

## **GBAC BOARD MAY MEETING MINUTES**

**May 31, 2022**

Attendees in person and via Zoom: Pam House, Vivian Allen, Gene Fisseler, Ellen Gerloff, Lisa Hardcastle, Cynthia Hughes, Meade LeBlanc, Cindy Liening, Janet Mason, Jo Monday, Walter Meyer, Mohammad Nasrullah, Mike Petitt, Patty Trimmingham, and Julie Massey, chapter sponsor. Also present were James Malzahn, Maureen Nolan-Wilde and Chuck Snyder

A quorum was established with almost 100% of voting members present.

The meeting was called to order by President Pam House at 1:00 p.m. Pam welcomed three class representatives from the 2022 Training Class, Lisa Hardcastle and Vivian Allen, and alternate James Malzahn. She also took a few minutes to thank departing class reps, Leanne Criswell and Walter Meyer, for their past two years of service. Next, Pam thanked Janet Mason for her tireless efforts as board member and class trainer, and she conveyed the Board's appreciation for all Janet has done for the Chapter. Janet acknowledged the kind words and noted that she was able to accomplish so much because of the support and invaluable assistance she had received from everyone else in the room. Janet welcomed the new class reps and assured them that they would enjoy their Board terms. Pam welcomed Gene Fisseler as the new Class Training Coordinator and offered him the full support of the Board.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The minutes of the May meeting that had been emailed previously to the Board were offered for discussion. A motion was made by Cindy and seconded by Janet to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Pam noted that with hurricane season approaching, the chapter's Emergency Preparedness Plan would be circulated to new members of the Board. Briefly, she explained that following potentially catastrophic weather events, Board Members canvas everyone in the chapter to determine how they have fared and whether assistance is needed from volunteer teams.

### **NEW BUSINESS AND PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Pam addressed new business and mentioned that Bobette Brasfield had raised the question of whether the Chapter should formulate a security policy for chapter meetings and for when members visit schools or otherwise work with children. Ellen reminded the Board that safety statements are made at the beginning of each Chapter meeting regarding emergency evacuation instructions. Discussion ensued, and the consensus was that Chapter members could inquire about contingency plans beforehand or when they visit schools or other organizations. Also, Pam was asked to raise the issue at state level as to whether state-wide policies should be adopted for active shooter and other security issues.

Pam addressed the TMN Annual Meeting, scheduled at the Omni Hotel in Houston for Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. She mentioned that registration would open on Monday, August 1<sup>st</sup>. Pam offered the GBAC Chapter for Meet & Greet duties during the conference. She also reminded the Board that decisions needed to be made for the Video Competition and the Project Fair Competition. Several members mentioned the Bayside Park project in Seabrook as a worthy contender for Chapter Project, and plans were made to follow up with Stennie Meadours and Sandy Parker for their input.

Pam mentioned that Kjell Lindgren, Nasa astronaut and Texas Master Naturalist member of the Gulf Coast Chapter, would participate in a Q & A from space with TMN on Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, Pam reported on an Advisory Council consisting of representatives from Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, 4H Clubs, etc. at the Agri-Life Extension offices. Plans were being made to hold a Fall Festival, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, to celebrate the organizations and their projects. Pam will be looking for suggestions of GBAC projects and activities that could be highlighted and presented at the festival.

#### **BOARD REPORTS:**

Treasurer (Cindy Liening)

Cindy provided the financial report. A motion was made by Jo and seconded by Patty to accept the April financial report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Membership (Patty Trimmingham)

Patty reported that May VS hours of 6,211, were slightly higher due to the inclusion of some late April hours. Eight members of the new class had certified and one had already recertified. Patty was pleased to report a new transfer from the Coastal Prairie Chapter. Finally, Patty presented the 4,000-hour pin to Cindy Liening, amidst congratulatory remarks from all present.

Volunteer Service (Jo Monday)

Jo reported that she is hearing from multiple organizations who are seeking volunteer assistance, and she would be sharing those opportunities in the near future. She thanked Tracy Walpole for redesigning the form to be submitted for new projects.

Advanced Training (Ellen Gerloff and Mike Petitt)

Ellen and Mike mentioned the upcoming Advance Training opportunity: "Jellies, Man O' Wars and Dragons: Some Toxic Marine Life at Our Beaches" by Dr. Cindy Howard on Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> from 2-3:00 pm via Zoom.

Ellen reported that the Oyster presentation was highly successful. Ellen and Mike are working on new ATs for August and September.

### New Training Class (Janet Mason and Gene Fisseler)

Janet reported that the final training class had been a field trip to Johnson Space Center to see the Attwater's Prairie Chickens. A volunteer luncheon had been held on May 26<sup>th</sup> for all who had been involved with the 2022 class. Janet said that 69 volunteers had helped with some aspect of the training. Gene, Patty and Janet would be meeting with the class reps to outline their duties going forward and address any concerns or questions they might have.

As for the fall training class, Gene said plans were ramping up as they figure out the logistics of ten evening classes and three or four Saturday field trips between August and October. The organizational committee currently consists of Gene, Julie, and Cindy Howard. Gene has called eight other chapters that have conducted evening classes, and he is actively gathering advice on successful practices. He has accumulated a list of up to 28 people who may be interested in taking the training. The first class will be held the third or fourth Thursday evening in August.

### Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Mohammad Nasrullah)

Mohammad reported that he continues to plan for appropriate diversity presentations. As part of the long-term goals of the chapter, his committee is working on a formal EDI statement, which he hoped to present to the Board for discussion at its next meeting. Pam mentioned that she will be renaming Mohammad's directorship the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Director. JEDI is used by other organizations, including Texas Agri-Life.

### Communications (Meade LeBlanc)

Meade thanked Maureen and Chuck for their support and hard work with Chapter communications. She is always looking for volunteers who are interested in working with social media, photography, etc.

### Chapter Sponsor (Julie Massey)

Julie discussed the logistics of the December Chapter meeting, and let the Board know that she was in the process of reserving a location. Julie also mentioned her summer interns and her goal to make the summer productive for them as well as the groups under Julie's sponsorship.

Finally, Julie mentioned her concerns that her colleagues' travel expenses to professional conferences had been drastically reduced by Galveston County for 2022, and she was looking for partial funding from a variety of organizations so that deserving employees from her office could participate in some beneficial, career-building meetings over the summer. Discussion ensued, and upon Motion duly made by Gene and seconded by Patty, the Board agreed unanimously to make as much as \$1,000 available for professional fees and travel expenses for employees at the Carbide Park Extension Office over the 2022 summer.

**FINAL THOUGHTS:**

Pam mentioned that the Treasures of the Bay teacher training that had been planned tentatively for late June had been postponed, possibly until 2023.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Hughes