

Texas Master Naturalist Program Lost Pines Chapter

CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK July 2026



Mission Statement of the Texas Master Naturalist

The Texas Master Naturalist Program's mission is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the state of Texas.

Purpose Statement of the Chapter Operations Handbook

This document is intended to guide the Lost Pine Master Naturalist Chapter as part of TMN Program governing documents. This COH is a resource for all members of the chapter, and it should be shared with all chapter members. This document focuses on responsibilities and duties of the chapter and does not detail day-to-day operational procedures. Detailed operating procedures that require frequent updates are located on the chapter's website. This document strives to comply with all requirements of Chapter Bylaws and the TMN Chapter Management and Operations Protocols.

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CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK

Texas Master Naturalist Program *Lost Pines Chapter*

1 CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

1.1 Governing documents

The documents governing this chapter are our Bylaws, the Texas Master Naturalist™ Program's *Chapter Management and Operations Protocols (CMOP)*, and this *Chapter Operating Handbook (COH)*. A chapter's COH must comply with the *Bylaws* and the *CMOP*. [Reference CMOP at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>] The chapter is structured for governance as described in this COH.

1.2 COH definitions

Executive officer:

An executive officer is an elected leader who is responsible for leading the organization. They are voted on by members at the last general meeting of the year with a majority of members in attendance.

Director:

A director is a member of the board who leads, manages, and oversees a directorate or functional area of the chapter. They make financial and policy decisions and might also serve as a committee chair. They manage their committee chairs or volunteers. Directors are expected to steward their areas and communicate needs, progress, and challenges to the board. Directors who serve on the board act in two capacities: as members of the board when participating in governance, and as functional leaders when coordinating operational activities. These roles are distinct in purpose and scope.

Directorate:

A directorate is a functional area of responsibility within the chapter, led by a director and encompassing related projects, partner programs, committees, and activities. Directors organize and coordinate the chapter's operational work and provide clear points of leadership. Governance authority remains with the board of directors as defined in the bylaws.

Committee:

A committee is a group of members who volunteer to participate in a specific function, project, program, or goal. They will share responsibilities with committee chairs and directors.

Committee chair:

A committee chair is an appointed leader who is responsible to lead, manage, and oversee specifics of a committee. A committee chair may also be a director, may report to a director, or may report directly to a board member. A committee chair assists the executive officers and directors to achieve the chapter's mission and in making financial and policy decisions. They schedule and organize events and ensure adequate participation.

Project (Chapter Volunteer Service Project):

A project is a defined effort or activity that will satisfy the chapter's volunteer service certification or recertification annually. A project works to meet the CMOP requirements for members to achieve a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service each year. A project promotes continued involvement and helps

to further the mission of the TMN program. Projects can be short, medium, long-term, or on-going. A project aims to achieve specific objectives within a defined timeline, budget, and scope. A project is reviewed and approved based on the volunteer service project process and aligns with TMN/CMOP requirements for approved service categories.

Project Leader:

A *project leader* is the point-of-contact for a specific volunteer service project. A project can be a short-, mid-, or long-term objective. A project leader is a member who leads people and makes sure a project is carried through. The project leader engages the team, motivates them, takes care of their needs, and maintains a friendly and productive environment. Some of their primary responsibilities include:

- Attends meetings with other leaders
- Reports to the board or their director on the status of their project
- Keeps the team focused on the project and moving forward to reach their goal
- Budget responsibilities
- Inventory management

Partner Program:

A *partner program* is a coordinated effort or activity between the chapter and approved partner agencies and associations. The program creates value by achieving benefits that extend further into the community that are not available to the chapter without the partners and associated agencies. The purpose can vary depending on the nature of the initiative but must fit within the objectives and mission of the Texas Master Naturalists program.

A *partner program* meets the CMOP requirements to assist members in achieving a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service each year. A partner program promotes continued involvement and helps to further the mission of the organization. Partner programs can be short, medium, long-term, or on-going. A partner program aims to achieve specific objectives within a defined timeline, budget, and scope.

