Lost Pines Master Naturalist Board Meeting
Minutes

July 16th, 2014

President Julia Akin called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm at the Blue Bonnet Center in Bastrop. Board members in attendance were: Julia Akin, Audrey Ambrose, Holley Hallmark, Grace Pratt, Jim Estes, Larry Gfeller, Rick Johnson, Roxanne Hernandez, Marsha Elrod, and Joan Estes.

Julia asked members if there were any additions or correction to the May Board meeting. There were no additions or corrections. Grace made a motion to accept the minutes and Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Old Business

Julia asked the Board for suggestions regarding a LPMN a milestone awards pin. The awards decided upon after discussion was 250, 500, 750 and 1000 hours. The design of a rocker pin with attachment of the specific hours was also selected. Audrey said an order of 200 chapter pin was $3.00 a pin. She will place an order for 24 pins for 250 and 500 hours each. For awards of 75.0, 1000, and 1500 hours she will order 12 of each.

A pine tree design theme on the pin was consistent but the pin signage varied. After discussion of four options the Board voted with a show of hands and the majority of the Board voted for the pin with three pine trees, TMN on the top and Lost Pines on the bottom. The pin colors are white, green, beige and silver.

The policy and nomination form for the LPMN member of the year was reviewed. The Board made some edits on the time line for the nomination process but Grace will review and edit the proposed policy. The primary concern was that the timeline did not give enough months of the year for nominations. The major change in the draft was that the nominations would be accepted until December 1st. Grace said that she and the committee will have sufficient time to review the nominations and make the announcement at the December Christmas party. Grace and Audrey will also decide on the rocker pin for the member of the year award,

Marsha reported no the status of the kayak trip. It is too hot to have a trip in the summer and it was suggested that she look into September or October for the trip. We will use the Bastrop River Co to provide kayaks for members that do not have their own and they will provide transportation to and from the river for members. The charge for the reservation is $35.00. The day of the trip was discussed because Larry said that Saturdays in October scheduled members as trail guides and they would not be available to take the trip until after noon. If a Saturday was selected the time for the trip should be 1:00pm. The trip will take between 2-4 hours depending on the speed the kayakers. Larry suggested that we could have a cook out at the end of the rive trip and make it a social event as well. It was decided that a draft of the proposed trip would be posted on Meetup in September and included in the Newsletter.

Julia discussed the idea of a full time Nominating Committee to identify current Board members that will not fill another year in their position. This will give the committee sufficient time to talk to chapter members about serving on the Board either as an officer or a Committee chair.

New Business

Julia handed out a draft of the revised organizational structure for LPMN. Primary changes in the structure were for the position of Vice President and Membership Chair. These positions had excessive responsibilities; the Vice president is unable to meet all of the responsibilities for Programs and Advanced Training and the Membership chair is so involved in members' hours and awards that there was little time for the responsibilities for Membership maintenance and growth.

Audrey announced that she has submitted her resignation as Vice President. Grace made a motion to accept Audrey's resignation and Roxanne seconded the motion. The motion carried. The nominating committee reported that they have offered the Vice President position to Mike Barrett and he has accepted. A motion was made by Roxanne to accept the nomination of Mike Barrett as Vice President and Grace seconded the motion. The motion carried. A part of the new organizations structure is to split responsibilities for Programs and Advanced Training. A new approach to Advanced Training has been developed utilizing expert members in committees focusing on bugs, plants, birds, and reptiles. The committees will solicit members to work on the committees and encourage member participation in chapter events as well as increase member knowledge in these areas.

The membership committee will be divided into three areas of responsibility: Time Management, Database Management, and Member Recognition. Scott will continue responsibilities for Time Management that is very time consuming overall.

The Hospitality Committee will be renamed Food and Fun. This will allow additional assistance to the committee chair for scheduled events.

The TMN Liability Policy form signature is still required of all chapter members. It has been verified that one form on file is sufficient and it is not necessary to renew on a routine basis. We will need to review who has signed forms on file and who does not. Scott said that the chapter has a lot of files that are kept and at some point in time we will need to find a place to store them.

Audrey announced the tentative program schedule for the year:

- August — Dr. Abbott will discuss Dragonflies at McKinney Roughs
- September — Jim Estes will discuss iphone "Apps" for Master Naturalists
- October — Committee meetings
- November — Marion Buchanan will discuss Good Plants
- December — Christmas Party

Roxanne reported the current status of the Blog on the web site. While it is informative it doesn't work for calendar events. It does not provide the same information as Meetup and it does not link with Meetup. The alternatives would be to email it to members or to email members about new events. The primary concern about Meetup is that some members are unhappy about the amount of information that they receive on a regular basis. The question is how we can streamline it because it provides members with the information necessary for volunteer hours or advanced training. Another issue is the number of people that can enter information into the program. One suggestion was to provide the members with a handout about Meetup to make it easier for them to use it. Roxanne did not want to assume responsibility for Meetup. Grace offered to assume the responsibility for Meetup. Audrey made the motion for Grace to assume the responsibility for Meetup and Joan seconded the motion. The motion carried. Grace will work with Mike to complete the transition for Meetup management. There was also discussion about

restricting access to Meetup to members only and Grace and Mike will provide direction for Meetup access.

