The Bylaws of the Central Ohio Grotto, an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society

I. MEMBERSHIP
   A. Membership Application Process
      1. Application for Grotto membership shall be made to the Grotto Membership Chair.
         a. The Grotto Membership Chair verifies the Conditions for Membership are met.
         b. The Executive Committee votes to approve the application.
         c. The Grotto Treasurer verifies the dues have been paid.
      2. Conditions for Membership as are follows:
         a. Cave with a Grotto member at least once.
         b. Attend one Grotto meeting (virtual or in person).
         c. Complete the membership application and any accompanying documents.
         d. Pay dues on an annual basis.
         e. The Executive Committee may by a majority vote waive any or all requirements above except the membership application and any accompanying documents.
   B. Membership Classifications
      1. Regular Members are required to be a current member of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Regular Members have the following privileges:
         a. Vote in annual elections for the Executive Committee.
         b. Hold office.
         c. Serve as Committee Chair.
         d. Access to Grotto's records except personal information and closed sessions.
         e. Receive a copy of currently issued publications of the Grotto.
      2. Associate members (not in the NSS) have all privileges of the Grotto except the right to vote in elections for the Executive Committee and hold office.
      3. Life Members have paid the Grotto lifetime membership dues and are exempt from paying Grotto annual dues. If a current NSS member, the Life member has all the privileges of a Regular member. If not a NSS member, the Life member has the privileges of an Associate member.

II. DUES, ASSESSMENT, AND GIFTS
   A. Dues for Grotto membership shall be set by the Executive Committee and confirmed by Grotto members present at a regular meeting.
   B. Grotto members who have not renewed their dues within three months of the renewal date will be inactive.
   C. Grotto members who are dropped from the NSS for nonpayment of dues will be converted to Associate membership.
   D. Grotto members who join or are called into service in the Armed Forces, and who are deployed overseas, shall continue to have full membership privileges but shall not be assessed any dues during their time in service.
   E. No special assessments may be made against Grotto members.
      1. Voluntary contributions may be solicited by the Executive Committee for specific purposes.
      2. A charge may be made for the Grotto's special publications and extra copies of regular publications.
      3. Fees may be collected for the use of the Grotto's property when approved by the Executive Committee.
   F. Gifts and bequests may be made to the Grotto in any amount for any use compatible with the purposes of the Grotto. If special designations are not made by donors, monetary gifts shall become a part of the General Fund.
   G. Annual date of membership renewal shall be set by the Executive Committee and confirmed by Grotto members present at a regular meeting.
   H. Proration of membership dues shall be set by the Executive Committee and agreed upon by Grotto members present at a regular meeting. Prorated dues apply only to first time new members and members who have been inactive for one or more years.

III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS
   A. The Executive Committee shall be composed of:
      1. The Officers of the Grotto which are:
         a. Grotto Chair
         b. Grotto Vice-Chair
         c. Grotto Secretary
         d. Grotto Treasurer
      2. The immediate Past-Chair of the Grotto.
      3. Two members elected from the Grotto membership.
      4. There must be a minimum of three individuals holding the four offices. The Chair may not hold any other office.
      5. Each individual is entitled to one vote regardless of the number of held positions.
   B. Executive Committee Position Vacancy.
      1. If an Executive Committee position becomes vacant, the Executive Committee may temporarily appoint a regular member to fill the position, except the Chair's position which is automatically filled by the Vice-Chair.
      2. The appointed position must be voted upon by the regular members present at a regular meeting.

IV. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE OFFICERS
   A. The Executive Committee primarily discusses Grotto business matters in a separate meeting, and then makes its recommendations to the membership at a regular meeting.
   B. The Officers shall carry out the duties of their respective offices so as to be in keeping with Articles III and IV of the Constitution.
      1. The Grotto Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Grotto and of the Executive Committee, shall have general supervision of its work, and shall maintain proper liaison with the officers and committees of the NSS. The office of Grotto Chair may not be held by the same person for more than two terms in succession.
      2. The Grotto Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Grotto Chair, and will succeed to the office of Grotto Chair in the event that the Grotto Chair resigns or is otherwise unable to complete their term.
      3. The Grotto Secretary shall take minutes at all meetings of the Grotto and of the Executive Committee, and shall take care of all Grotto correspondence, including the filing of annual and other necessary reports to NSS officials.
      4. The Grotto Treasurer shall maintain all Grotto financial records. Payment of bills other than normal operating expenses must be approved by a majority of the Executive Committee. The Grotto Treasurer will present the next fiscal year's budget to the Executive Committee for approval before the end of the fiscal year.
   C. Other elected officers or appointed positions may be established by the Grotto at its discretion and will not have Executive Committee voting rights.
      1. The Grotto Membership Chair is an appointed position. The Grotto Membership Chair shall:
         a. Maintain all Grotto membership files.
         b. Issue membership cards and/or renew existing membership cards.
         c. Distribute the Great Saltpetre Preserve (GSP) gate combination to Grotto members.
         d. Present applicants to the Executive Committee for a vote to approve membership.
      2. The Grotto GSP Representative(s) is an appointed position. The Grotto GSP Representative(s) shall:
         a. Hold and distribute the keys for GSP to Grotto members in good standing according to the GSP key policy.
         b. Provide meeting minutes and any other important information in a timely manner to the Executive Committee.
         c. Attend GSP Committee meetings on behalf of the Grotto and report back to Grotto members.
         d. Visit GSP at least four times per year.
      3. The Grotto Equipment Chair is an appointed position. The Grotto Equipment Chair shall:

a. Keep accurate records of all Grotto equipment.
b. Make the equipment available to Grotto members.
c. Establish rules for borrowing items.
d. Delegate the responsibility to manage equipment to other chairs.

4. The Grotto Librarian is an appointed position. The Grotto Librarian shall:
   a. Maintain and catalog the Grotto Library.
   b. Establish rules for borrowing items.
5. The Grotto Webmaster is an appointed position. The Grotto Webmaster shall:
   a. Manage the Grotto's digital assets such as domain name, website, and digital workspace.
6. The Grotto Newsletter Editor is an appointed position. The Grotto Newsletter Editor shall:
   a. Collect articles and publish a regular Squeaks newsletter.
   b. Distribute the newsletter to current Grotto members.

V. ELECTIONS

A. Officers and Executive Committee members shall be elected annually by ballot at the regular meeting in November.
B. The Grotto Chair shall appoint an Election Committee of three Grotto members no later than the regular meeting in September. This Committee shall establish the election process and present a ballot of one or more candidates for each of the elected offices, as described in Article III of these By-Laws, at the regular meeting in November.
C. Nominations are due one week prior to the election.
D. The balloting for Officers and Executive Committee members shall consist of a single prepared ballot. In unique situations, such as the need to break a tie, the Election Committee will prepare additional ballots as needed.
E. The elected Officers and Executive Committee members shall hold office for the calendar year.
F. The Executive Committee meeting or a special meeting in December will serve as a transition meeting for the outgoing and incoming Executive Committee members.

VI. MEETINGS

A. Regular Grotto meetings will be held monthly.
B. Special meetings of the Grotto may be called at such times and places as approved by the Executive Committee. The Grotto membership shall be sent notices as to the date, place, and purpose of any such meetings.
C. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Grotto Chair or a majority of the Executive Committee. There shall be a minimum of six such meetings each year or more as needed to conduct the business of the Grotto.

VII. COMMITTEES

A. Ad hoc committees may be established to execute the work of the Grotto and any regular member may request the creation of an ad hoc committee. Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the Grotto Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee. Each ad hoc Committee Chair shall appoint the personnel and promote the activities of the Committee.

VIII. PROPERTIES

A. The Grotto may acquire real and personal property for use by and on behalf of the Membership.
B. In the event of dissolution, the Grotto shall follow the dissolution clause in the Constitution.

IX. PUBLICATIONS

A. The Grotto Newsletter Editor will issue and distribute a regular publication to all Grotto members. The publication may also be distributed to prospective members and to friends of the Grotto at the Newsletter Editor's discretion.
B. Required copies of Grotto publications shall be forwarded to the NSS office.

X. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

A. Grotto members may be sanctioned with actions ranging from a warning up to, and including, expulsion for the reasons listed below. If a severe sanction is recommended (for example, removal

from the Grotto), the Chair will seek the approval of the Executive Committee before administering the sanction.
    1. Willful disregard of their own or the safety of others.
    2. Willful misuse of the Grotto's property.
    3. Conduct detrimental to the Grotto.
B. Grotto members shall be expelled from the Grotto automatically if they are expelled from the NSS.
C. Any Grotto member subject to expulsion from the Grotto may obtain a personal hearing before the Executive Committee: except that, in the case of automatic expulsion as previously stated above in this article, no hearing will be granted unless and until the individual has been reinstated as a member of the NSS.

XI. AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAWS
A. A petition to amend or revise the By-Laws will be referred to an ad hoc By-Law committee. The By-Law committee will propose the amendment to the Grotto membership. The Grotto members shall have at least one regular meeting to review the amendment before being voted upon. The amendment shall be adopted at a regular meeting by a majority vote of the Grotto members present.