

Lost Pines Master Naturalist Board Meeting Minutes

November 3, 2016

In attendance: Julia Akin, Beth Moore, Larry Gfeller, Paula Weisskopf, Frank May, Cat May, Michal Hubbard, Allen Guisinger, Marcia Karr, Kathryn Hedges, and Marsha Elrod

Meeting called to order at 5:42pm by President Julia Akin.

New Business

1. Nominating Committee:

Larry presented the full slate of nominees for the 2017 chapter officer positions:

- Marcia Karr – President
- Paula Weisskopf – Vice President
- Marsha Elrod – Treasurer
- Allen Guisinger – Secretary

Michal motioned to approve the slate of nominees as presented, Beth seconded. All in favor, zero opposed. The nominees will be presented to the chapter at the December 5th meeting.

2. Financial Audit Results:

- Marsha Elrod, Ronnie Lanier, Paula Weisskopf, and Carroll Moore performed the audit in mid-October.
- They reviewed the recommendations from the 2015 audit and concluded that everything had been completed, with the exception of sending “Thank You” letters to donors over \$50.
- Marsha and Beth will work together to update and send out the letters. Beth will scan the hard copy of the letter so that it can be made into an electronic template.
- Julia asked that Marsha update the audit results report to include the 2015 findings.
- Frank motioned to accept the Audit report as amended with the 2015 results. Michal seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

3. 2017 Budget Review and approval:

- Carroll emailed out the budget report for review prior to the meeting.
- Julia broke down the admin budget line item, specifically explaining that the member scholarship amount had increased.
- Michal motioned to approve as presented, Marsha seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

4. Review and approve Partners vs Associates:

- We clarified the definition of “Partners”. They are agencies that offer us resources, such as meeting space, in exchange for volunteer service.
- We discussed adding the cities of Bastrop, Smithville, and Lockhart to the approved “Partner” list, but decided to make those decisions on a case by case basis given the broad scope of city activities.

- Beth motioned to accept the Partner list as proposed, Larry seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

5. Annual Meeting Scholarship Proposal:

- Julia proposed that the chapter provide a \$350 scholarship to cover most of the tuition for one chapter member to attend the Annual Meeting.
- The scholarship would be open to any certified member who applies.
- Marsha motioned to accept the \$350 scholarship. Frank seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

6. Year-end report re: McKinney Roughs agreement:

- Louise has been in contact with Erin at McKinney Roughs and is looking into how many service hours we've provided in order to determine whether or not we're fulfilling our end of the agreement.
- Frank asked if South Shore hours would count towards the LCRA agreement. No one knew the answer so this will require follow-up.

7. Board meeting dinners for 2017:

- With Beth stepping down from the board, the group needed to decide how to handle board meeting dinners going forward.
- It was decided that board members will rotate providing dinner for meetings.
- Julia has offered to provide dinner for the January board meeting.

8. Revisions to Chapter Management & Operations Protocols:

- Specifically, "Disciplining and/or Removal of Members": The state has re-written this section. It was decided that the previously written procedure was inadequate for resolving issues.
- The board member responsibility descriptions will also be updated.

9. Outreach laptop:

- Since we will be doing fewer 2017 Outreach events, we discussed what should be done with the outreach laptop. It was decided that Marsha will keep it and use it for the chapter's accounting work.

10. Gifts for outgoing board members:

- Julia proposed less expensive gifts for outgoing board members since the board had decided that the director's chairs were too expensive.
- Michal motioned to accept the gifts at a reduced cost. Cat seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

11. 2017 Training Class Update:

- Letters have gone out to the 2017 prospects and two have already signed up.
- Michal proposed a class project at Bluebonnet (possible pollinator garden). There was a discussion about the feasibility and implementation of that, but ultimately it was decided to present the idea to the 2017 class and see how it turns out.
- Michal motioned to present a 2017 class project, Larry seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

12. 2017 Smithville Green Expo:

- Marcia received an email from the City of Smithville recruiting participants for their 2017 Green Expo.
- We participated in 2016 and, per Allen, the event wasn't a good fit for us.
- We decided not to participate in 2017.

13. Texas Waters: Exploring Waters and Watershed Training:

- Marsha learned about this program at the Annual Meeting. The program's goal is to inform and educate the citizens of Texas about the most precious natural resource Texas possesses, its water. This curriculum will allow Texas Master Naturalists to earn a *Texas Waters Specialist* designation and then start giving back to their community through various, water-specific service projects.
- Marsha acquired 7 training manuals at the annual meeting that we can use to self-train as a chapter.
- She suggested Kathy Cox becoming the chapter leader for this program, since she also attended this program's session at the Annual Meeting.

Old Business

1. Revised “Request for Approval of a Project, Program or Event”:

- Kathryn emailed the revised, consolidated form to the board before the meeting.
- Per the group's feedback, the form will be updated one more time, then turned into an interactive form, uploaded to the website, and presented to the chapter.

2. Board retreat summary:

- This agenda item will be moved to the January board meeting agenda.

3. Wetlands site update:

- Marcia Karr spoke with Oscar Fogle, our contact at the Guadalupe-Blanco Land Trust, regarding the Plum Creek wetland site just north of Lockhart.
- Oscar said that the project currently has a lot of infrastructure needs to address before they can open to the public (roads and fences that need replacing, dead trees that need removing, etc.) He said that they have a lot of resources for getting this work done, and that once the site itself is ready, he will be interested in having our chapter offer support through educational and interpretive programs.
- Marcia and Oscar agreed to speak again in Spring of 2017.

4. 2016 Annual Meeting Scholarship Recipient:

- Kathy Cox received the annual meeting scholarship.

Approve the minutes from September 1st:

- Larry motioned to approve, Beth seconded. All in favor, zero opposed.

President Julia Akin adjourned the meeting at 7:55pm.

Julia has offered to provide dinner for the January board meeting to be held at 5:30pm on January 5th, at Bluebonnet Electric Headquarters.