

## GBAC BOARD DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

November 29, 2022

Attendees via Zoom: Pam House, Vivian Allen, Laura Clark, Mary Dobberstine, Gene Fisseler, Ellen Gerloff, Lisa Hardcastle, Cynthia Hughes, Meade LeBlanc, Cindy Lienen, Jo Monday, Mohammad Nasrullah, Mike Petitt, Abhi Prasad, Kathy Tamer, Patty Trimmingham, Tracy Walpole and Julie Massey, Advisor

A quorum was established with 93% of voting members present.

The meeting was called to order by President Pam House at 6:00 p.m. Pam welcomed the three representatives of the Fall 2022 class to the meeting, Laura Clark, Mary Dobberstine, and Abhi Prasad.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The minutes of the November meeting that had been emailed previously to the Board were offered for discussion. Vivian requested that her name be removed as being present at the November meeting. A motion was made by Vivian and seconded by Gene to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Pam reminded the Board that Texas Master Naturalists at State level had adopted new organizational documents for 2023, including the CMOP, the Chapter Management and Operating Protocols, and the By-Laws. These represent the basic operating documents for all TMN chapters, and although our chapter is not allowed to alter the documents, we are asked to adopt them by vote of the chapter with at least 30 days' notice to the membership. Pam had shared the proposed documents with the Board previously, and she took a few minutes to discuss the changes. Fundamentally, the revisions would allow the Chapter to continue operating *status quo* with very few exceptions. For example, before the Chapter would enter into a contract in the future, review and approval would be required at the State level. Pam continued with a clarification of voting powers: Although the Board welcomes six Class Reps from Spring 2022 and Fall 2022, all Class Reps technically share a single Board vote. Likewise, Committee Co-Chairmen attending the same Board meeting technically share a single Board vote.

Discussion ensued, after which Pam called for a motion to present the documents to the membership for approval at the February, 2023 meeting. The motion was made by Gene, seconded by Cindy Lienen, and passed unanimously. Pam also mentioned that she would be considering an *ad hoc* committee to comb through the Chapter Operating Handbook to make sure that it will be aligned with the new State's new requirements.

Next, Pam discussed planning for the December chapter meeting scheduled for Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. She was looking forward to excellent attendance with more than 110 members and guests responding so far. Pam outlined the sequence of events for the evening and noted that she would conduct a brief business meeting in order to obtain approval for the 2023 slate of officers. Further, she shared that Joanna Mendoza would be leaving her position as Office Manager and Administrative Assistant-Coastal & Marine Resources at Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Office. Pam asked about the possibility of making Joanna an honorary member of the chapter in gratitude of her long-standing support and invaluable assistance to the chapter. Enthusiastic discussion ensued with a plan to present such a resolution to the chapter. Upon motion made by Jo Monday and seconded by Gene, the resolution to make Joanna Mendoza an honorary member of the Galveston Bay Area Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists was unanimously approved.

## **BOARD REPORTS:**

### **President (Pam House)**

Pam discussed a Day Away event for the Board, including past and present members. The Day Away would provide several uninterrupted hours for long-range planning in a comfortable atmosphere. Discussion ensued, and Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 am to 3 pm was set. A suitable location would be determined soon. Pam also reminded the Board that she needed all end-of-year committee reports as soon as possible. Finally, Pam reported that on December 13, the next TMN Tuesday would focus on building board leadership, and that the GBAC Board would receive an invitation to attend.

### **Treasurer (Cindy Liening)**

Cindy provided the financial report. After discussion, a motion was made by Patty and seconded by Ellen to accept the November financial report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Next, Cindy reported that she had revised the proposed 2023 budget as requested at the previous meeting. Discussion ensued, and Pam mentioned that four chapter members had been asked to represent the chapter at the Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Conference in Orange Beach, Alabama from February 27<sup>th</sup> through March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Discussion ensued, and the consensus of the Board was to cover the expenses of the registration fees, the hotel rooms, meals and fuel costs. The Board expressed confidence that expenses submitted for reimbursement would be reasonable and worthwhile. Julie Massey suggested that the chapter would appreciate receiving a report from the participants following the conference. Treasurer Cindy requested a motion to approve the 2023 budget, and Mike Petitt provided the motion, Gene provided the second, and the budget was unanimously approved.

### **Membership (Patty Trimmingham)**

Members reported 3,203.5 Volunteer Service hours, 307.75 hours of AT, and 1,566 impacts in November. Patty was pleased to report that 22 out of 26 members of the Spring class had certified and that 16 had recertified. As for the Fall class, all had completed the training, and 7 of 30 had already certified. Patty thanked Dorothy Hogg and Tracy Walpole for their dedicated work on VMS reporting.

### **Advanced Training (Ellen Gerloff and Mike Petitt)**

Ellen thanked Mike Petitt for agreeing to lead the Advanced Training committee in 2023 and noted that she would continue to be involved and offer assistance as needed. She thanked the chapter and the Board for the opportunity to work with Advanced Training over the years. Ellen reported that GBAC had provided 20 AT presentations in 2022 for a total of 24.25 hours. There had been 5 Chapter meeting presentations, 4 Community AT presentations and 11 presentations by the AT Committee.

Upcoming for 2023: **Ecological Function of Small Living Shorelines in Galveston Bay** would be presented by Cindy Howard and Jim Dobberstine and would be conducted on Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 6:00 pm via Zoom for 1.25 hours AT.

Community AT would be offered on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 6:00 pm via Zoom. Details to be announced.

And on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 6:00 pm via Zoom for 1.5 hours AT, **Diurnal Raptors of the Galveston Bay Area** would be presented by Lynn and John Wright

### **Fall Class Training (Gene Fisseler)**

Gene reported that he had enjoyed leading the Fall training class, and that he was willing to lead again in 2023. He commented that a Training Leader for Spring, 2023 had not yet been identified, although he had asked one member, who was considering it. Gene had also prepared a slide show for Thursday evening's meeting.

### **Communications**

Pam commented that since Meade would be stepping into the Treasury position, Communications would need a new leader. Pam asked the Board to be thinking about Meade's replacement.

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

Mohammad reported that he was working on the January Community AT logistics and making plans for continued outreach to underserved communities in 2023.

### **Class Reps Fall Class**

Laura and Mary commented that they would appreciate suggestions from others about strategies to keep their class motivated and active. Discussion ensued, and the consensus seemed to be personal involvement and personalized invitations. Gene recommended forwarding chapter-wide calls for volunteers with personalized messages such as "I'm going, and I would love to see you there."

**Chapter Advisor (Julie Massey)**

Julie mentioned that she was looking forward to the Chapter meeting on Thursday evening and to the Treasures of the Bay awards. Julie would be searching for Joanna's replacement, and that it would take at least two months to finalize a new hire for the position. Julie's priority was to find the right and best person for the job, and she was committed to do so.

Finally, Pam reminded the group that the Board would need to pay their chapter dues and renew their "Conflict of Interest" statements for 2023. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Hughes