Holly informed members that she will need to perform a financial audit. The last audit performed was in 2012 and an audit committee completed this required function. Holly will set a meeting up to conduct the audit following the format that Rick established for the audit. Joan volunteered to assist holly with the audit. The signatures at the Bank will need to be revised and in order to do this it is required that the meeting minutes reflect when the officers were elected. The authorized names at the bank will be the Treasurer Holly Hallmark, President Julia Akin, and Vice president Mike Barrett.

Holly Hallmark was elected Treasurer in October 2012 at the October LPMN Chapter Meeting
Julia Akin was elected President in December 2013 at the December LPMN Meeting
Mike Barrett was elected Vice President in July 2014 at the LPMN Board Meeting

Form 990 has been filed on July 14th with the IRS for 2014. She received the notice in 2012 with the understanding that the chapter has three years to file for this status. The chapter has 501C certification and the Tax number is 74-3009819.

Julia reported that she met with Maryann Melton with the Goodwater Master Naturalist Chapter in regards to establishing a Junior Master Naturalist Program. Kelly Alechi and her two boys have volunteered to assist with the project. She will keep the Board posted on program development.

Larry asked that the Board consider submitting the Chapter Newsletter at the 2014 Annual Meeting in Hunt, TX. He said all of the news letters were newsworthy but suggested that one be selected and submitted for the contest.

Announcements

Jim introduced some agenda items for Board discussion.

- The Blue Bird Society asked if the chapter could build 250 blue bird houses. They would provide all of the supplies needed and we would have four months to complete the project. Grace volunteered to lead the project and she will work with Jim to begin the project.
- LPMN can introduce a Hugleculture project for Lost Pines. We will need to find a site for the project and we will begin with a limited project. Jim will work with Jamie to set up the project
- Maintenance is required on the Rain Simulator. The signage for the exhibit is in poor condition. Marsha said that she had the original templates for the signs and she will make copies of the signs for the Simulator. Rick also has a Simulator and he said his exhibit was in pretty good condition. Rick and Jim will work together to get the Simulators maintained as needed.
- Lockhart State Park has had a request to replace the trail signs for over four years; the signs are to be changed out for signs with QR codes. This project has stalled for nearly a year due to lack of fund availability in the Park. Jim said he estimated that it would cost approximately $200-$250 to set up 40 to 50 signs on the trail. Sue Whitten is also working on a graphics handbook for the trail as well. Audrey made a motion to provide up to $250 for the signs at Lockhart State park and Grace seconded the motion. The motion carried. Julia suggested that we could find some vendors who might be willing to donate funds for the project and efforts to do this should be considered.
- Rachel Bauer will request the animal track models from Lockhart State Park for an event.
- The Bridge Maniacs have volunteered to build a bridge for Louise Ridlon (past President) at her home to facilitate travel between their property and her son's property immediately behind theirs. Their daughter-in-law is wheel chair bound and this would facilitate the family's property access. It is scheduled for August 3rd for 8:00am. They will provide all supplies needed for the project. All members will be informed of the project and invited to assist if available.

Larry asked the Board to review the request for volunteer hours for Liz Pulman and Miriam Vaughn when they inventory LPMN property for plants. It was decided that they would be able to submit their volunteer time on these projects because they submit their findings back to the community.

Audrey asked the Board to consider sending Julia to the State MN Meeting this year; the Meeting in invaluable to the chapter and members for not only chapter growth and development but interaction with other chapter leaders for networking and communications. Audrey made a motion for the chapter to pay the registration fee for Julia at the October meeting and Grace seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting is scheduled for October 25-26th in Hunt, TX. Julia will provide additional information when available.

The Board is considering developing a scholarship to a member with a financial need requesting to attend the meeting. The chapter has the money and could set aside necessary funds.

The Picnic is scheduled for July 27th at the Bastrop State Park Rectory. There will be a silent auction again and members should be encouraged to bring items for the auction. It will be scheduled for 1:00 but members will be arriving at 11:00 to set up the room and set out the food.

Audrey announced that Marsh Elrod has achieved her 2014 recertification requirements and she presented her with her pin.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for September 3rd and will be at the Blue Bonnet Electric Coop in Bastrop at 6:00pm.

There was no additional business. The meeting adjourned at 9:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Estes

Joan Estes Secretary

V.2