective immediately. Marianne moved; Chuck seconded; all in favor.

APPOINTMENTS OF NEW DIRECTORS (if applicable):

No new appointments.

POLICY DECISIONS COMING OUT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:

None

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is tentatively set for the third weekend of January, the 16/17th, 2016, at 1pm, at Mark’s location at Livermore, CA. [The meeting was later moved to the following Saturday, January 23, at POST Headquarters in Palo Alto.]

Meeting adjourned at 4:38pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Pat Helton, WCC Recording Secretary

| <i>Directors</i> | <i>Appointment Date</i> | <i>Expiration Date</i> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Bruce Rogers, President</i> | <i>January 2013</i> | <i>January 2016</i> |
| <i>Mike Spiess, Vice President</i> | <i>January 2013</i> | <i>January 2016</i> |
| <i>Martin Hays, Treasurer</i> | <i>August 2014</i> | <i>August 2016</i> |
| <i>Marianne Russo, Secretary</i> | <i>January 2015</i> | <i>January 2018</i> |
| <i>Mark Bowers</i> | <i>January 2014</i> | <i>January 2016</i> |
| <i>Chuck Chavdarian</i> | <i>January 2014</i> | <i>January 2016</i> |
| <i>Jerry Johnson</i> | <i>January 2015</i> | <i>January 2018</i> |
| <i>Neil Marchington</i> | <i>January 2015</i> | <i>January 2018</i> |
| <i>Kelley Prebil</i> | <i>January 2015</i> | <i>January 2018</i> |