Partner Program liaison:

A *partner program liaison* is assigned as a communicator to approved partner agencies and associations and who determines the service and education requirements of both the chapter and these organizations. They report to the director as stated in the program description. The liaison is a partner with the executive officers and directors to achieve the chapter's mission and assists the board in making financial and policy decisions. They schedule and organize events and ensure adequate participation.

2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2.1 Makeup of the board

The board consists of the elected officers, the appointed directors, the immediate past president, chapter state representative, and the chapter advisor. All are voting members of the board.

2.2 Elected officers

Officers who are elected by the membership [Reference Bylaws Article V, A., D., and E.]:

- President
- Vice president
- Secretary
- Treasurer

2.3 Appointed directors

Directors are appointed according to Bylaws Article V, E., F., and G. They are:

- Advanced training (AT) director
- Chapter event director
- Chapter state representative (duties assigned to chapter president)
- Communication director
- Education director
- Environmental stewardship director
- Membership director

- Outreach director
- Training class director (new term begins when training class ends)
- Training class representative (term may be shorter than other directors)
- Volunteer service (VS) projects director

2.4 Term of office

The term of office for officers and directors is 12 months, and they are eligible for re-election or re-appointment with the exception of the president, vice-president and IPP who will rotate. The rotation of the presidency is such that the vice president succeeds to the presidency after 12 months, then serves as president for 12 months, followed by serving as the immediate past president for 12 months. For board continuity, staggered terms of more than 12 months are encouraged, but not required. For organizational growth, terms are limited to 3 consecutive years in the same board position and a total of 6 consecutive years as a board member. Members who reach the 6-year limit are eligible for re-election or re-appointment after 1 year off the board. A good faith effort will be made to adhere to these term limits; however, if no eligible member is willing to serve in a position, a member may continue to serve beyond the applicable term limit.

2.5 Executive committee

The elected officers comprise the executive committee. [See 5.2.5]

3 DUTIES OF BOARD

3.1 Duties of all board members

- Communicate effectively with the Texas Master Naturalist (TMN) state office about any questions or issues that arise and keep it informed of what the chapter is doing
- Communicate effectively with the executive officers, board members, committees, and members
- Maintain confidentiality when dealing with individual member issues
- Whenever possible, maintain the privacy of members' personal information
- Strive to further the TMN mission in everything one does
- Adhere to the TMN Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct [Reference at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- Remember that every chapter and every member represent the public face of the TMN program and its sponsoring agencies
- Serve as a model of leadership and recruit and develop new leaders for the chapter
- Work to identify, coach and train potential replacements for their position
- Establish and oversee committees by serving as or identifying committee chairs and engaging volunteers as appropriate
- Provide a written letter of resignation to the board, including an effective date, when resigning
- Works to improve or create detailed operating procedures for their functional area

3.2 Duties of officers

The chapter may adapt roles and responsibilities to reflect current operations, provided all changes remain consistent with the Bylaws and the CMOP. Duties listed below are required; however, the Board may assign or redistribute these duties as needed. Officer titles must remain unchanged.

3.2.1 President

- See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- Serves as chair of the board of directors
- Prepares and distributes an agenda for board and chapter meetings
- Presides at board and chapter meetings
- Signs all board-approved documents that may be legally binding on the chapter

- f. Ensures that the president is one of the three authorized signatories on the chapter bank account
- g. Authorizes in writing in advance any payments to be made of \$1,000.00 or greater from the chapter bank account
- h. Ensures that before the chapter makes any written commitments to county governments, city councils, etc., or executes contracts or memorandums of understanding with other entities, the chapter's advisor and the TMN state program coordinator's review is obtained
- i. Presents an annual summary of the chapter's accomplishments in accordance with annual reporting requirements established by the TMN state office
- j. Conducts vote by manual or electronic means as required by responsibilities of the board [see 4.4]
- k. Presents a slate of candidates for all director positions for review and approval by a majority vote of the executive committee, immediate past president, and chapter advisor
- l. With the advice of the appropriate director, appoints all committee chairs and serves as an ex-officio member of all committees, assisting as appropriate
- m. Ensures all officers and directors perform their duties and responsibilities as stated in this *COH* and are familiar with program guiding (or governing) documents (i.e., *Bylaws*, *CMOP*, *Document Retention Policy*, *Financial Policies and Procedures*)
- n. Works closely with the vice president and immediate past president to ensure a smooth transition to the office of president
- o. If there is no immediate past president, reassigns the duties of that position [see 3.5.1]
- p. Works closely with the education director to ensure education activities are aligned with the chapter's mission and strategic priorities
- q. Works closely with the environmental stewardship director to ensure environmental stewardship activities are aligned with the chapter's mission and strategic priorities
- r. Works closely with the outreach director to ensure outreach activities are aligned with the chapter's mission and strategic priorities
- s. Serves as immediate past president upon completion of term as president
- t. Facilitates a retreat of all newly elected officers and directors with the outgoing board members to help in the transition of responsibilities and to chart the chapter's new year
- u. Writes donor-appreciation letters
- v. Presents recognition awards to out-going officers and board members
- w. Communicates with the TMN state office, other chapters, and state agencies as appropriate
- x. Serves as the chapter's state representative or appoint(s) an alternate to serve [see 3.4.3]
- y. Attends the TMN annual meeting or delegate(s) an alternate

