

**Galveston Bay Area Chapter TMN Board Meeting**  
**March 24, 2026**  
**Via Google Meet**

**Attendees:** Mary Dobberstine, Jenny Dudley, Karen Garvin, Lisa Hardcastle, Robin Novak, Anthony Soliz Rocha, Tracy Walpole, and Sharon Tirpak.

**Absent Members:** Gene Fisseler, Denise Correll, Julie Massey, Mary Jean Slazer, Mary McElligott, and Brandi Keller.

\*Also in attendance were Laura Clark and Cindy Liening.

Mary Dobberstine, President, initially announced the meeting date and time during the February board meeting and reminded members of the meeting date with a proposed agenda, February board minutes and financial summary YTD via email on March 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 Consent Agenda**

Mary offered the consent agenda items for discussion. No comments were made.

**Jenny made a motion to pass the consent agenda items; the motion was seconded by Lisa. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Old Business**

- **Communications Director**  
Mary announced that Chloe Stifler will no longer be the Communications Director. Mary will be support over the interim and encouraged all board members to be on the lookout for a replacement.
- **Governing documents**  
Jenny reported that the committee has met three times to review proposed changes to the Chapter Operating Handbook. Key recommendations from the committee include:
  - Changing the name of the Justice, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion committee to Community Engagement committee
  - Retaining our chapter's board term limits
  - Changing the work "approval" to "review" in the contract section referring to the Chapter Advisor's role
  - Retention of ad hoc grant committee

- Retained our “hold harmless” and image release policies
- Clarified a tiered system of approval for travel time related to volunteer service

Additionally, the committee recommended moving the Outreach team from a freestanding committee to the Community Engagement Director’s oversight. This would allow enhanced collaboration between the outreach and community engagement teams.

Jenny will share a draft of the proposed changes with the board.

- **Anniversary Swag**

Lisa reported the team submitted a 25th anniversary logo for shirts and pins to the state, but approval was deferred pending changes. The board likes the logo design and asks the team to revise the design to gain approval. After some discussion, Sharon made a motion that the board approve a budget of up to \$1000.00 to purchase pins to be given to all current members. Mary seconded the motion and the motion carried.

- **Video Project**

Mary D. presented updates to the board concerning the video project. Mary E. is collaborating with Chuck on video production and has assembled a list of potential interviewees. Mary D. participated in an initial interview, and the resulting video will be shown at the chapter meeting. She compared the videos to a time capsule containing personal testimonials about the significance of the master naturalist program to its members.

## **New Business**

- **Best Practices for Photographing Minors**

Mary and Brandi will continue working on this task. Brandi has a form to obtain permission for photographing minors at our events. Until the form is formalized and distributed, verbal permission is allowable, but written permission is better.

- **April Volunteer Month**

Mary would like to celebrate Volunteer Month by providing pizza for our members at our chapter meeting. She would also like to share a poster Brandi created highlighting the impact the chapter has on the community. Additionally, the state has provided social media templates to use for celebrating our volunteers.

## **Officer Reports**

- **President** (Mary Dobberstine)

Nothing additional at offer at this time.

- **Vice President** (Jenny Dudley)

Jenny requested that the chapter members support the Green Heron team at a “Big Sit” event at Exploration Green’s *Wetlands Walkabout*, a community event

featuring nature exhibits, activities, and opportunities for families and neighbors to learn about local ecosystems. She envisions making this a chapter-wide event as part of our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Activities could include an outreach table, native plant walk, birding walks, etc.

- **Treasurer** (Karen Garvin)  
Karen had nothing to share except that she is learning a lot about accounting!
- **Secretary** (Lisa Hardcastle)  
Lisa shared that the Dick Benoit Prairied Preserve workday is scheduled for April 1, 2026. She will resend the notice to chapter members with hopes of soliciting more volunteers.
- **Immediate Past President** (Gene Fisseler)  
Not present.

### Director Reports

- **Advanced Training** (Robin Novak)  
Robin shared that the chapter recently held its first in-person advanced training session in quite some time, with twenty-two participants gathering at Deer Park Prairie. She expressed that it was enjoyable and described the experience as reminiscent of being back in a training class session. Robin hopes to organize additional in-person events. It was proposed that she consider planning a 25th anniversary advanced training event featuring a full day of sessions.
- **Communications**  
No report.
- **Community Engagement** (Anthony Soliz Rocha)  
Anthony indicated that efforts are underway to reactivate the committee. He is in the process of assessing interest among previous members to determine who remains willing to participate.
- **Outreach** (Denise Correll)  
Although Denise was not present at this evening's meeting, it was noted that she is coordinating volunteers for several upcoming events.
- **Membership** (Tracy Walpole)  
Tracy submitted a report to board members prior to the meeting. She continues to troubleshoot issues with the state updates, including records retention/archive made with the new system. Volunteer service hours and advanced training hours continue to be high in relation to last year's end-of-year totals. Forty-one members have recertified, two have reached 250 hours of volunteer service hours and five have reached the 500-hour milestone. She would like the opportunity to provide an update at our chapter meeting.

- **Training Class** (Julie Massey and Gene Fisseler)  
Although neither Julie nor Gene was in attendance, it was noted that the class is at the half-way point. Additionally, many chapter members have attended the training sessions and are supporting the class.
- **Volunteer Service** (Sharon Tirpak)  
Sharon reported receiving several emails for training class members requesting access to opportunities to report their hours. The challenge is that there is not enough information included in the requests to properly identify the appropriate opportunity. She would like to provide information directing members to the location of the descriptions on our website so that they can request the correct opportunity.

### Other Reports

- **Class Representatives** (Mary Jean Slazer and Mary McElligott)  
No report.
- **Chapter Advisor** (Brandi Keller)  
Brandi sent a report to board members prior to the meeting. Key points include:
  - The wall plaque for the Galveston County resolution recognizing the chapter's anniversary was received. It will be shared at the Chapter meeting.
  - Sea Grant will be hosting a community engagement intern for the summer. Applications have been reviewed and interviews will be next week. The intern will be assisting with Sea Grant and master naturalist events like Camp Wild and MRRP
  - She has been busy with several community activities. Past events include State of the Bay, Dolphin Challenge, and Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Upcoming events include Plastic Pollution Symposium, a study in collaboration with the Texas City and Houston Zoo at the Texas City Dike, and a Sea Bean Symposium in October.

### Closing

- **Review Action Items**
  - Mary will continue to work with Brandi on the photo release document.
  - Jenny will send a draft of the revised Chapter Operating Handbook to board members.
  - The SWAG team will revise their anniversary logo and resubmit it to the state. Once approved, pins will be ordered. A t-shirt order form will be sent to chapter members at that time as well.
  - Tracy will have time at the chapter meeting to address changes to the Volunteer Management System.
  - Robin will investigate a full day advanced training event.
- **Next Meeting** – April 28, 2026, at 6:30 PM

- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM by Mary Dobberstine.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Hardcastle, Secretary

\*These minutes were approved on April 28, 2026 and later corrected to add two non-voting attendees omitted in error.