

Lost Pines Master Naturalist Board Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2014

The Lost Pines Master Naturalist March Board meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm at the Jalisco Restaurant by President Julia Akin. Members in attendance included: Julia Akin, Audrey Ambrose, Holly Hallmark, Joan Estes, Larry Gfeller, Jim Estes, Rick Johnson, Grace Pratt, and Lori Baumann. Audrey's mother attended with her as a guest.

Julia asked members if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. There were no additions or corrections to the minutes. Rick Johnson made a motion to accept the minutes and the motion was seconded by Grace Pratt. All members voted in favor of passing the motion and the motion carried.

One item in chapter Old Business Julia discussed was member roster cleanup. Julia handed out a copy of the cleaned up roster to Board members. This list does not accurately identify active chapter members and it does not include the training class members either. Scott and Holly are reviewing the list and identifying the members that have a lapsed membership. When the review is completed they will report the paid member dues and report hours as well.

Julia sent the email Newsletter to members and requested a membership status update but she received only one response from Ralph Smoot. Carol Reidy responded saying she moved to Georgia but enjoyed hearing about chapter activities. A decision will need to be made regarding members that do not respond to membership requirements and possibly remove them from the list.

Improved chapter recognition is currently being revised. Awarding an outstanding member should include a custom pin to recognize their chapter contributions. There was a lot of discussion about finding someone or someplace that would customize a pin for the chapter. The discussion included whether to use the Dragonfly or develop a new custom chapter pin. Discussion focused on a pin with a pine or pine trees on it to recognize the chapter. The decision was to look for a custom pin with the focus on pine trees. Our chapter does not have a lot of members with high numbers of volunteer hours. We will get a list from Scott of members with 250, 500 and 1000 or more hours recorded. Walt Elson and Rick Johnson will receive awards at the July meeting. Larry Gfeller is developing the letter of award for each member. Awards in the future will be presented quarterly.

The July awards will be presented at the picnic. Audrey asked where the picnic would be held and on what Saturday would it be scheduled. Sites that were discussed for the picnic site included Red Rock, Buescher, or Lockhart. The date agreed upon was July 12th from 11am to 2:00pm. The best place decided for the picnic was the Buescher Rectory with the second choice being Red Rock. We will have a silent auction again because it was well received last year.

July is a busy month with the holiday and the picnic will replace the monthly chapter meeting. The Board meeting scheduled for July 3rd was discussed to see if the day was too conflicting with July 4th. The members agreed to move the July Board Meeting to July 9th.

Member discussion was directed to consider the development of a LPMN Member of Year Award. The award should include a poll of chapter members for their recommendations and the award could be presented at the December meeting. Criteria will be developed for individual member award consideration. The members should represent the best of LPMN and demonstrate service above and beyond the norm. The committee to address the Award includes Grace, Robin Nelson-Ross and Joan. Joan will seek out a template for the criteria form and Grace will work with Robin to address the member polling and set up the process for results. A July deadline should be set to get the forms out to the members.

Audrey reported that the June field trip had 22 enrolled. She was not sure what members had signed up because the members had to sign up directly with the Wildflower Center. Marsha Elrod is currently working on the kayak trip. She will get an update from Marsha at the next meeting.

Larry said that he has not had a recent update from Nick Cowey regarding the video of the hike. In fact, it may not happen at all. He will continue to pursue the video with Nick.

The first order of new business was to discuss the work being undertaken to make the award presentations a meaningful celebration. Scott will identify the member with over 250 hours. The ceremony should have a photographer, establish a pleasant atmosphere, include valid (truthful) data, and a simple presentation.

The 2014 graduation class is nearing completion and each member will receive a certificate and a chapter name tag. The ceremony will be held at McKinney Roughts

Larry discussed the proposal to establish a yearlong Nominating Committee. This will allow ample time for the committee to identify current board and chair members that will not seek another term of office. The committee can seek out new officer and committee members for the next year and avoid the last minute rush to find members willing to serve the chapter. The committee has been Grace, Larry and Robin. Grace serves in the capacity as chairman due to her role as past president. Grace asked Joan to serve on the committee and she agreed. A goal is to keep "old timers" connected and active in the chapter.

The last item in new business related to the desirability of "project leaders" for new initiatives. An example of a new initiative is the Mentoring of the new class members and the training class project. The projects would be well served with a dedicated person to lead the project and successful project results.

The discussion regarding the Membership Chair focused on the heavy work load of recording volunteer and advanced training hours. At one point the discussion was whether or not to break the responsibilities in two positions. Julia will discuss the option with Scott for his input. The focus of the Membership chair has not been directed to membership activities because of the

large amount of time incurred with tracking hours and managing the awards. Scott has requested additional help on numerous occasions with minimal results. Kathy Kirk has volunteered to help with the project at this time.

Additional discussion focused on different types of systems for managing hours. Another issue with the computer system is accessibility of multiple members to manage the data. One solution discussed is the shared gmail document drive.

Rick said that the meeting at Jalisco while convenient for dinner the restaurant did not have a good environment for a meeting because it was hard to hear some of the discussion. It was decided that the next Board meeting would be held at the Bastrop Library. They have a nice meeting room but it will require a \$50 deposit. The deposit is not cashed but held as security. Julia will arrange a reservation with them for 6:30pm on July 9th.

There was no additional discussion and the meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Estes
Secretary