3.2.2 Vice president

- a. See 3.1.—Duties of all board members
- b. Assists the president and acts for the president in the president's absence
- c. Is considered president-in-training and as such will assist the president in the performance of his/her duties, as requested
- d. Assists the president to fill any vacancies in committees and participates as appropriate
- e. With the president and immediate past president, help guide and educate the chapter's new officers and directors using the state governing documents
- f. Coordinates with the chair of the nomination committee (immediate past president) [see 5.3.2]
- g. Ensures all officers and directors perform their duties and responsibilities as stated in this *COH* and are familiar with program guiding documents (i.e., *Bylaws*, *CMOP*)
- h. Understands the governing documents of the chapter and assists in ensuring they are followed
- i. Reviews draft state documents as requested by the president
- j. Works closely with the president and chapter event director to recommend chapter and board meeting dates and locations for approval by the board. Typically, in January.

- k. Works closely with the chapter events director and communications director, to ensure downstream and cross communication occurs regarding dates, times and venues are communicated timely and accurately to their volunteers and committees
- l. Works closely with the membership director, advanced training director, and volunteer service director to ensure downstream and cross communication occurs regarding projects and advanced training and that all are in alignment and consistent in VMS
- m. Works closely with the training director to ensure all TMN requirements for basic training are met
- n. Serves as chair of the annual financial examination committee [see 5.3.1]
- o. Attends the TMN annual meeting to prepare for service as chapter president

3.2.3 Secretary

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Conducts necessary chapter correspondence as assigned by the president
- c. Records, publishes, and preserves the minutes of all meetings of the board, executive committee, general membership, and any special meetings [see 4.6]
- d. Maintains record of attendance at each meeting and whether a quorum is present
- e. Maintains a paper copy or a secure digital record of all minutes and correspondence according to the chapter records retention policy—digital records are available with restricted access at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/shared-drives>. [Reference at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- f. At board and chapter meetings, has access to electronic or paper copies of past minutes, the Bylaws, CMOP, COH, and the parliamentary authority Robert's Rules of Order
- g. Ensures that a method is in place for maintaining the chapter's paper and/or electronic files [see 4.6]
- h. Facilitates chapter members' compliance with the chapter records retention policy
- i. For 501(c)(3) chapters, ensures that all board members sign the required Conflict of Interest form each year [Reference form at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- j. Maintains a secure list of all websites, social media platforms, email distribution lists, apps, data storage sites, financial accounts, and any other tools the chapter uses to conduct its business (include username and password if appropriate)
- k. Provides attendance to VMS approvers
- l. Retrieves recordings of board and chapter meetings and save to shared drive
- m. Files appropriate and required chapter documentation with TMN

