



Texas Master Naturalist Brazos Valley Chapter
Meeting Minutes for January 14, 2016
Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History

Attendance: Jim Balthrop, Laura Biddle, Melissa Brown, Amanda Chau, Angela Dedrickson, Donell Frank, Roger Hoestenbach, Denise Kieso, Cheryl Lewis, Bruce Neville, Amanda Schwede, Steve Simcik, Dusty Tittle, Sue Welfel, Deb Wilson.

The meeting was brought to order by Bruce Neville at 5:36 PM.

Bruce Neville-December meeting minutes. Correct Donell Frank to one "N" in each name. Laura moved to approve. Amanda Chau seconded. Passed unanimously

Bruce introduced Dusty Tittle, our county extension agent. Annual state meeting and advisor awards. Met with him. Invited him to our meeting.

No questions on committee reports. No specific format for reports needed.

Bruce said we have a full slate of committee chairs/directors. And that it's not up to just the committee chairs to staff events. We need members to sign-up for committees and staffing events. He thanked the board for their willingness to participate and volunteer.

He would like to re-establish contact with our advisors. He would like to do a brainstorming retreat, probably in March, for the whole active membership. The brainstorming weekend, four-hour meeting will be separate from our monthly meeting in March. Looking for a location to have it. 170 on our roster, 130 of which have not been "marked out" as having transferred or moved out of Brazos County, and 42 active (reported at least one volunteer hour in the last year and paid their dues). Six from this year's class (2015) will also be invited. Amanda Chau said we could budget to have it catered. Bruce's ideas include, but he would like membership to also suggest ideas, - -

1) Annexing surrounding county chapters that are inactive (He passed around a map.), as we already have members from some of these counties attending. The Conroe Chapter has annexed Grimes County. Bruce has a question in to Michelle Haggerty about how to go about annexing another county. Dusty didn't think there was a requirement to be in the chapter of which you reside. And that the bylaws indicate just that someone cannot be a member of two chapters.

2) Received a lot of requests for youth volunteering/junior master naturalists. Rio Audobon Society indicated an interest at yesterday's meeting. But Audobon doesnot require background checks. The new system has the State paying for our background checks and keeping up with them. - -

February's BVTMN meeting will cover VMS training. March Saturdays are 5, 12, 19, 26. March 13 and 19 are spring break weekends. March 5th 10 AM – 2:30 PM tentative date scheduled. Melissa suggested a “getting to know your group” time. Box lunches via Schlotzsky's or Jason's Deli. Dusty indicated the online ordering via Jason's Deli, where someone can be the administrator to limit cost, menu items/options, and send out email with link to ordering. Individually packed with names; Jason's Deli will set up. Will discuss individual cost limit at the budget meeting.

Point of meeting is to get ideas, retention issue, too social/not dirty/environmental/hands-on, people want field trips, workshops, education, getting more members at the state annual meeting, finding a focus/project/objective from within our mission, follow-through, meeting topics followed up with/mirrored with field trips from membership. Bruce will blog and make lots of requests to get membership to attend.

Melissa Brown asked about the Jay Pritchard Memorial behind the museum. Bruce said we still need information on signage and that he will email Deborah Cowman.

Additional park clean-ups. We already have two annual commitments to Brison and Gabbard. We may also eventually get the park trail behind the museum.

Amanda Chau requested a special meeting to discuss the 2016 budget the end of January or beginning of February. She will send out an email later this week with the meeting request. Dusty indicated there is a line item in their budget to cover some meeting expenses. Goes through Emily Besser in his office in time to get a PO set up.

Restoring prairie to the Rock Prairie landfill brought up.

The meeting was concluded by Bruce Neville at 6:30 PM.