

GBAC BOARD JUNE 2023 MEETING
June 27, 2023

Attendees via Zoom: Pam House, Gene Fisseler, Meade LeBlanc, Lisa Hardcastle, Mary Dobberstine, Patty Trimmingham, Jo Monday, Mike Petitt, Mohammad Nasrullah, Laura Clark, Abhi Prasad, Lynn Porfirio, Corlis Simmons and Julie Massey, Chapter Advisor. Also present were Tracy Walpole and Vivian Allen.

This meeting was called to order by President Pam House at 6:00 pm. Pam apologized to new Class Representatives for not meeting to explain how the Board works but assured that she will schedule a meeting soon.

Old Business:

The minutes of the May 30, 2023 Board meeting that had been previously emailed to the Board were offered for discussion. A motion was made by Gene and seconded by Mike to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Mary updated the Board on chapter email addresses. The reason for creating these email addresses is to provide continuity as roles change and provide an alternative to using personal email addresses. She has created email addresses for officers and some directors, e.g., gbactmnpresident@gmail.com. She also shared the password and addressed questions. It was decided that at this time, use of the email addresses would be optional for the rest of this year and the Board will discuss whether to formally adopt the use at the beginning of 2024. Patty requested that anyone who is using the chapter email addresses let her know so that links on the website can be updated.

New Business:

Mary shared with the Board information regarding the Annual Meeting photo contest. Photos will be accepted through September 15, 2023. In addition, she will be sending information out to chapter members, securing judges and coordinating the process. She has asked a local photographer who is not a chapter member to be a judge. Gene asked if the photo contest window was September to September or January to September. He expressed concern that if it is January to September, photos taken later in the calendar year would not be eligible for any yearly contest. Pam said she would pass on the concern. Mary also briefly discussed other contests such as brochure, scrapbook, newsletter, etc. The discussion then centered on the Chapter Project contest. Because the people involved in the Bayside Regional Park Project were unable to make a presentation for the 2022 Annual Meeting, it will likely be our project for this year's meeting.

Lisa discussed with the Board the after-school Birding Club project Eowyn Johnson started at Clear Lake City Elementary School this year. It will be expanding to two additional elementary schools for the coming school year and Lisa wanted to make sure that it had been approved by whatever means necessary. Jo stated that she had

approved the project. Several members expressed enthusiasm for the project and were happy to know that it was expanding to additional schools.

Pam brought to the Board a request from Linda Zeller, to purchase hats for the photography team to wear when they are at chapter functions so that participants would know that the photographers are taking photographs for chapter use. She is requesting \$250.00 to make the purchase. Pam likened the expense to Hawk Watch t-shirts. It was suggested that we allot up to \$300.00 for the purchase. Mike made a motion to approve the expenditure and Lisa seconded it. Because Pam and Gene are both part of the photography team, they abstained from the vote. The motion passed unanimously. It was suggested that Linda try to use a vendor who has supported the chapter in the past.

Pam also brought to the Board a request that Diane Humes wanted to make but was unable to due to her absence today. Diane wanted to ask whether the Board would be interested in providing a contribution toward the Armand Bayou Nature Center's road repair project. A discussion ensued about what kind of support we should be providing to other organizations. The general consensus was that our purpose is to provide service to organizations and that we should not provide financially for projects such as this.

Laura asked the Board to discuss the possibility of securing a bus to provide transportation to the Annual Meeting in McAllen. Julie shared that in the past a bus was used to attend some AT activities, but individual members shared the cost of the bus. Pam suggested that someone take the lead and determine cost and interest. Julie suggested starting with an email to the chapter. Pam agreed to send an email soon. Meade suggested that they should also determine if anyone wants to carpool to the Annual Meeting.

Board Reports:

President (Pam House)

Pam reported about a meeting with state Chapter Presidents she attended earlier in the day. Much of the meeting was about the upcoming Annual Meeting. In addition, July's TMN Tuesday's topic will be titled *NASA, Globe, Eclipse, Oh My!* It will be held via Zoom on July 11.

Vice President (Gene Fisseler)

Gene stated that the presenter has not cancelled for the August chapter meeting. He is working on our final meeting and hoping to have a jellyfish researcher from Texas A&M.

Secretary (Lisa Hardcastle)

Lisa did not have anything to discuss.

Treasurer (Meade LeBlanc)

Meade provided the financial report detailing activity to date. There is income from Mel's store and a donation for a scholarship. Expenses included supplies as well as a contract coordinator for Camp Wild and a donation to Houston Audubon for the training class. Patty made a motion to accept the financial report, and Mary seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Membership (Patty Trimmingham)

Next, Patty discussed the membership report that was shared with the Board electronically. Davis Clay has reached 4,000 hours and Cindy Liening has reached 5,000 hours. Additionally, 15/30 members from the fall training class have certified and 2/22 from the spring training class have certified. She shared that impacts from May to June doubled, likely from Camp Wild. She was unable to provide a report detailing visits to the chapter website. Tracy shared that the request must come from the "Word Press Owner" which she believes is someone at the AgriLife Extension Office. Pam thanked Tracy for maintaining the website. Patty also suspects service hours will drop during the heat of summer. Patty reported that Tracy bought the iPad for the chapter and they both have received positive feedback regarding using it for signing in at chapter meetings.