3.2.4 Treasurer

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Receives all monies for the chapter and maintain them in a chapter bank account
- c. Develops and maintains an annual budget for the chapter with input and approval by the board—the proposed budget should be finalized and submitted for approval as soon as possible after the start of the new calendar year
- d. Pays all bills promptly upon receipt of a written statement, invoice, or receipt and any other required documentation for approved expenses
- e. Makes all financial reports and documents available to any chapter member or advisor upon request
- f. Ensures that the required two or three signers are on the chapter bank account
- g. If any other financial tools are used by the chapter, such as PayPal or Square, ensures that at least two other board members have access
- h. Signs all checks, drafts, or other instruments for payment or notes of the chapter; in the absence of the treasurer, the president or another designated officer may sign any instruments under \$1,000.00 for payment or notes of the chapter
- i. Ensures that for any unbudgeted payments of \$1,000.00 or greater, the president must provide written authorization in advance (and filed with the chapter), and/or must co-sign the payment instrument with the treasurer or other designated officer
- j. Presents a financial report at all board and chapter meetings that includes the status of all financial transactions and bank statement reconciliations

- k. Prepares and submits all annual financial records, reports and audits as required by law and sponsoring agencies
- l. Presents the financial records to the financial examination committee [see 5.3.1] annually as requested
- m. Maintains the financial records of the chapter in such a way that quality financial reports can be produced that are easily understood by any chapter member or advisor—financial management systems can be a detailed spreadsheet or commercially available software programs such as QuickBooks or Quicken
- n. For 501(c)(3) chapters, files the 990N or other tax form with the IRS annually
- o. For 501(c)(3) chapters, uses a financial management system that meets *Generally Accepted Accounting Principles*
- p. Retains a detailed account of all income, expenses, disbursements, and other financial matters (including a paper copy of such documentation) for seven years plus the current calendar year, according to the chapter records retention policy [Reference the TMN Chapters Records Retention Policy at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- q. Serves as a member of the chapter's Ad Hoc committee for grants, contracts, and donations
- r. Oversees and maintains the board approved financial policies and procedures document

3.3 Duties of directors

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Works closely with appropriate board members to identify and align their directorship with the chapter's mission and strategic priorities
- c. Communicates the activities, problems, and budget reports of their committees or projects, as needed, typically at board meetings
- d. Communicates actions of the board to the committee chairs or project leaders typically after board meetings, or more frequently, as needed

3.4 List of directors and other *non-officer* board members

- Advanced training director
- Chapter advisor
- Chapter event director
- Chapter state representative
- Communications director
- Education director
- Environmental stewardship director
- Immediate past president
- Membership director
- Outreach director
- Training class director
- Training class representative
- Volunteer service projects director

3.4.1 Advanced training (AT) director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Leads and coordinates the chapter's advanced training opportunities, ensuring activities are organized, supported, and aligned with chapter operations and board direction
- c. Maintains and uses the established form and process for members to request that a project be considered for AT credit
- d. Reviews and recommends approval or disapproval of AT requests and events in coordination with the AT committee [Reference CMOP 5.10]
- e. Coordinates with the membership director to establish and manage AT opportunities in the chapter's volunteer management system (VMS). Ensures that potential advanced training opportunities are

reviewed on a regular basis

- f. Communicates approved AT opportunities to chapter members and ensures that opportunities are posted on the chapter's official opportunity communication tool, Meetup

3.4.2 Chapter event director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. The chapter event director oversees the food and fun committee and the audio visual (AV) committee
- c. Schedules and secures chapter meeting speakers, venues, and door prizes
- d. Coordinates with the AV committee chair to ensure meeting AV equipment is operational and available for chapter meetings, chapter sponsored events, and training classes
- e. Schedules and secures venues for monthly board meetings
- f. Arranges access to meeting venues
- g. Introduces speaker at chapter meeting
- h. Keeps in touch with upcoming speaker, obtains biography for introduction, and coordinates copying any handouts needed
- i. Sends thank-you notes after the monthly meeting to the speaker
- j. Coordinates with the AV committee to assist the president with hybrid meetings
- k. Develops chapter field trips
- l. Works closely with the food and fun committee to communicate to the chair the accurate dates, times, and locations of meetings and events
- m. Coordinates scheduling of special chapter events such as anniversaries, holiday parties, and volunteer recognition events with food and fun committee

3.4.3 Chapter state representative

This position is assumed by the president, or the president may appoint a board member to assume these responsibilities.

