

**Rockcastle Karst Conservancy Spring Board Meeting – March 15, 2026**  
**79<sup>th</sup> Meeting held at the Deer Park Branch Library, Cincinnati, OH and online**

In Attendance:

**Directors:** Patrick Gibson, Werner Jud, Janice Gott and Mary Gratsch were present on site.

Gary O'Dell present online.

(A quorum does exist)

**Others:** Debi Pavey, Richard Duncan, Neena Jud, were present on site. Mike Harrington, Gary Bush, Suz Gagnon, Jerry Brandenburg, and Sean Cain were present online.

Meeting called to Order by Chair Patrick Gibson at 2:02 PM EST. Meeting agenda attached at end.

Current slate of Officers accepted by acclamation.

A Announcements:

none

B Secretary's Report: (M. Gratsch)

1. Asked for comments/amendments to the Minutes of regular Meeting of 12/7/2025 as posted on the RKC website; no response.

**MOTION: To accept the minutes of the 12/7/25 meeting, as posted on the website.**

**(W. Jud motioned to accept, J. Gott 2<sup>nd</sup>; passed by acclaim).**

C Treasurer's Report: (J. Gott)

1. Contributions came in from Elizabeth Copelin, Alex Furst and Hilary Lambert.
2. There have been some membership renewals already.
3. Bob Roth repaid RKC for 4 of the landowner gift baskets. This money became the start of next year's Landowner Relation Fund.
4. The Life Membership Fund has jumped in value significantly due to the stock market. J. Gott to request our yearly distribution.
5. J. Gott filed the Kentucky Annual Report, which included changing the names of officers; Gott to Treasurer and Jud to Vice Chair.
6. The latest donation to the Bluegrass Legacy Endowment Fund went into a separate fund from the original. It was not set up by the donor entity but set up through RKC. This is merely a bookkeeping thing. The funds are maintained in the same manner.
7. Federal Taxes are due May 15. J. Gott will need to file the long form.

**MOTION: To accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. (Gibson, Gratsch 2<sup>nd</sup>; by acclaim)**

D Committee Reports:

(a) Membership/Message Committee: (Gratsch)

1. P. Gibson would like everyone on the Board to write something for the Spring Newsletter and get it to Leah by the end of the week. W. Jud offered to write something on the problem with the boundary tree. M. Gratsch will do something on Membership Renewal.
2. D. Pavey offered to print copies of the Newsletter for Open House, however, references to large caving events will be edited out.
3. P. Gibson volunteered to send out membership drive letters, with a link to the Spring Newsletter, like he did last year.

(b) GSP Committee: (Debi Pavey)

1. D. Pavey handed out a GSP Year in Review report for 2025.
2. Trash barrels have been painted in camouflage colors so they blend in better.

3. Plumbing repairs on the Caretakers Residence (CR) are still required in the crawlspace behind the perimeter skirting.
4. The Point is being cleaned up. Debi would like to see the rest of the preserve cleaned up; including the CR, upper parking lot and Shelter.
5. Leopold bench is in the process of being delivered.
6. Ticket House repairs are ongoing.
7. CR septic tank was located but needs to be dug open, inspected, and cleaned, if needed.
8. N. Jud went to the Mt Vernon Courthouse to research deeds and verify adjacent property owners.
9. N and W Jud along with Debi Pavi and Pete Stow, met with Jerry Gilbert, an attorney, in Richmond, KY to discuss GSP boundaries and tree poaching issues. The attorney has not invoiced RKC yet but we need to retain legal counsel.

**MOTION: To authorize Werner Jud to retain legal counsel concerning ongoing GSP property boundary issues. ( Gratsch,Gott 2nd; passed by acclaim)**

(c) Misty Cave Committee: (S. Cain & Pete Stow)

1. Sean checked on the Property and will check out the cave later.
2. Sean would like to mark the boundaries and wondered who has the deed and plat map. It was suggested that he check with Howard Kalnitz or W Jud for this information.

(d) Skylight Dome Committee: (Jerry Brandenburg)

1. Joseph Smith has been too busy to look into repairing the road and giving us an estimate.
2. Cave visitation tends to occur at the same time as cave events at GSP.

(e) Cornhole Cave Committee: (Gratsch)

1. M Gratsch would like to mark the property boundary trees before the end of the year. G. Bush offered to help.
2. N. Jud asked for a copy of deed and plat map to be entered in RKC records to facilitate boundary marking. Chair should have copies of these documents in official RKC files.

(f) Sloans Valley Cave Preserve: (Mike Harrington- report by email)

1. M Harrington, working with P Gibson, got a bid of \$3,200 for a 14' X 22' cement pad for a picnic shelter and selected a site for it. P. Gibson found a 12' X 20' pre-fab shelter at Lowes for \$4,499, which would require volunteers to assemble. N. Jud and Jared Embree are working on a grant for this. MG expressed concern over the large size of the proposed structure, citing worries it will lead to parties, trash and camping..W Jud agreed also mentioning the resulting increase in monitoring and maintenance to keep clean.
2. M. Harrington expressed concern over the safety of the ladder bolted in the pit and got an estimate of \$16,000 to fabricate metal stairs with handrails on both sides. N Jud asked Mike to submit a proposal so she can search for a grant.
3. Wendi Orlandi volunteered to supervise a clean-up at the Preserve. No date has been selected. Harrington to provide an estimate to RKC for expenses for a cookout during the clean-up. This estimate may include a \$15 dump fee to be around \$15 to dispose of the trash.
4. Kathy Crocket Trail – Ownership is a complex issue. Information needs to go to J Gott and Janeen Sharpshair.