Volunteer Service (Jo Monday)

Jo shared that the new class is asking a lot of questions about moving service projects forward.

Advanced Training (Mike Petitt)

Mike sent an AT report to the Board prior to the meeting. This information includes:

Completed programs: GBAC sponsored AT – Texas Native Cats, 1.25 hours, 51 attendees; Chapter Meeting Presentation - Oyster Mariculture Along the Texas Coast with Mario Marquez, 1 hour, 41 remote attendees, 68 in-person; Book Club – *Issac's Storm*, 1.5 hours, 15 attendees. Future programs – July 22, 2023, 10:00 AM, Tour of League City Weather Station, 1 hour; August 9, 2023, 6:00 PM, 1 hour – Hummingbirds by Martin Hagne (GBCO), via Zoom; September 25, 2023, 2:00 PM, 1.25 hour – Tracking Sea Turtles of the Gulf of Mexico, Chris Marshall via Zoom. Chapter meeting presentation, August 3, 2023, 7:00 PM, 1 hour – A Flight Plan: Conservation Needs Through the Eyes of Our Feather Friends, Lisa Gonzalez.

Mike did mention that if anything is going on in the Caribbean, weatherwise, it is likely that the Weather Station visit will be cancelled.

New Class

Diane was not in attendance, so Pam brought up discussion of future training classes. The chapter had three classes in a row, which may be too much. Pam suggested having a spring class every year and alternating whether it would be a day class or evening

class each year. Gene stated that he and Julie were discussing the matter earlier today. He suggested gathering more data and working with Diane, putting a proposal together to bring to the Board.

Justice, Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (Mohammed Nassrullah)

The Juneteenth event was very successful with approximately 2,000 visitors, nine expressed interest in becoming Master Naturalists. There were nine volunteers, eight from our chapter. Visitors were very excited about the Wing-Span exhibit, wanting to know what bird they would be. There were so many participants that a volunteer needed to run out and get more name badges. Hispanic Heritage month is coming up and he plans to have the chapter participate in an event. He is planning on creating a “kit” for these events. He is also working with non-profits to find speakers for future events.

Communication (Mary Dobberstine)

Mary tied into Mohammed’s “kit” idea to share that she is working with Sara Snell and Karen Hazen to inventory supplies, materials and kits that the chapter has from previous outreach activities. There are a lot of great materials that can be used at future events. She and Lisa met with Sara last week to go over the materials and content for the “Gems of the Gulf” presentation which Lisa has agreed to give if there is interest from the community. Mary is also hoping to have a booth at a League City event on sustainability in September.

Lisa shared that John Orsag, with League City, approached her about a new League City Nature website recently created by the city. He inquired about having Master Naturalists contributing a blog for the site. Mary and Lisa discussed it and agreed to start with a birding post written by Lisa for the first blog post. They will also brainstorm other topics and ask for other volunteers to write future blog posts.

Jo suggested that we think about working with the city next year on the summer day camp program they have. Julie mentioned that one of the lead people at Parks and Recreation Department is a former Master Naturalist. Julie also suggested that the League City Nature blog could be connected with our Facebook page.

Class Reps Fall 2023 (Abhi Prasad, Laura Clark)

Neither Abhi nor Laura had anything to add, since Patty’s report covered everything.

Class Reps Spring 2023 (Corlis Simmons, Lynn Porfirio, Jesse)

Corlis and Lynn have seen the membership report but have not reached out to classmates yet. Jesse was unable to attend tonight's meeting. One email was sent to the class about AT. They look forward to meeting with Pam to learn more about their role.

Sponsor (Julie Massey)

Julie updated the Board on open positions at the extension office. One has been filled and hopefully Joanna's former position will be filled soon. She mentioned that the binoculars in the storage room were bought by AgriLife for use by the Texas Master Naturalist program. Julie was excited to share that a group funded by a NOAA grant is working on a monofilament recovery project and has seen the work done by our chapter. They are going to use the information for a "how you do it" model for the whole state, and possibly Gulf-wide because it's such a good model.

Julie reported that the interns, Marisa Gonzalez and Skyler Nix, are doing a great job and love hanging out with us and the projects we have. Marisa is a Texas A&M at Galveston student majoring in Marine Biology. Skyler attends Texas A&M – College Station and is working on a Purple Martin monitoring project. Julie expressed gratitude for the Master Naturalists working with Marisa, Skyler and Kiara so well.

Julie also shared that the Master Gardeners have invited the Master Naturalists to participate in their August 8 meeting. She thinks this is a great opportunity and is encouraging the Board to participate, as well as other members. Barry Ward with the Trees for Houston organization will be presenting at the meeting. She will send out additional information.

Finally, she mentioned that the League City Garden Club is having a Garden Tour on September 30 and Dick Benoit Prairie Preserve is one of the stops on the tour. She would like the chapter to have a table or exhibit at it, perhaps a seed making station. Lisa mentioned that she received an email from John Orsag saying he needs to get approval for the event, as there is a concern regarding parking at the prairie.

Other Business

Pam stated that she was hoping to have the next Board meeting in person, but that it is only a few days before the Chapter meeting and then we will be meeting in person with the Master Gardeners a few days later. Several people mentioned they will be out of town and will miss the next Board meeting. There was also concern about driving to Carbide Park for a 6:00 meeting due to traffic. Pam decided we would have the July meeting on July 25 at 6:00 PM via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hardcastle