

MINUTES – BOARD RETREAT

**Alamo Area Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist
9 July 2011**

Members present:

Nancy Brown, Wendy Thornton, Jamie Daily, Nancy Phillips, Barbara Harder, Nancy Thoss, Ling Yin Liu, Linda Gindler, David Reichert, Jessica Leslie, Ron Tullius, Pam Ball, Liz Robbins, Anita Anderson, Evelyn Penrod, Linda Mitchell, Ernie Laurel, Frank Ballard, Howard Homan, Susan Hunnicutt, Lissa Martinez, Dwight Henderson, John Wolcott

The meeting was called to order by Liz Robbins at 10:00

Liz discussed the bylaws as they pertain to voting procedures and rights of Board Members should there be a need for a vote due to lack of consensus during a meeting.

June minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report – Jamie Daily

Jamie will send the report via email.

Unfinished Business:

- Bingo – Bank account is closed and balance of \$150+ deposited in AAMN bank account.

Committee Break-out Session Reports:

Liz thanked Linda Mitchell for the use of her lovely home for our retreat.

John Wolcott announced that Frank Ballard has earned a 1000-hour pin.

Membership Committee – Linda Gindler and Membership Committee

Linda explained the two broad areas of discussion which include:

(1) Member records

- Background checks, which have been done for new members as part of training since Class 20, 2007, but have not been repeated at the 3 year point as required by the State, and which also have not been done for those who attended training prior to Class 20. Efforts have begun on determining how to accomplish this and a formal package will be forthcoming from the committee.
- Liability waivers -These have also been completed by members who have attended more recent classes
- Active/Inactive membership roster - for the purposes of liability insurance provided by the State.

(2) Hours reporting -

Linda reported that the day after the meeting with Sonny Arnold and Chris Scherr requesting our help in tracking volunteer service hours, the membership committee replied to their request and there has been no return response as yet. AAMN will go forward regardless with needed changes that will comply with their request. The targeted implementation is January, 2012. Roy Arnold has been replaced by Howard Homan as backup for John Wolcott.

State Advisors – Ron Tullius

Ron passed around a list published by the TX Wildlife Assn. of the top ten Texas outdoor books. The state has announced a regional meeting of the southeast chapters of the TX Master Naturalists, the first annual meeting will be held July 16 in Spring, TX, sponsored by the Heartwood chapter. Five hours of AT credit have been approved for the conference. Ron will attend and write an article for the newsletter. Ron reported on State budget cuts: Texas Agrilife expects to cut 15% but will retain all positions until January 2012. This may affect some of our programs and TPWD sponsors, as well, as the State may cut one of the two urban biologist positions. The Texas Master Naturalist program will continue.

Activities Information – Pam Ball

Pam requested that anyone who wants to be added to the list of those eligible to vote on activities approval let her know. There are currently 8 persons on that list.

Training Committee – Pam Ball

Pam discussed the document 'Training Committee Expenditures-Fall 2010' which included information on cost per trainee as well as other expenses for the semester.

Chapter Programs – Jessica Leslie

Jessica stated that the programs committee is always looking for ideas for topics and speakers and that she will submit something for the newsletter asking for ideas. She also mentioned that AAMN need to consider compensating or honoring speakers in some way. Ron mentioned several options based on how similar groups show appreciation to speakers and presenters.

Ron suggested that each committee report their budget quarterly in order to determine how much would be available for this purpose. Jamie suggested that we create a Ways and Means committee that she would lead to research ways to raise money. Ron suggested that the purpose of the Ways and Means Committee also include discussion of payment of honorarium to presenters/speakers who are not Agrilife employees. A motion was made and passed that a collection box be set up at the entrance to monthly general meetings with a suggestion of a \$3.00 donation per person and a \$5.00 donation per couple. Information regarding this will be included in the upcoming newsletter.

Community Outreach

Lissa discussed the Urban Wildlife Conference. She also discussed the shortness of notice of some activities, as well as the number of volunteer hours requested. The subject of the storeroom's purpose was discussed and specifically, the large 'obsolete' display feature stored there. Liz said she would take the display to Susan Blaker at Medina River. Lissa stated that she has a commitment to Olmos Basin Park and may be unavailable to attend some outreach activities. She will determine if someone else is available if she has a conflict before committing AAMN to an event.

Hospitality – Nancy Brown

Nancy Brown introduced Susan Hunnicutt as a new member of the Hospitality Committee. Susan will be the Tuesday night Board meeting facilitator. A social coordinator is being requested to organize the May party. The committee will speak with Lonnie regarding the role of Hospitality and that of the facilitators at the training classes. Hospitality would like to set up and be able to leave by the second speaker and have the facilitators do the remainder of what needs to be done. Pam will check on the time requirement that has been specified for facilitators.

Historian – Nancy Phillips

Nancy stated that more photos are needed. Photos will be sent to David and distributed by him.

Marketing and Technology – David Reichert

David informed members that the state MN monthly email can be received by going to the state homepage and signing up to receive it. He also passed out and discussed survey results regarding the newsletter and website. It was also suggested that the President's Message could be published quarterly. Photos and articles are welcome and will be included on the web, Facebook, and newsletter whenever space is available. Event photos are especially needed. David would like to do a better job recruiting help from the fall class for this. Liz stated that David will be part of the application review committee.

Special Committee Reports

SARA-SABG – Ron Tullius

SARA is continuing the 3rd Saturday public hikes at the Mission Reach, which currently include phase 1 and may expand to include phase 2. Project Rewind commitment has been completed and another grant is being sought for next year due to its success. AAMN help is requested for several walks starting in November. Information will be forthcoming in the newsletter and those interested in leading hikes may sign up. An appreciation luncheon is being planned for volunteers by SARA.

PHP – Wendy Thornton

Progress is being made on getting the 4th Saturday programs started. Wendy stated that the goal is to have an Urban Ecology Center which will include space for AAMN within three years. Work on the outdoor classroom is progressing. The Conservancy would like to have AAMN as members and is having a fund raiser in October. Discussion ensued over how we should support their efforts by 'adopting them'. Lissa pointed out that there are other parks that are in need of support, too.

New Business

Liz has requested that David create a survey regarding the retreat to be sent by email to attendees. Lissa stated that she will not be able to present at the State conference next year and requested that if anyone has a project that they would like to present to contact her. Information will also be placed in the newsletter.

Liz thanked the Board for their hard work.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Approved

Barbara Harder, Secretary

Liz Robbins, President