

GBAC BOARD MEETING
November 7, 2023

Attendees via Zoom: Pam House, Gene Fisseler, Meade LeBlanc, Lisa Hardcastle, Jo Monday, Mike Petitt, Diane Humes, Mary Dobberstine, Patty Trimmingham, Abhi Prasad, Laura Clark, Lynn Porfirio, and Julie Massey, Chapter Advisor. Voting members absent were Mohammed Nassrullah and Corlis Simmons. Also present were Chuck Snyder, Tracy Walpole, Vivian Allen, Sandy Parker and Stennie Meadours.

This meeting was called to order by Pam House at 6:00 pm.

Old Business:

The minutes of the September 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 gave an update on Google Workspace and Chapter email addresses. Google has certified that our Chapter qualifies as a non-profit organization and has approved the Chapter domain (www.gbactmn.org). With this account we will receive free email addresses, which she will set up for the Board and other business needs. These addresses will enable smooth transitions as roles change within the Board. The email addresses will also assist in social media accounts as well as collaboration within Chapter groups such as the Photo Team.

Next, Pam informed the Board that the Chapter received a \$1,000.00 donation designated for use by the Bayside Park Project. Sandy Parker then discussed a request to use part of the funds to purchase a gas-powered lawn mower to mow pathways within the Native Prairie Area of the park. The mower would be stored within a locked storage shed provided by the County. Concerns regarding liability associated with the Chapter owning equipment were discussed. A motion to table a decision until Julie discusses the issue with the State Program Coordinator and Sandy talks to the County was made by Lisa and seconded by Gene. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Next, Meade shared the 2024 proposed budget with the Board. She used current information from the 2023 budget to base the proposed budget on. Some discussion was held on possible decreases in corporate contributions and slight changes from the previous budget included in the proposed budget. She asked Board members to think about special projects that need to be incorporated into the proposed budget prior to final approval.

Tracy then shared a proposal for new Chapter badges. She stated that she has received informal feedback from members desiring changes to the current badge. Pam suggested that Tracy form a committee to draft details such as how to phase in the new badges, who pays for them, etc. and then report back to the Board. Patty made a motion for Tracy to head the ad hoc committee, Laura seconded it and the motion passed unanimously.

Pam then thanked Abhi and Laura for completing their terms as Class Representatives. Laura said that it was fun and eye opening to learn how the Chapter operates. Both expressed appreciation for the opportunity to be Class Representatives.

Pam reported to the Board that she had selected a Nominating Committee, with Cindy Lienen serving as chair and Lynn Wright and Chris Anastas as members. Gene made a motion to approve the members of the committee and Mike seconded the motion. The motion was passed. The committee has nominated the following officers: Gene Fisseler – President, Mary Dobberstine – Vice President, Lisa Hardcastle – Secretary and Meade LeBlanc – Treasurer.

The December meeting was discussed next. It was suggested that the new class select centerpieces from the many ones in storage from previous classes. Pam also announced that Julie is retiring at the end of the year, and she will be honored at the meeting. Sara Snell will also be remembered at the meeting. Diane suggested in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Texas State Parks that a map of the parks be displayed and members can place a pin in parks they have visited.

Board Reports:

President (Pam House)

Pam shared that the Annual Meeting was great, and more information will be shared in The Midden. She also announced that Sharon Tirpak will be taking on the Volunteer Services directorship and Lisa Hardcastle will be the Outreach/Education Committee chair.

Vice President (Gene Fisseler)

Nothing to report.

Secretary (Lisa Hardcastle)

Nothing to report.

Treasurer (Meade LeBlanc)

Meade sent the monthly financial report to Board members prior to the meeting for review. A motion was made by Patty and seconded by Lisa to accept the October financial report. The motion passed unanimously.

Membership (Patty Trimmingham)

A membership report was sent to the Board prior to the meeting. Patty shared that 28 of the 30 Fall 2022 class members have certified. So far, 11 of the 22 Spring 2023 class members have certified. Letitia Knipe has reached 2,500 hours of volunteer service and Chuck Snyder has reached 4,000 hours. Patty also shared that the state corrected her on how “active member” is defined. Previously, she understood that once a person completes coursework, that person is an active member. However, she has been informed that status is obtained when the person becomes certified.

Volunteer Service (Jo Monday)

Jo reported that she received a request from two members to have Board work for the Friends of Anahuac Refuge Board to count as volunteer service hours. A motion was made by Jo to approve the request, seconded by Gene, and the motion passed unanimously.

Advanced Training (Mike Pettit)

Mike shared an Advanced Training Report with Board members prior to the meeting. October Advanced Training opportunities were well attended and successful. Upcoming presentations include *Ecological Succession: From Grasslands to Forests* by Cindy Howard on November 14 at 6:00 pm via Zoom; *We Belong: A Conversation on Equity in the Outdoors* by Thurman Hogan III on December 5 at 6:00 pm via Zoom; and Heritage Book Study Club discussion of *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard on December 4 at 1:00 pm via Zoom.

New Class (Diane Humes)

We will be hosting an evening class in Spring 2024. There are approximately 43 people interested in the class at this point. A “Meet and Greet” will be scheduled soon.

Justice, Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (Mohammed Nassrullah)

Mohammed was unable to attend the meeting but shared a report with Board members prior to the meeting. The JEDI committee met on October 4 and November 1. The two October events, Nia Cultural Center *Juneteenth Legacy Projects* Tour and REI *Outdoors for All* events were very successful. The December event will be *We Belong: A Conversation on Equity in the Outdoors* by Thurman Hogan III on December 5 at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

Communication (Mary Dobberstine)

Mary, with the assistance of Mohammed, has lined up a speaker for the February Chapter meeting whose topic will be *Outreach: Fairs, Festivals and Farmer Markets*. The speaker presented at the Annual Meeting and Mary is excited to have her speak to our Chapter.

Class Reps Fall 2022 (Abhi Prasad and Laura Clark)

Abhi is happy that 28 of the 30 members of the class certified. An email was sent to the class members congratulating them on the accomplishment. He shared that it was a pleasure working with Laura. She gave kudos to the Chapter for offering a night class and appreciated all of the support the class received.

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

Lynn reported that they have reached out to about six class members and received responses from about three of them. The Class Representatives continue to reach out and offer support to their classmates.

Sponsor (Julie Massey)

Treasures of the Bay nominations have been coming in. Julie will send a reminder out soon. Donations for the Sara Snell Scholarship have also been coming in. She is working on finding someone to take on the Dolphin Challenge event.

Other Business

Pam reported that Tracy will be the new Membership Director and Patty will remain on the committee. The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 28 at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hardcastle