

Bexar Grotto Meeting

Date: 11/27/17

Attendees: 46

Arron called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Visitors

Al from San Marcos Grotto. He found us through the Hydrogeo workshop.

Alex from Corpus Christi.

Adam and Andrea were at the Robber Baron Open House.

Treasury report

Not included in the numbers are the Porta Potties and the two new checks, nor the up to \$1800 allocated to NCRC. The balance is \$21,359.46.

Organization Reports

TSS – This Thursday there will be a work session at 10am at the TSS office. The TSS office is at the Pickle Research Center in Austin. Ask Joe or Marvin for more information. The TSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Saturday December 9th at the TSS office.

TSA – We had a turnout at the Hill Country State Natural Area. We will continue to have projects and they are on the calendar. The TSA meeting will be moved to January 7th at Government Canyon at the visitors center on the porch.

TCMA – We pushed our budget meeting until January. Our Board of Directors election is underway. If you have not received a ballot check your SPAM folder. Let Gregg know if you did not receive one. We have 34% reporting. We're still working on buying a property.

NSS – A webinar is occurring December 7th on "The Life of Rope" at 8:00pm central time. There may or may not be a viewing at Geary's house. The NSS is looking at taking some of their books and turning them into eBooks. The NSS has received Haggard's cave with deed in hand. They received a new cave in Tennessee. The money was raised through GoFundMe. The Bat Ball will be December 30th (29th-2nd) in Huntsville, Alabama.

Bracken – If it cools off the bats will leave. They're still there now. We're doing many work projects so if you have days off during the week, talk to Fran. This Saturday, the 2nd, there will be a workday cutting down cedar from 9am to 2pm. Or you can help herd boy scouts. Hopefully in January or February there will be some karst surveys. The new visitor's center will likely have a pavilion near the cave. They're in the process of getting it priced. They will probably start fundraising at the end of the summer.

Old Business

Request and approval for four slots for NCRC training. We are still accepting applications. It requires a week of your time in January and the grotto will pay the entire entry fee to NCRC on your behalf.

At the last meeting Arron introduced the giving policy to the grotto. Eric wants to make a motion to discuss the giving policy. Victoria made a motion to accept the giving policy. Gregg seconded it. Eric

made the motion to amend the giving policy. Eric would like to remove pages 2-7 to keep it simple and have things brought to the floor for grotto consideration. Mike seconded Eric's motion. Alan is concerned that we have to a super majority to move it forward. Alan is asking why a simple majority wouldn't suffice. Rob reported that we could majority change our By-Laws. Arron thinks a policy should be more difficult to change. Geary says we're getting off the topic and we need to discuss the two motions on the floor. Alan is saying that if Eric's proposal fails, then Alan can make a motion to change the super majority if he pleases. Eric is concerned that we've done amazing things in the past. Katherine reported that it was her understanding that this policy went through committee process and was reviewed numerous times. The grotto has considerable funding that we've not had in the past and requires more financial responsibility. She thinks it still allows us to bring things forward. She doesn't see anything wrong with putting that forth with a legal document. Rick called to question the amendment. Geary said that to call to question you need a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote. Arron asked how the proposed amendment is different from the current status quo. Eric again restated that he doesn't want the policy to be so long. Geary brought up the scout who came today. Pam reported that if he had been asked to wait he probably would have done so. Sue reported that based on the new policy he would not be able to do that. He would have to go to an officer. Sue reported that she misunderstood the policy. Tom agrees with Eric that in light of the Hydrogeo becoming its own thing, then the grotto source of funding becomes significantly less. However, if that income source is not replenished, we may not need this. Arron reported that we get money from other places besides Hydrogeo and that as a 501c3 we need to do our due diligence. Sue said that it sounded like the officer who receives the request has the option to not bring it to the grotto. Jill asked if someone could explain both sides of the issue concisely. Arron said that to not have the policy removes two small steps. Having the policy is a demonstration to outside donors that this organization has a policy to accept and funnel funds properly for where they will go. Sue stated that those things are all on the first page. The rest of the document outline how to get the information to us. Jill is asking if it makes a difference either way. Arron reported that the committee's opinion is that it will help the grotto. Alan reported that it's part of our responsibility as a 501c and is a justification of having it in place. Joe Schaertl asked if there is an example of how it could be beneficial to not have the policy, or if the policy were one page versus seven. Arron said that the only way for it to be bad would be if we wanted to quickly move through giving without much information. Joe Mitchell doesn't feel the grotto is the place for policies and procedures. He thinks the document should be in the by-laws, as it could be condensed to a paragraph and he thinks that the policy is redundant. He thinks the worst part is that it is causing a lot of friction. We don't have big donors that will look into our policies. If we want to, we can put it in our by-laws. Arron reported that it is just a reiteration of our mission statement and by-laws. This document is meant to be published if someone has a question about how to donate. Joe Mitchell said that they can always ask. A new visitor noted that we need a paper trail and if the IRS looks into our information without a paper trail, that is poor for business because the IRS will look at that. Geary reported that that is in the minutes and that is our paper trail. Jill said that there are unnecessary emotions going on and she is surprised at what she has come back to see. It's not worth the anger. Arron reported that the officers have a fiduciary responsibility to the grotto and this will help them ensure their proper status and the tax-exempt status of the grotto. Arron reported that the amended policy will be kicked back to the committee if it is voted for. Geary said that if it is not voted for it will be dead. Geary said that Eric's motion takes precedence because he wanted to amend it. Geary said that we could ask if anyone has any more questions. So, we have a vote to yes amend the policy to one page or no, not amend the policy to one page. It was a silent vote. The vote to approve the amendment to slash it from 7 to 1, passed 19 to pass, 15 against the amendment and one abstained. Geary said that the amendment passed. SO now it's a one page giving policy that is proposed. So now Victoria's motion was proposed so now it is a one-page policy and now the grotto must vote to approve the policy as amended or vote it down and have no policy. Marvin asked if it could be reviewed.

