

Galveston Bay Area Chapter TMN Board Meeting
FEBRUARY 23, 2026
Via Google Meet

Attendees: Mary Dobberstine, Jenny Dudley, Karen Garvin, Lisa Hardcastle, Gene Fisseler, Robin Novak, Denise Correll, Tracy Walpole, Sharon Tirpak, Julie Massey, Mary Jean Slazer, and Mary McElligott

Absent members: Anthony Soliz Rocha, Chloe Stifler, and Brandi Keller.

Mary Dobberstine, President, initially announced the meeting date and time during the January board meeting and reminded members of the meeting date with a proposed agenda via email on February 18, 2026. All meeting participants were able to communicate with each other via Google Meet.

Welcome and Call to Order

- Welcome and call to order.
 - The board meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM.
- Establishment of quorum
 - Lisa Hardcastle established a quorum.

Approval of Board Minutes

- The minutes from the January 24, 2026, “Day Away” board meeting and the February 5, 2026, chapter meeting were present for discussion. Both documents had been shared with board members via email on February 19, 2026. Gene made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Sharon seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Approval of Financial Summary

- The GBAC Financial Summary report for the period ending February 18, 2026, was also shared with board members on February 19, 2026, and offered for discussion. Tracy made a motion to accept the report; Robin seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Old Business

- The following *2026 Objectives* from the January board meeting were presented for discussion:
 - *Governing Documents* – support the statewide Texas Master Naturalist governing document updates by reviewing proposed changes and communicating clearly to members what is changing, why it matters, and how it supports volunteer service and stewardship.
 - *25 Events for 25 Years* – implement a year-long series of events highlighting existing GBAC programs and partnerships, including service projects, public programs, and community presentations.

- *Volunteer Video Storytelling* – capture short member testimonials about their TMN experience, favorite projects, and chapter impact for use in outreach, events, and social media.
- *25th Anniversary Swag* – develop a small set of commemorative items (e.g., shirt, cap, pin, bandana) to create visibility and shared identity during the anniversary year.
- *Recognition / Proclamation* – pursue local government proclamations and partner recognition to increase public awareness of GBAC’s 25-year impact.

The following updates were provided on each item:

- Jenny has established a team with Mary D, Tracy, and Lisa to review the *Chapter Operating Handbook*. Three meetings have been scheduled to review the document, research changes, and finalize the phrasing. The document will then be shared with the board for approval. It will also be offered to the chapter for ratification.
- Mary M. reported that a spreadsheet of 25 events has been created to organize the 25 programs and partnerships to be highlighted throughout the year. These events will also be used as the basis for the volunteer video storytelling objective. A standardized script and video guidelines have been developed to create consistency. She is currently assigning point people for each of the events to organize the details. At our April chapter meeting videos completed to date will be shared to celebrate Volunteer Month. All videos created this year will be shared at the December chapter meeting.
- Lisa and Patty Trimmingham will lead the team to create commemorative items to celebrate our 25th anniversary.
- The Galveston County Commissioner’s Court presented a 25th Anniversary Proclamation recognizing our chapter and the incredible impact of our volunteers on February 16, 2026. Brandi was instrumental in coordinating this event and several chapter members were in attendance. Additionally, Mary has created a table poster celebrating our 25th anniversary and highlighting what we do. This poster can be used at outreach events throughout the year.

Lisa made a motion to approve the 2026 Board Objectives, which was seconded by Jenny. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

- Establishment of a Financial Review Committee
 - Mary explained that per our chapter’s operating handbook, our chapter uses a financial review committee to examine the chapter’s financial records. Required members of this committee are the vice-president, secretary, one class representative and the chapter advisor. Lisa explained how the process has worked in the past. Mary Jean agreed to be on the committee.
- Best Practices for Photographing Minors
 - Mary announced that the state has prepared a document with recommendations for best practices when photographing minors.

Additionally, Brandi has some ideas from her work with 4-H to share. Chloe will work with Mary and Brandi to establish procedures for our chapter.

Officer Reports

- **President** (Mary Dobberstine)
Nothing additional to share.
- **Vice President** (Jenny Dudley)
Jenny reported that she has presenters for upcoming chapter meeting except for October's meeting. She is looking into a presentation on a water topic.
- **Secretary** (Lisa Hardcastle)
Nothing to share at this time.
- **Treasurer** (Karen Garvin)
Nothing additional to share.
- **Immediate Past President** (Gene Fisseler)
Gene has nothing to share and reserves his time for the training class report.

Director Reports

- **Advanced Training** (Robin Novak)
An advanced training event on prairies will be held in March. Details will be shared with members soon.
- **Membership** (Tracy Walpole)
Tracy reported that updates to the Volunteer Management System (VMS) have created difficulties on the administrative side but are being resolved quickly. She will need to make updates for her training class presentation. She also announced that preliminary data shows that our chapter's volunteer service hours for 2025 have surpassed those for 2024. Advanced training hours for 2025 also surpassed the 2024 numbers.
- **Outreach** (Denise Correll)
A recent outreach event at the Moody Gardens Educator Open House attracted 140 individuals to visit the chapter's booth. Upcoming events include LaPorte's Spring Fest in April and Artist Boat's World Ocean Day in June. She has also ordered an additional tablecloth for outreach events.
- **Training Class** (Gene Fisseler and Julie Massey)
Gene and Julie reported that the first class last week was a great success. Thirty-three of the class members were in attendance (three were absent due to prior commitments). There were many chapter members in attendance as volunteers. The presenters, Charriss York and Cindy Howard gave great presentations. They also remarked that many members of this class have strong environmental backgrounds.

- **Volunteer Service** (Sharon Tirpak)
Sharon reported that she is answering questions from our new members. Additionally, there continues to be confusion regarding the topic of board work and volunteer service hours. She will get a group together to discuss guidelines for this.

Other Reports

- **Class Representatives** (Mary Jean Slazer and Mary McElligott)
Mary Jean reported that everyone is excited about the new class.

Closing

- **Review Action Items**
 - Lisa and Patty will begin work on 25th anniversary swag items.
 - The financial review committee will begin work.
 - Mary, Chloe, and Brandi will work on best practices for photographing minors.
 - Sharon will update guidelines on board service as volunteer service.
- **Next Meeting – March 24. 2026**
- **Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 PM by Mary Dobberstine.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hardcastle, Secretary