

**Cascabel Conservation Association**  
**Winter 2023 meeting**  
**January 7, 2023**

**Minutes**

**In attendance:** Chris Eastoe, Birgit De Gregorio, David Omick, Pearl Mast, Tom Talbott, Erik Revere, John Welch, Susan Tollefson, Karen McKelvey, Bob Evans, Andrew Volz, Gail Loveland, Nancy Ferguson, Tom Orum, Barbara Clark, Katie Talbott, Daniel Baker

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Introductions
- b. Reading of sojourner reflection -- 2010

*“This is a place of great courage. I think of what it took to make a vision a reality and that journey was steeped in courage. For the people that come here equal courage is required. Solitude and the depths of soul exploration go hand in hand and require great courage.*

*This is a place that is safe. You can sit in silence awash with thoughts of the past and fear or wonder for the future and find yourself crying then laughing. The coyote and the cactus do not mind your caterwauling.*

*This is a place of curiosity. A lizard will catch your eye and you wonder what his day is like. For an hour you do your best to follow. A praying mantis will perch upside on the side of a saguaro his hands folding in front. He does not move for half a day. You wonder why and wish you could be made small enough to crawl in between those spines and play along.*

*This is a place of light. Physical light in all its forms. The blazing sun baking the earth coaxing the clothes from your body. The silver of moon light scatters across the desert floor. The little flame of a candle drawing you close. The spiritual light is here too and shines and ebbs and illuminates those things too sacred for words.*

*Thank you for this wonderful place. Thank you for having the faith to follow that dream and move into action. Thank you for showing a passionate advocate how to be still. My heart is very full of this place. Thank you for that gift.”*

- c. Minutes of October 15, 2022 meeting: David Omick moved to approve minutes and Tom Talbott seconded. Minutes unanimously approved.

2. BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION

- a. Board matters
  - i. Vice president Vera Moritz is resigning from the Board for personal reasons.
  - ii. New board members are being solicited. Attendees at the meeting were asked if they would be interested in board membership. Also several other people were asked prior to the meeting, and some people are considering it. Nominations of interested parties will be made at the next board meeting.
    1. A potential position for a representative from Archeology Southwest was discussed. John Welch indicated that ASW is keen on working with the community and CCA in particular. There will be changes in

leadership coming up at ASW and having a position on the board would send a message to new leadership that ASW has a commitment to the valley.

- a. Discussed whether this position would be voting or advisory only.
  - b. Birgit raised the possibility of also having a CCA member on the ASW board.
  - c. It was agreed that we would do further research into what is allowed by our bylaws and consider amending the bylaws to allow such a position to exist.
- iii. Erik nominated John Welch (as an individual) as a potential board member. Katie seconded the nomination. Approved unanimously. John will check with his supervisor to see if this will be ok with ASW, as he attends meetings as part of his job. We will also continue to explore the idea of a designated position for an ASW representative.
  - iv. Chris (and James) will be traveling abroad for four months from March – mid July, then again for another 2 months at the end of the year. It was agreed that meetings could be moved to accommodate Chris’s schedule so he could continue to act as president. Next meeting would be middle of March. Then probably September.
  - v. Birgit noted that the Board does not have a designated secretary and she fills both the treasurer and secretary position. She does not feel she has good meeting-minute-taking skills and wondered if this was a job that we could pay to have done. Karen McKelvey offered to take the minutes at the next meeting as a volunteer and see how it goes. She thinks this could be a job she would take on as a contribution to the organization.
- b. Financial Report
    - i. Treasurer’s report from Birgit – (See attached report)
      1. Karen asked how the newsletter expense compares to what was brought in. This year the newsletter cost \$1200 and brought in about \$5000 income.
      2. Gail moves to accept treasurer’s report. Tom Talbott seconds. Unanimously accepted.
    - ii. Potential property acquisition – Katie presented a plan for CCA to make an offer to purchase a parcel owned by Patrick and Layla that is adjacent to the CCA hermitage land and the Saguaro Juniper Grazing lease. It is on the road to the straw bale legacy site and close to the new Caravan Hermitage. This is an important piece of land for the continuity of the hermitage program and to protect the qualities of the wildlands enjoyed by sojourners.
      1. Katie made an initial motion that CCA make an offer to Patrick and Layla to purchase their 40-acre upland property. David seconds. After a thoughtful discussion, the motion was approved.
      2. Other property purchases were brought up. This purchase does not preclude people making proposals to purchase other parcels. If someone is interested in a parcel and wants to pursue it, it will be considered.
      3. Specifics of the offer were discussed, including the importance of making a fair market-value offer. Pearl made a second motion that Katie and the temporary land purchasing committee are authorized to offer up to \$77,000 total to Patrick and Layla for their upland property, comprised of a maximum of \$52,000 plus closing costs contributed from

CCA, plus private donations. Erik seconded the motion. After a thoughtful discussion the motion was approved unanimously.

