

Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve Committee Meeting

March 12, 2015 – Jerry Brandenburg's house

Committee Members Present:

Jerry Brandenburg
Tama Cassidy
Scott Pavey

Werner Jud (online)
Neena Jud (online)

Also attending:

Bill Addington
Bob Dobbs
Richard Duncan
Tammy Otten
Mark Skinner
Joe Gibson

Mark Swelstad
James Clements (online)
Patrick Gibson (online)
Jon Hagee (online)
Dan Zubal (online)

Meeting started at 7:30 pm.

Caretaker's Report:

In recent weeks there has been lots of snow and rain causing high water in Crooked Creek and undermining the poles supporting the electric cords across to the Point. BC suggests that this might be the right time to figure out the permanent wiring to the Point. Also, high water threatens to carry the Port-O-Lets away from their current location. BC favors a traditional water heater for the Kitchen. He will bring up the shower house when weather permits.

Treasurer's Report:

Revenue & Expenses, Financial Report, and Initial Draft of 2015 Budget were sent to the Committee (and James Clements for sharing through TeamViewer).

Expenses exceeded income. These documents are available upon request.

Since Werner was not at the meeting in person (and experiencing communication difficulties at a distance) it was suggested to table the budget until next month.

SP so moved, TC 2nd. Voted unanimously in favor.

Please note: the budget items are an average of the last three actuals, but the red numbers represent items that have been more fluid, and will need to be discussed.

Scott needs to get the credit card that was mailed to BC (credit card company's mistake) to purchase things for the tractor. **Scott will ask BC to send it to him.**

Old Business

Scouts generate a large amount of revenue for GSP, BC was concerned about the status of the campgrounds, Jerry gave the go ahead to use the campground but requested it be used delicately.

Water Pressure: Jerry Brandenburg will handle this.

Road Repair: Bill Carr has a budget of \$1000 for Everett Wagner to handle the repair as discussed in past meetings. The goal is to have this completed by Open House, but is weather dependent.

Kitchen: New lock and keys will be produced by Fred Ball and distributed by Jerry Brandenburg.

Duties of Committee Members: No-one sent anything to Jerry since last meeting! **All committee members: email Jerry a list of things that need to be done (whether done by you or others, or not done but you know it needs to be) so he can assemble a master list.**

Volunteer hours book: Bob Dobbs is ready to hang it back up near the phone. Having a record of volunteer hours spent on tasks to benefit the Preserve can make a difference when applying for grants for projects. Dan Zubal had suggestions about signage and will talk with Bob Dobbs.

Committee: Jerry is trying to get more active Committee members and participation. Hopefully TeamViewer (or a similar program) will help.

Movie: Nothing new this month.

Open House: Bob Dobbs was reporting for James Robinson.

The Richmond County Library has offered to cover the costs for Spook Handy to play and sing on Sunday at Open House.

In addition Jon Hagee offered to come and play in the Cave on Sunday as he did a few years ago. His music will not compete with Spook Handy, but will be an addition to the experience of touring the Cave.

The re-enactors will be back again, so all cavers are encouraged to also dress in period clothing.

Bob Dobbs has revised the Open House flyer with the additional information. Richard Duncan will handle souvenir sales. Janice Gott will prepare the cornbread and members of Central Ohio Grotto will handle the soupbeans.

All people who help with Open House are welcome to camp that weekend for free. Caver support will be needed throughout weekend. Sunday afternoon is expected to be very busy.

Sweatshirts: Proposal to order approximately 45 sweatshirts in forest green with khaki GSP logo. Sizes will ranging from adult small through XL to fill out our selection of sweatshirts. **Werner (or Neena) was authorized to place the order.**

Scout Shelter: There will be a Memorial Service for Bill Simpson at 9 am on Saturday morning of Open House. A memorial sign recognizing Bill and Jack Hissong will be installed on the Scout Shelter. A work day has been scheduled for March 21, 2015 to complete the siding on the end gables. At that time the size and verbiage for the sign will be resolved.

Water Heater in Kitchen: Currently it is functional, although it seems to be twitchy right now. Werner sent all Committee members an explanation of the history and the costs involved with repairing or replacing the tankless water heater. The decision was tabled until the April meeting. There will be sufficient time to replace it before Open House if the decision is made to replace it at that time.

Darry Marsh also mentioned a problem with the spray nozzle.

KOR: Since KOR is taking place at GSP, the issues for the Committee relate to conservation and protection of the Cave and its resources. The Committee has policies for access to the Cave, requiring sponsors to be with their non-member guests at all times in the Cave. Furthermore, the Management Plan requires additional sponsors when a large group of non-member guests is expected.

