

**Rockcastle Karst Conservancy
Fall Board Meeting – September 7, 2025**

In Attendance 9/7/2025

Directors: Werner Jud, Janice Gott and Mary Gratsch were present onsite.
Patrick Gibson, Gary O'Dell present online
(A quorum does exist)

Others: Richard Duncan and Neena Jud were present on site. Debi Pavey, Scott Pavey, Jerry Brandenburg & Tristan Phillips were present online.

77th Meeting of the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy was held at the Deer Park Library and online. Called to Order by Chair Patrick Gibson at 2:04 PM.

(9/7/25 Meeting Agenda at end)

Announcements:

1. Austin Traut filming a segment of Kentucky Life for KET TV has been turned over to Chelsea Parada from BGG

Secretary's Report: (M. Gratsch)

1. Asked for comments/amendments to the Minutes of regular Meeting of 6/15/2025 as posted on the RKC website; no response

MOTION: Motion to accept the minutes of the 6/15/25 meeting (J Gott motioned to accept, W Jud 2nd, passed by acclaim).

Treasurer's Report: (J. Gott)

1. Werner still working to finish tax filing for 2024
2. Gary Bush changed payment on website from Paypal to Zeffy. We need to encourage sustaining members to switch from Paypal to Zeffy. Sending personal emails would probably be the best method.

MOTION: To accept the Treasurer's Report as presented (Gratsch, Jud 2nd, by acclaim)

Committee Reports:

(A) Membership/Message Committee: (Gratsch)

1. Mary G plans to take the trifold display to the 2026 NSS Convention
2. A Summer Newsletter was sent out to membership via email. Our goal is to have quarterly Newsletters.
3. Janeen Sharpshair has volunteered to make up Christmas gift baskets for cave owners. She requests \$25/ basket.

Motion: To spend up to \$125 for up to 5 gift baskets (Gratsch, Gott 2nd, by acclaim)

4. Our brochure and membership cards have Werner's address as Treasurer which needs to be changed to Janice's address. Janice printed up labels that can be stuck over Werner's info. Mary G to work on correcting the address on the brochures and membership cards

(B) GSP Committee: (Debi Pavey)

1. Work on the Caretakers Residence (CR) water line upgrade to install a meter, is waiting on Rodney Trowbridge, who works for KY American Water

2. Ticket house renovations require obtaining new wall material.
 3. Neena and Jared submitted the grant application to the Kentucky Colonels for the GSP entrance drive improvement. The grant was denied, however, they are looking for other grants possibilities
 4. Neena wrote up a RKC Annual Report for 2024. (Some grant applications request this) She would like the Board to make such a report yearly, preferably just before or after the Annual Meeting so it can be presented in March.. This requires information from each Preserve Manager about the activities and visitation at each of the Preserves. Mary suggested that the Annual Report could be part of the Spring Newsletter to encourage members to rejoin
 5. Future Activities at GSP include Caver Appreciation and a Halloween Party (11/1-2), which will be used as a fund raiser
- (C) Misty Cave Committee: (P Gibson)
1. The Board received a request from Diego Dilly, OSU undergrad and COG member, who would like to study microbes in Misty. We need to establish protocols for such request. GSP has template for such requests. Debi P stated that a request was also received for GSP, which the Committee is working on. Mary G to respond to Diego's request stating that his request under consideration and that the cave is a hibernacula so, if approved, can't be started till next year.
 2. Jennie Hawkey (COG) led a clean-up trip on 8/2/25.
- (D) Skylight Dome Committee: (Jerry Brandenburg)
1. Jerry is expecting an estimate for regrading the road from the same contractor who did the last repairs. Damage from recent rains are not as serious as last time. Charlie Crabtree offered to suggest some modifications to the road drainage system.
- (E) Cornhole Cave Committee: (Gratsch)
1. Nothing new.
- (F) Sloans Valley Cave Preserve: (Mike Harrington- no report)
1. Patrick G reported that COG will be holding its annual Thanksgiving trip to the Sloans area
- (G) Fundraising Committee: (Gratsch)
1. Still waiting on Mike H to set up Etsy site to sell Sloans tees
 2. Mary will have items to sell for RKC at Consignment at the 2026 NSS Convention
- (H) Land Acquisition: (Wendy Orlandi)
- No report – Patrick G will contact her to see if she is still interested in chairing the committee
1. Partick G has been unable to contact the owner whose property abuts GSP who was planning to sell the property, which contains Ice Box Cave
- (I) NSS Preserves Program / MOU Committee: (Gratsch)
1. Nothing new – perhaps we can find out who chairs the committee now and set up a meeting at the 2026 NSS Convention
 2. Remove from agenda until there is more to report
- (J) Grant Committee: (Neena Jud, Jared Embree)
1. The committee would like 2 lists from all project managers; one of immediate work projects and the other, a list of long term (5-10 year) projects
 2. Mary G suggested applying for a grant from the National Speleological Foundation
- (K) Waiver Committee:
 Tabled