- a. Erik, Susan, Andrew, and Tom T. will help Katie as the temporary land purchasing committee.

3. BAICATCAN LAND COMMITTEE (Erik)

- a. Erik is making his year-end report at this meeting. Up to \$2000 is authorized for campground hosting and management, and they have spent under \$1000. Pearl and Erik do not take a stipend for campground management. Erik commented that they have a great hosting team and it is working well. He hopes this is a welcoming open space for CCA members and guests. They have planted a couple new hackberry trees and have a spot for one more native tree. It was hard to keep up with the weeds this summer. Andrew will be pruning the trees.

4. SAGUARO-JUNIPER ANNOUNCEMENTS (James Callegary as S-J representative)

- a. SJ shareholders recently voted to become a non-profit. The board is working on modifying articles of incorporation. Primary focus is on education and conservation, with inclusion of spiritual.
- b. Important to maintain ties to our past and the covenant.
- c. Lots of joyful activity—fence repair, cow moves, time on range, etc.

5. HERMITAGE PROGRAM--Susan Tollefson (*See attached report*):

- a. Sojourners—It has been a quiet fall with just two sojourners at the Corbett Center. There is a waitlist for the Caravan when it is ready
- b. Susan plans to reach out in person to organizations to use the Corbett Center for small groups. If anyone has a group that might be appropriate, email Susan.
- c. Sabbatical gatherings are being held on the second Saturday of the month. In November we had the Open House; in December we hiked to straw bale legacy site; in January we will hike up Hot Springs Canyon to look for an archeology site.
- d. Open House: Karen did a wonderful job organizing it, and it was a meaningful, well-attended day—35 people. Mary Lou Gonzales and Daniel Baker spoke about the hermitage history, some people toured the Corbett Center, and almost everyone went to the Caravan site.
- e. Caravan Progress: We are continuing to get the caravan ready and it is very close. Should be ready by first of Feb. We have been constructing the composting toilet and gathering supplies. Need to list it on the website and construct a fence to keep the SJ cows out when they are on range.
- f. Sojourning News: Continues to be well received and a way to include sojourners from afar.

6. CONSERVATION PROGRAM—Pearl Mast (*See attached report*)

- a. Vigneto lawsuit—that suit has been dropped. Earth Justice was able to make a settlement with the DOJ to help pay the legal expenses.
- b. Fence removal—great group of people. Removed a mile of fencing on property in the Confluence area owned by Talbotts, Kai, and CCA. Tom did a great job coordinating.
- c. Budget—Came out close to the budget we proposed last year. \$5300 was designated to fight SunZia. David and Pearl did not accept a stipend this year.
- d. SunZia—Nov 9 ACC approved the amendments for certificate of compatibility for Sun Zia. Peter now has legal representation and filed for re-hearing on Dec 12. ACC never responded, so it was denied. Next step being determined. Legal representation costs a lot of money and fundraising is happening.

- i. Marissa and Edith and David and Pearl are working on a Go Fund Me site. Very beneficial if the organizer is a nonprofit so that donors can get tax deductible receipts.
    - ii. MOTION: Pearl moves that CCA establish a Go Fund Me site to raise money for legal fund to oppose the transmission lines. Gail seconded.
      1. A Go Fund Me campaign needs a single organizer, but it was suggested that we ask other organizations if we can include them in order to spread the word more effectively (ASW, Center for Biological Diversity, Tucson Audubon, LSPWA, etc.)
      2. Motion passed unanimously
  - e. Reporter from Bloomberg News will be visiting on Jan 19 to talk about the transmission lines, if anyone wants to contribute to that.
  - f. Road signs are available if anyone wants them.
  - g. Go Fund Me site needs a good photo looking from over here to the Rincon Mountains. Chris and James and Tom T will help with that.
7. GARDEN/ORCHARD PROGRAM
- a. Developing hybrid system—earth friendly, plus tilling. Challenging to grow onions and garlic or plant seeds where there is a lot of grass.
  - b. Fundraising—don't want to compete with raising money for legal funds. Will wait until the spring and then decide if we want to have a fundraiser or not.
8. EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS, ANNOUNCEMENTS –
- a. Update on the University of Arizona internship (Tom T, Andrew V.)
    - i. The U of A internship to help us research future internship possibilities is complete.
    - ii. Andrew and Tom will create a packet of information. Andrew has written up internship description samples. This packet will include info about the Resilience Internships and Student Experiences (RISE) program at U of A which specifically funds internship for U of A students and has funding through June 2024. Tom and Andrew will present this info to the boards of CCA and SJ at workshops soon.
    - iii. They noted that there is a lack of practical skills being taught in modern education. Is there an opportunity for us to pass along the practical skills that exist in this valley as well as the things that make this place special?
9. NEXT MEETING: **Saturday, March 11 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.** at the Community Center, with Zoom option.