

GBAC BOARD JULY MEETING
Via Zoom
July 30, 2024

Attendees via Zoom: Gene Fisseler, Meade LeBlanc, Lisa Hardcastle, Pam House, Mike Petitt, Tracy Walpole, Denise Correll, Sydney Jeffcoat, Terri Bell and Jesse Monzingo. Also present were Laura Clark and Lynn Porfirio. Mary Dobberstine, Sharon Tirpak, Diane Humes, Mohammed Nasrullah, Corlis Simmons and Brandi Keller were absent.

Gene Fisseler, President, notified members of the meeting date and agenda via email on July 23, 2024.

Gene called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Lisa reported the quorum requirement was established with 10 of 16 Board members present. All meeting participants are able to communicate with each other via Zoom.

Gene reviewed the proposed agenda with the attendees and no changes were made.

Review and approval of minutes:

The minutes of the June Board meeting that had been previously emailed to the Board were offered for discussion. **A motion was made by Mike and seconded by Tracy to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.**

Officer Reports:

- **President (Gene Fisseler)**

Gene announced that the TMN Annual Meeting will be held from October 23 – 27, 2024, with registration opening this Thursday, August 1 at noon. He has a list of 13 – 15 members he believes will be attending. Gene reported that the state has provided a code to give one member \$100 off the registration fee. He also reminded the Board that last year the Chapter gave three \$100 scholarships to members attending the Annual Meeting. Gene shared that he would like the Board to consider providing scholarships for the Annual Meeting to Chapter members who have gone above and beyond in service to the Chapter. After discussing his recommendation, **Pam made a motion to provide \$500 for the President to award, as he sees fit, to one or more deserving individuals to be used towards Annual Meeting expenses. Mike seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.** Additionally, Gene will communicate with attendees who may want to carpool or share a hotel room at the Annual Meeting.

- **Secretary (Lisa Hardcastle)**

The password project is complete, and the information is stored in a spreadsheet on the Google Nonprofit drive.

- **Treasurer (Meade LeBlanc)**

Meade shared the financial report with Board members prior to the meeting. The only major expense in July was the \$1000 sponsorship to the State Annual Meeting. **Pam made a motion to accept the report as presented. Lisa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Meade also shared the new expense/reimbursement policy and reimbursement request form with Board members for discussion. She recommended adding verbiage regarding sales tax exemption, asking members to make their best effort to obtain a sales tax exemption when making a purchase, but also understanding that it is a difficult task when purchasing items on-line. **Meade made a motion to accept the expense/reimbursement policy and reimbursement form as presented. Pam seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

- **Immediate Past President (Pam House)**

Pam is looking forward to activating the Scholarship Committee for fall scholarship awards. The process includes sending notice of the scholarships to local school districts. Notice of the available scholarships will also be shared with Chapter members.

Director Reports

- **Advanced Training (Mike Petitt)**

Mike reported that the “Owls of the Upper Texas Gulf Coast” presentation was well received by attendees. The presentation about poison ivy and poison oak was less well received, as it did not provide the basic information such as plant identification, where it’s found and plant management, that most attendees were interested in learning.

Mike also shared that after 115 people registered for the presentation, he believed we needed to increase our license with Zoom for the additional participants. He opted for the “webinar” package but has since learned that the webinar package did not allow participant interaction. He then purchased a 500-participant Zoom license for the meeting and cancelled the webinar package. He is hoping to receive a refund for the webinar purchase. He has also discovered that typically 75% of people who register for a session attend and will plan accordingly in the future.

- **Communication (Jesse Monzingo)**

Jesse updated the Board with information about the Photo Contest. Approximately sixty photographs have been received. The committee is extending the deadline to August 9 and has sent an email to Alan Wilde to inform Chapter members via Constant Contact.

- **Membership (Tracy Walpole)**

Tracy summarized the July membership report sent to Board members earlier in the week. According to the report, we have 241 active members. Volunteer service hours for July are 971.75, which is lower than previous months, likely due to the impact of Hurricane Beryl and rainy weather in July. Advanced Training hours for July are 108. Additionally, there was one initial certification and eight recertifications. Laura Clark and Tracy Walpole achieved 1,000 hours level of service hours and Bobette Brasfield obtained 4,000 hours level of service hours. Data for the New Training Class indicates 27 of 31 members have completed the required training hours and 13 have certified.

Tracy also shared recommendations for improvements to the potential trainee process. She is recommending that potential trainees register via the Volunteer Management System after talking with a representative of the Chapter, but prior to selection for the training class. In her recommendation, she included several benefits anticipated by changing the process and reported that other Chapters use this process successfully. Gene commented that he wants to ensure that personal interactions with potential trainees is maintained.

- **Outreach (Lisa Hardcastle)**

We had one outreach event planned for July, but it was cancelled due to the hurricane.

- **Training Class (Diane Humes)**

Although Diane was absent, Gene shared that the Chapter needs to select a new director for the upcoming class. Although it is scheduled to be a daytime class, if the majority of participants would prefer a night class, he recommends that we accommodate the preference. Planning for the next class will begin in the fall.

Other Reports

- **GetBACKTogether**

Jesse reported that she will have a slide to share information at the Chapter Meeting.

- **New Class Representatives (Denise Correll and Sydney Jeffcoat)**

Denise asked if she should send an email to classmates reminding them of the upcoming meeting. Gene said that it was up to them to decide the best ways to connect with the class and that email is always good.

Old (unfinished) Business

- **Bat Monitoring**

Laura reported that she will do a short presentation at the Chapter Meeting to update members. She also shared that she has been in contact with the Galveston County Daily News regarding a story on the bat project. Additionally, she is working with two Clear Creek ISD schools to facilitate a bat monitoring project with students.

Other

- Lynn attended tonight's meeting to share information from the Exploration Green Conservancy (EGC). Now that it is moving from a construction phase to an operational phase, EGC would like to collaborate with GBAC TMN and are seeking volunteers for educational programs and outreach activities. After enthusiastic discussion about the opportunity to continue our relationship with EGC, Gene suggested Lynn attend a meeting with EGC leadership to discuss next steps. Being the EGC secretary, he'll handle setting up the meeting. He also suggested including Gulf Coast Chapter TMN in discussions, as members from both Chapters volunteer at Exploration Green. He requested that Lynn take an active leadership role in this project, and she said she would consider it.
- A brief discussion was held regarding changing the day and/or time of our Board Meeting. Sydney volunteered to send out a survey to determine the preferences of Board members.

There being no further business, Mike made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hardcastle