

## **GBAC BOARD MAY MEETING**

**June 24, 2025**

**Via Google Meet**

**Attendees:** Mary Dobberstine, Jenny Dudley, Gene Fisseler, Denise Correll, Julie Massey, Mary McElligott, Mohammed Nasrullah, Lynn Porfirio, Mary Jean Slazer, Anthony Soliz-Rocha, Chloe Stifler, Sharon Tirpak, and Tracy Walpole

Absent were Lisa Hardcastle, Brandi Keller, Meade LeBlanc, and Robin Novak.

Mary Dobberstine, President, initially announced the meeting date and time during the May board meeting and reminded members of the meeting date with a proposed agenda via email on June 18, 2025. All meeting participants were able to communicate with each other via Google Meet.

The President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

A quorum was established by Gene Fisseler who was sitting in for Secretary Lisa Hardcastle.

### **New Communications Director**

At the request of the President, our new Communications Director Chloe Stifler introduced herself. She is a member of the Class of 2025 and is the Conservation Director at Armand Bayou Nature Center.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

**Gene made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items. Sharon provided a second. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Chapter Member Report**

The President yielded the floor to chapter member Lynn Porfirio who provided a brief update on the Exploration Green pollinator garden project located near the Sunflower Pond (formerly Phase 3A). Lynn reported that the final planting was initiated in May, with 500 plants being planted. To date, approximately 30 volunteers (seven of which are TxMNs from GBAC and the Gulf Coast chapters) have contributed some 200-250 hours (85 hours by TxMNs). Other volunteers contributing to the effort include folks from NPSOT and local residents. Ongoing activities include weeding, mulching and supplemental planting. The local irrigation system failure has been offset by regular and significant rainfall augmented by truck watering provided by Exploration Green. Lynn will submit a report to H-E-B summarizing the first year's progress.

## **Old Business**

- **Dragonfly BINGO update** – Mary asked if anyone had any person or third-party feedback or questions since the June launch of Dragonfly BINGO. Jenny reported that she had received a few questions immediately following the June chapter meeting launch. Chloe indicated there has been quite a buzz among the new class members. Reminders and other promotional messages will be communicated over the next weeks and months.

## **New Business**

- **Chapter Financial Review** – Jenny reported that the Financial Review Committee (Jenny, Meade, Lisa, and Denise) had completed its work. The chapter's 2024 financial records were reviewed in accordance with the Treasurer's protocols. She described the process and reported that a glitch in the Quicken software being used created some reconciliation errors in the first quarter. The errors were corrected and going forward plan has been devised to prevent recurrence. Upon signature by the committee members and review and signature by the chapter advisor, the report will be presented to the board.
- **Fall State Conference** – Mary updated the board members on the status of plans and arrangements for the October State Conference in Bryan-College Station. She reminded the board that a portion of the conference costs are offset by sponsorships and that our chapter traditionally makes a \$1,000 contribution. **Mary entertained a motion from Mohammed to approve a \$1,000 GBAC sponsorship for the conference. Jenny provided a second and the motion passed.**
- **Fall Chapter Service Event** – Mary solicited board members for options for our Fall Chapter Service event, the second of the year. Specifically, we are interested in events having a service component and a fellowship component. Sharon is working with GISP to see if we can host such an event at the park. Jenny is working with UH Coastal Center's Evelyn Merz to determine what could work there. Another suggestion offered was to work Exploration Green Conservancy at its Fall Squawk Walk. Stay tuned for updates.

## **Officer Reports**

### **President (Mary Dobberstine)**

Mary had no more updates.

**Vice President (Jenny Dudley)**

Jenny sat in on the Presidents' Call led by the state TxMN office and reported that the presidential certificate component of the 4,000 volunteer hour service award has been "paused." She also confirmed that our special guest presenter at the August chapter meeting will be Ashley Jones, state archeologist.

**Secretary (Lisa Hardcastle)**

Lisa was unable to attend but distributed the May board meeting minutes via email prior to this board meeting.

**Treasurer (Meade LeBlanc)**

Meade was unable to attend but distributed the previous month's financial summary via email prior to this board meeting.

**Immediate Past President (Gene Fisseler)**

Gene presented an image of an updated mock-up of the volunteer hours recognition replacement plaques. He had worked with Tracy Walpole, Patty Trimmingham, and Darla Cox to incorporate comments received at the last meeting. The lists are printed on 11x14 card stock and displayed in black wooden frames. It is estimated that ten frames will be needed to cover all the milestone categories plus the in-memoriam names at a maximum estimated total cost of \$200. These will work with the current plaque mounting system. Suggestions received: (1) remove the plural "s" from Naturalist in the title, (2) try to work the dragonfly logo into the title, and (3) try to work the dragonfly log into a watermark behind the list of names. That feedback will be shared with the team.

**Reports****Advanced Training Director (Robin Novak)**

Robin was unable to attend but shared a calendar of scheduled AT events.

**Communication Director (Chloe Stifler)**

Chloe shared her initial ideas regarding regular social media posts – the week's volunteer opportunities on Monday, volunteer stories on Wednesdays, Throwback Thursdays, and weekend highlights on Fridays. Board members enthusiastically supported her proposals.

**Community Engagement Director (Mohammed Nasrullah)**

Mohammed reported that our booth at the Juneteenth Festival on June 14 was staffed by six volunteers and visited by more than 100 guests. Flyers discussing five Black naturalists were distributed. Visitors took part in a Nature Quiz, watched a video about

five Black naturalists, and signed up for more information regarding TxMNs. He added that the next Community AT is set for July 1 with Sevim Kalyoncu, executive director of Green Muslims, presenting. And, following approval by the board last month, the H-E-B grant application for funds to create a pollinator garden at the Clear Lake Islamic Center was submitted on June 1.

### **Membership Director (Tracy Walpole)**

Highlights of the membership report include:

- VMS reflects 260 active members, 20 in training, and 20 people interested in training;
- May member activities (as of 6/2/25) include 3,269.5 Volunteer Service hours and 283.75 Advanced Training hours; and,
- To date, 11 of the 29 2025 Training Class have fully certified as TxMNs.

Tracy raised the possibility of financial support for selected state conference attendees. The suggestion was noted and taken under consideration.

### **Outreach Coordinator (Denise Correll)**

Denise is still settling into her new role as Outreach Coordinator. Recent outreach activities have included the Artist Boat World Ocean Day Festival on June 7. She took part in the event and reported that it went well.

### **Training Class Director (Julie Massey)**

Julie reported that the checks for last remaining class expenses are being paid out by the Treasurer. On another note, she reported that Skyler Nix, a former Texas Sea Grant intern that worked for her and interacted with our chapter, has received the 2025 National Wildlife Foundation Young Leader Award.

### **Volunteer Service Director (Sharon Tirpak)**

Sharon reported that her business is about the same as usual, apart from a few Dragonfly BINGO inquiries.

### **New Class Representatives (Anthony Soliz-Rocha, and Mary McElligott, and alternate Mary Jean Slazer)**

All three new class representatives shared how they have been engaging in chapter activities and encouraging their classmates to do the same. A Facebook group has been created for the Class of 2025 that has received good feedback.

### **Chapter Advisor (Brandi Keller)**

Brandi was unable to attend but shared written notes regarding her recent activities.

**Announcements**

- The next board meeting will be convened on July 29 via Google Meet.
- The next chapter meeting will be convened on August 6.

**Review Action Items** – There were none.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gene Fisseler, Acting Secretary