Eric read the line that was added. Victoria was upset that it eliminated all the work that the committee did over the past five months. Geary said that we now have to vote it up or down. Victoria is upset that now we have no protection against the policy. It has been voted on. Arron then decided to read the first page. They asked how we have to vote for what Arron just read and Arron clarified that we vote "YES" to approve what he just read. Marvin said that it still is a policy and that giving must be go within those guidelines. Yes means we implement page one of the policy, which he read out loud. The votes are in. 29 to accept page one as written and 5 against. Motion passes. Arron asked Randy to pull the text off page one and post it on the website.

New Business

Rob has a guest. Rob has been taking scouts caving. He hopes that scouts will give back to the community. He would like to introduce Eagle Scout Candidate Carl Duvlin. He has an Eagle Scout project at Panther Springs Park. He will be making three benches. Each bench will be \$250 each. The total budget will be \$900. The extra money will be toward feeding the volunteers. The park is in the recharge zone. The project will be over Christmas break if possible. Gregg made a motion to fund a bench. Tom seconded. Gregg amended his motion to \$251. The motion carried by a vast majority.

We have the item to renew our contract with Chester's for 2018. Rob made a motion to stay and Mike seconded and we were all in favor.

Announcements:

We received our monthly copy of the NSS News.

Sue has T-shirts for sale as well as some unworn grotto and ICS shirts.

There are some old desert boots and uniforms that are free.

Marvin has some books for sale.

Joe said that 20 sets went to Mike, 10 sets went to Rob, and there are 5 more sets that need a bag. One of the first aid kits went to Mike and one might be with MJ Gibbons. Joe has the other first aid kit.

Upcoming Trips:

December 2nd and 3rd: Government Canyon SNA trip. Contact Marvin Miller or show up at the volunteers' center at 9am. There will also be a Bracken work day. See Fran for details.

December 9th: Arron has a trip to a ranch with several caves to survey. See Arron after the meeting.

December 16th: Hill Country SNA

January 6th: Government Canyon SNA;

January 7th: TSA Winter Business Meeting at Government Canyon

January 20th and 21st: Deep and Punkin for first-timers.

January 20th: Hill Country SNA

January 20th through 27th: NCRC Cave Rescue Training at Colorado Bend State Park

February 17th: Hill Country SNA

April 21st: Hill Country SNA

Trip Reports

Fran spent four days in the panhandle surveying new caves (winter hibernaculum) and collecting invertebrate samples. Rob, Rick and Fran are heading back to Childress county to survey 10 more caves. They're going to experiment on the prevention of white nose syndrome in the panhandle.

Joe, Greg, Jill, and Mike went to check out a cave on his property. Greg found a sinkhole, and then Jill found another one. Then, they found a cave entrance. They dropped into it and Mike yelled (from the top) that there was a rattlesnake on the shelf they had passed going down. You couldn't get more than 3-4 feet away from the cave. Then they found boards under the rocks and the hole is widening.

Marvin went to Cascade Sink. The owner contacted Marvin about TXDOT's bypass around Boerne and one of the three options passes over Cascade Sink. It's a large sinkhole with three streams entering it. It's a 70ft pit down to a stream passage that floods above the top of the sink. The cave was surveyed in the 60s and the map is good but does not have profile. The last 3-400 feet of the cave was discovered and not surveyed. There are also some other leads. It all needs to be done by the first quarter of next year. They surveyed the sink hole and then down the pit. You rappel into a waste deep pool and at the south end there is a small passage. The airspace gets lower and lower and after that you pop into a walking passage for the rest of the cave. It needs to be dry for us to survey it. On the 16th they're going to pump water out. Let Marvin know. The first step will be to pump it down and monitor it for a while.