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Work as a chapter liaison with the TMN state program coordinator
- c. Represent the chapter in state level matters of the TMN program
- d. Enhance the communication between the state and the chapter
- e. With the vice president and immediate past president help guide and educate the chapter's new officers and directors using the state governing documents
- f. Participate in meetings as requested by TMN state program coordinators
- g. Review draft state documents as requested
- h. Help with planning and coordination of activities for the TMN statewide annual meeting

3.4.4 Communication director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. The communication director leads and oversees chapter communication functions by managing and coordinating volunteers and committees that support communications including: [see 5.2.3]
 - History and archives historian or committee (preservation of records and media)
 - Website volunteer or committee
 - Social media volunteer or committee
 - Volunteers contributing items such as blogs, photos, and videos
 - Volunteers who maintain website and social media platforms
 - Volunteers who maintain electronic records on Google Drive (internal electronic records)
- c. Coordinates with the vice president, chapter events director, and outreach director to ensure consistent, accurate, and timely communication of dates, times, and venues of chapter events and activities for members and the public
- d. Collaborates with the training class director and membership director to support development and

- distribution of recruiting materials
- e. Supports the history and archives function by providing information to ensure preservation of memorabilia in any media
- f. Ensures processes are in place and followed for submission, review, and publication of member-contributed content
- g. Coordinates development and publication of communication materials, including announcements, blogs, and multimedia content for members and the public
- h. Provides resources and guidance for communication platforms and tools, including website, social media channels, Meetup, and similar systems used to publish announcements for Advanced Training, Volunteer Service opportunities, and chapter events and special events
- i. Oversees organization and maintenance of communication materials and records, including storage on approved platforms (for example Google Drive)
- j. Oversees chapter website
- k. Oversees chapter social media platforms and content developed for chapter members
 - Website and Social media must be compliant with the TMN Brand Guide [Reference at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>] and with policies of the TMN sponsoring agencies: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (AgriLife Extension)

3.4.5 Education director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Leads and coordinates the education functional area, supporting committees and ensuring educational activities align with chapter mission and board direction
- c. Works closely with the president to ensure education activities are aligned with the chapter's mission and strategic priorities
- d. The education director manages and oversees the volunteers, liaisons, and committees that affect education through various programs for members and the public within the chapter's community including: [see 5.2.4]
 - Jr. Master Naturalist program
 - PPLT homeschooling program
 - Texas Water Specialist certification program
 - Volunteers who maintain educational materials (tubs/totes/bins)
- e. Supports the Jr. Master Naturalist chair and committee resources, program information, and scheduling as needed
- f. Supports the PPLT homeschooling program with resources, program information, and scheduling as needed
- g. Supports the Texas Water Specialist certification program by providing information, certification requirements, and recognition of volunteers who become certified
- h. Oversees volunteers to ensure materials are up to date and to manage the chapter's educational materials, inventory, and checkout process

3.4.6 Environmental Stewardship director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. See also, 6.3—Responsibilities of project leaders
- c. Leads and coordinates the environmental stewardship functional area, supporting committees and projects that conserve and improve habitats within the chapter's territories and align with the chapter mission and board direction
- d. Works closely with the president to ensure environmental stewardship activities are aligned with the chapter's mission and strategic priorities
- e. The environmental stewardship director manages and oversees the projects that affect and improve the environment and habitats of the chapter's area

- f. The environmental stewardship director may be called upon to coordinate with the education, training, or outreach directors to participate and recruit for educational, training, or outreach activities