Given that entry to KOR is not restricted to membership in one of the three managing grottos and having a significant Cave on site is part of the draw for KOR, the Committee wants to reach an acceptable balance between access to and conservation of the Cave by limiting, controlling, and/or monitoring access.

Much discussion ensued. Key ideas include:

- Closing the Cave when the party starts,
- Printing a letter in the KOR Guidebook about conservation of the historic resources;
- Stationing monitors throughout the Cave during hours it is open;
- Stationing someone at the entrance with a registration book for people to sign in & out.
- Recruiting volunteers for Cave security, and establishing open hours based on the number of volunteers.

The discussion concluded with the preparation of the following proposal to be circulated via email amongst the Committee within the next few weeks so a policy can be voted upon at the next Committee meeting:

GSP will be open during limited hours, to be closed when the party begins both Friday and Saturday night.

When the cave is open there will be at least five in-cave security people and another person at the front of the cave to register guests in and out with names and wrist band numbers that will be connected to their registration.

If there are not enough security to meet this requirement the cave will be closed during that time and reopened when sufficient people are available.

KOR will provide security shirts for those monitoring the event and those monitoring the Cave.

New Business:

COG an additional Managing Grotto: Several months ago, Jerry Brandenburg was approached by leaders of the Central Ohio Grotto expressing their interest in participating in managing GSP. COG is an older grotto than GCG and is re-growing. They have 48 members right now and are growing every month. They are primarily sport cavers, but there are people interested in learning vertical, survey and rescue techniques. Many members have been to GSP many times and have joined one either DUG or GCG to participate and have access to the Preserve. COG members at the meeting (in person or virtually) include: Mark Swelstad, Joe Gibson, Patrick Gibson, and Dan Zubal.

As a grotto, they are wanting to volunteer and be active. They would like to offer their membership the benefit of access to GSP and are willing to participate in the management and maintenance of the Preserve.

Adding COG to the team of managing grottos will increase the volunteer base for the Preserve. Most of the members are younger than the average age of the committee and frequent volunteers, which bodes well for the future. A downside is that there will be more use of the Preserve, but they want to help take care of it. COG is comprised of conservation minded cavers.

Jerry suggested a “probationary”, “trial,” or “phase-in” period during which all involved can assess whether this is an appropriate move. Meanwhile, discussions with the leadership of the current managing grottos and RKC will allow for development of appropriate modifications to the Management Plan, Charter for the Committee, and Memorandum of Understanding between GCG and RKC.

The following motion was made by Scott Pavey:

The GSP Management Committee will create a proposal for COG for a probationary-like period for one year consideration for COG being added as a member Grotto of the GSPC with access rights as other member grottos. With the understanding that after this period the board will make a determination as to whether they will move forward to make these changes in the bylaws and articles and petition the RKC to accept these changes. During the trial period COG will be

provided the same access to GSP as current member grottos. This proposal will include what is expected of COG during this year provided the GSP and COG agree on these terms.

Seconded by Tama Cassidy

The motion passed unanimously.

COG thanked the GSPC for their consideration. Mark Swelstad, explained that at their last meeting, the COG executive committee voted to take the next step to becoming one of GSP's managing grottos. They voted that if they were accepted, Patrick Gibson would be their liaison to the Committee. In addition, the COG Executive Committee also agreed that they would amend their bylaws to restrict membership such as GCG in order to ensure that new members are well versed in caving ethics and GSP rules and restrictions. None of these changes will guarantee anything, but are steps in the right direction. In a lighthearted manner, Mark also wanted to make sure the GSPC understands that the COG is a small grotto and would not have hundreds of volunteers.

Rockcastle Karst Conservancy had their annual meeting on Sunday, March 8, 2015. Mary Gratsch moved off the Board, Werner Jud moved back on and the officer duties were shuffled around. Tammy Otten is now the Chair of RKC, and as such made a friendly reminder that GSP is a preserve of RKC, and requests that all communication, facebook posts, etc. include that phrase or something similar. GSP is well known in the Mt. Vernon, Kentucky region and that association can help RKC reach their goals. Neena Jud has the RKC logos and is an administrator on the fb page. She will work with James Robinson to incorporate the RKC logo into the page.

Wireless @ GSP Patrick Gibson is the WiFi manager. It is time to change the access code. He intends to do this in April, probably at the Committee meeting weekend. The system will change to be a captive portal – meaning that each person will have a unique user name and password. This will not stop anyone from giving out their user name and password to someone else, but both people cannot be online at the same time. This may reduce the problem of individuals with multiple devices using a lot of bandwidth.

Meeting ended at 10:11 pm.

**Next meeting will be:
Saturday April 11, 2015 at GSP,
Beginning at Breakfast, concluding at Dinner
Hopefully with remote access since there is Wifi at the Shelter.**