Old Business:

1. GSP MOU has been redrafted. Patrick G to send out to Board for review. He would like comments by October 1

New Business:

1. Elections are open for 2 Board positions, currently held by Patrick G and Mary G. Nominations must be received by end of the December Board Meeting. In a contested Election candidates Bio's must be received by December 31
2. Justin Turpin reported that the Department of Fish and Wildlife is planning to close off a passage in Sloans, leaving us to question where exactly is the passage they want to close off, why, for how long, and how will it affect water/air flow. Patrick G volunteered to try to contact Fish & Wildlife.

Next Meeting: The next Meeting was set for Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. EDT, at the Reading Library

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m. (Gratsch, O'Dell 2nd, by acclaim)

Meeting Minutes prepared by Mary Gratsch

Action Items

1. RKC/Grottoes MOU review and comments by RKC Board
2. File taxes – Werner Jud
3. All Preserve Managers – submit lists of short and long term projects
4. Plans for SVCP Kiosk – Harrington
5. Email Diego Dilly about his request to study microbes in Misty – Gratsch
6. Learn more about potential closing of a Sloans passage by Fish & Wildlife Service and whether RKC should comment - Gibson
7. Contact Wendy Orlandi to see if she still wants to chair Acquisition Committee – Gibson
8. RKC Website link for SVCP logo merchandise–Harrington, Bush, Treasurer
9. Cornhole Cave survey – Gratsch
10. Create letter or brochure explaining to landowners how to preserve their cave property – Orlandi, Gott (taken on by Janeen Sharpshair, J Gott)
11. Update RKC Bylaws
12. Update RKC Strategic Plan



FALL 2025 MEETING AGENDA

Sunday September 7, 2025

Deer Park Branch Library, Cincinnati OH - 2:00 P.M.

4020 E Galbraith Rd, Cincinnati OH 45236 – meeting room B

- **Call to Order – Patrick Gibson**
- A. **Announcements**
 - 1. Kentucky Life- Neena Jud
- B. **Secretary’s Report – Mary Gratsch**
 - 1. Minutes 6/15/2025
- C. **Treasurer’s Report – Janice Gott**
 - 1. Life Membership & Endowment Funds
 - 2. Migrating Treasury Income from Paypal to Zeffy
- D. **Committee Reports**
 - A. **Membership/Message Committee – Mary Gratsch**
 - 1. NSS Convention – 2025 Indiana (need to set up Display)
 - 2. Summer Newsletter sent out to members
 - B. **GSP Committee – Debi Pavey**
 - 1. Water Line Repair
 - 2. Ticket House Renovation
 - 3. Road Repair Application Grant - Neena
 - C. **Misty Committee – Sean Cain**
 - 1. Update?
 - D. **Skylight Committee – Thor Bahrman/Jerry Brandenburg**
 - 1. Road damage from recent rains
 - 2. Update?
 - E. **Cornhole Committee – Mary Gratsch**
 - 1. Assess eroding entrance/survey trip
 - F. **Sloans Valley Preserve Committee – Mike Harrington & Joe Morgan**
 - 1. Kiosk Plans
 - 2. Ladder Plans
 - 3. Emergency Contact Plan with Pulaski County
 - 4. Cathy Crockett Memorial Trail ownership?
 - G. **Fundraising Committee - Mary Gratsch**
 - 1. SVCP Logo merchandise link on RKC website- Etsy website?
 - 2. 2025 NSS Convention-Consignment sell vests/hats etc...
 - H. **Acquisition Committee - Wendy Orlandi**
 - 1. Acquisition Report
 - 2. Brochure for landowners about preserving cave properties
 - 3. Conservation Easement Committee Report – Janice Gott
 - J. **NSS Preserves Program / MOU Committee – Gratsch, Gibson, Jud**

K. Grant Committee – Neena Jud for Jared Embree

1. Requested prioritized list of projects from each Preserve Manager about the immediate and long term (5-10 year) needs

L. Waiver System Committee

M Old Business

1. GSP MOU, Charter, and Management Plan

N. New Business- Patrick Gibson

1. Waiver System Committee

Next Meeting Date & location – December 2025

Motion to Adjourn