(g) Fundraising Committee: (Gratsch)

1. Winter Adventure Weekend was cancelled due to excessive snow so Suz Gagnon was not able to sell any RKC merchandise. The charge for selling was to be \$25. Set up of the RKC display only is free.

(h) Land Acquisition: (Janeen Sharpshair)

1. M Gratsch would like RKC to print Kentucky Recreation Laws brochure to hand out at Open House.

**MOTION: To spend up to \$60 to print copies of the Kentucky Recreation Laws brochure. (Gratsch, Gott 2<sup>nd</sup>, by acclaim)**

2. J Gott to set up separate financial classes in bookkeeping for Landowner Relations Support and Land Acquisition

(i) NSS Preserves Program/MOU Committee: (Gratsch, Gibson, Jud) No report.

(j) Grant Committee: (Neena Jud, Jared Embree)

1. Jared and Neena are actively researching grants to fund the road repair at GSP and to replace the spillway across Crooked Creek to the Point.

2. They submitted a grant request to the KY Colonels for Sloans shelter/kiosk. RKC will need to supply a profit and loss and a balance sheet for 2025 and a 990 form when ready.

(k) Waiver Committee:

1. Megan Gaskin to review proposed online version of waiver at some point in time.

**E Old Business**

1. MOU is in the process of being signed by all entities.

2. G Bush could find no evidence that GCG relinquished control of GSP committee and funds to RKC. Gary submitted a 3 page document on how to effect the legal movement of the GSP Committee and funds to RKC. W. Jud to research GSP records regarding the transfer of GSP committee and funds from GCG.

3. Ken Bailey is currently working with Kentucky Karst Conservancy (KKC) on a MOU between RKC and KKC to manage the Mushroom entrance to Big Bat Cave in case of KKC's dissolution.

**F New Business:**

1. RKC/GSP Committee Charter will be updated next, followed by the Management Plan. P. Gibson, D. Pavi and N. Jud are working on this.

2. Some regular volunteers at GSP would like to leave their campers onsite when there several weekends in a row. The RKC Board sees this matter as falling within the GSP Committee responsibilities. The Committee may require a signed waiver and set a fee and time limits.

**Next Meeting:** The next Meeting was set for Sunday, June 7, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. EDT, at the **Reading Branch Library.**

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

**MOTION: To adjourn** (Gratsch, Jud 2<sup>nd</sup>, by acclaim)

Meeting Minutes prepared by Mary Gratsch

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## Action Items

1. Get articles for Spring Newsletter to Leah by 3/21/2026.
2. Jerry Brandenburg to obtain a bid to repair the road to Skylight.
3. Board needs to decide on size and scope of kiosk/change area for Sloans.
4. RKC Website link for SVCP logo merchandise—Harrington, Bush, Treasurer
5. Learn more about potential closing of a Sloans passage by Fish & Wildlife Service and whether RKC should comment. - Gibson
6. Review GSP/RKC Charter and Management Plan.
7. Walk Misty Boundaries. – Sean Cain
8. P Gibson to send out Membership Renewal emails.
9. Cornhole Cave survey and mark boundary trees. – Gratsch
10. Mike Harrington to submit estimate for cost associated with Sloans clean-up.
- 11, Research transfer of GSP Committee and funds from GCG to RnKC and make legal if it hasn't already been done.
11. Update RKC Bylaws.
12. Update RKC Strategic Plan.



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## Spring 2026 MEETING AGENDA

Sunday March 15, 2026

Deer Park Library, Cincinnati OH - 2:00 P.M. Meeting Room B

4020 Galbraith Rd, Cincinnati OH 45236

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- **Call to Order – Patrick Gibson**
- Election of Officers
  
- A. Announcements**
  
- B. Secretary’s Report – Mary Gratsch**
  - 1. Minutes 12/7/2025
- C. Treasurer’s Report – Janice Gott**
  - 1. Life Membership & Endowment Funds
  - 2. Federal Tax Report due by May 15
- D. Committee Reports**
  - a. Membership/Message Committee – Mary Gratsch**
    - 1. Is there going to be a Spring Newsletter? If so copies for Open House?
    - 2. Membership Drive sent with or without link to Spring Newsletter
  - b. GSP Committee – Debi Pavey**
    - 1. Spring Projects
    - 2. Open House
    - 3. Ticket House Renovation
    - 4. Boundary Issues
  - c. Misty Committee – Sean Cain**
  - d. Skylight Committee – Thor Bahrman/Jerry Brandenburg**
    - 1. Road damage repairs
  - e. Cornhole Committee – Mary Gratsch**
    - 1. Marking boundary trees
  - f. Sloans Valley Preserve Committee – Mike Harrington & Joe Morgan**
    - 1. Kiosk Plans
    - 2. Ladder Plans
    - 3. Emergency Contact Plan with Pulaski County
    - 5. Cathy Crockett Memorial Trail ownership?
  - g. Fundraising Committee - Mary Gratsch**
    - 1. Winter Adventure Weekend was cancelled due to snow so no sales were made. Cost for selling was to be \$25. Set up of display was free.
  - h.. Acquisition Committee/Land Owner Relations – Janeen Sharpshair**
    - 1. Emailed report.
    - 2. Request for funding to print Kentucky Recreational Law flyers
  - i. NSS Preserves Program / MOU Committee – Gratsch, Gibson, Jud**
    - 1. nothing new

- j. **Grant Committee – Neena Jud and Jared Embree**
  - 1. Update on potential grant
- k. **Waiver System Committee**
- E. **Old Business**
  - 1. GSP MOU, Charter, and Management Plan update
  - 2. RKC serving as back-up for Kentucky Karst Conservancy (KKC)
- F. **New Business**

**Next Meeting Date and Location – June 2026**

**Motion to Adjourn**