3.4.7 Membership director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Leads and coordinates membership administration, ensuring member services and records are organized and support chapter operations and board direction
- c. Maintains a current roster of all chapter members with pertinent contact information and ensures such information is not shared on public sites, including the chapter website or social media platforms; provides the roster to the President annually
- d. Oversees chapter merchandise activities and ensures they are conducted in accordance with board-approved financial policies and procedures
- e. Publishes names of members achieving certification and milestone awards, and presents service awards at chapter meetings; ensures member hours are monitored to support timely recognition
- f. Ensures chapter members are trained in the proper use of the volunteer management system (VMS), including entering and maintaining volunteer service (VS) and advance training (AT) hours
- g. Works with training and communication directors to develop and distribute recruiting material and coordinate outreach efforts
- h. Coordinates with the training class director, including integration into VMS
- i. Coordinates with communication director and chapter officers to manage electronic communications to all members and ensures the Meetup organizer has necessary VMS related information
- j. Manages the chapter's use of VMS for reporting VS and AT hours [Reference CMOP, 5. and 6.]
- k. Supervises the chapter VMS administrator's (VMS Approver) process for reviewing and approving hours logged by members
- l. Ensures all member VMS profiles are complete and up to date, including information required for annual criminal background checks
- m. Ensures recruitment and continuity of the membership committee and, in the absence of sufficient committee members, ensures responsibilities are fulfilled
- n. Oversees management of VMS data, including coding and creation of new volunteer service and advanced training opportunities, maintenance of Texas Master Naturalist user-defined fields and chapter-related certifications, and coordination of data entry support as needed; User Defined Fields (UDFs) associated with other TPWD volunteer programs, such as Angler Education, are managed by those individual programs and cannot be updated by TMN chapter administrators.
- o. Supervises the process for reviewing and approving member hours to ensure accuracy and timeliness
- p. Ensures timely and accurate reporting of member hours and supports preparation of required reports to the Texas Master Naturalist state organization, in coordination with the Secretary
- q. Manages the chapter's mentor program in coordination with the training class director [Reference CMOP, Appendix 3.]

3.4.8 Outreach director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Leads and coordinates outreach efforts, ensuring activities effectively connect the chapter with the community and align with chapter operations and board direction
- c. Manages and oversees the chapter's outreach programs and events, including outreach festivals, TPWD programs and special events
- d. Plans, coordinates, and ensures chapter presence at outreach events in collaboration with event coordinators and partner organizations
- e. Researches and identifies new outreach opportunities aligned with the Texas Master Naturalist mission
- f. Recruits, trains, coordinates, and ensures adequate participation of volunteers for outreach activities
- g. Develops and maintains partnerships with State Parks personnel, PPLT, and other agencies,

organizations, and community groups

- h. Develops and maintains a core team of volunteers to support outreach events
- i. Develops and manages the outreach budget, website calendar, and schedule
- j. Coordinates volunteer scheduling using appropriate tools (e.g. Meetup)
- k. Maintains outreach communications by notifying membership of events and coordinating with the communications director for website, calendar, and announcements
- l. Creates, maintains, and manages outreach materials, including displays, handouts, giveaways, and training tubs
- m. Oversees storage, transport, inventory, and required reporting (e.g., outreach tubs)
- n. Coordinates with the volunteer service projects director to maintain and pre-approve outreach opportunities
- o. Ensures collection and reporting of outreach impact data and participation in VMS
- p. Acts as liaison between outreach leads, committee members, and the board

3.4.9 Training class director

Note about term of office: The term of the new training director begins upon the conclusion of the current training class or at a reasonable time thereafter.

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Leads and coordinates the chapter's training classes and committee, ensuring delivery and administration support of member recruitment, training and onboarding in support of board direction
- c. Works closely with the vice president to ensure all TMN requirements for basic training are met
- d. Develops a budget for the class and submits it to the board for approval
- e. Recommends class tuition fees to the board for approval
- f. Works with outreach and communication directors to develop recruiting strategy and materials
- g. Coordinates with the membership director to manage the training class application process and new volunteer VMS onboarding process
- h. Coordinates with membership director to review applicants and share with the board as appropriate
- i. Presents to the board for approval a proposed class syllabus that covers the state-approved curriculum for Initial Training [Reference CMOP 2.3]
- j. Serves as manager for the training class, including planning, curriculum development, calendar—including orientation and graduation dates, instructors, venues, attendance tracking, etc.
- k. Coordinates with the chapter events director and food and fun committee to provide welcoming meals for trainees during the first two training sessions
- l. Coordinates with the chapter events director to obtain audio/visual equipment required for training classes.
- m. Uses chapter audio/visual equipment as needed to support training classes and returns equipment to the chapter events director or designated storage location following use, as appropriate
- n. Coordinates all communications with trainees
- o. Ensures that a mentoring program is in place for trainees [Reference CMOP Appendix 3]
- p. Ensures each trainee receives appropriate instruction to use VMS and Meetup
- q. Assists all trainees in successfully completing Initial Training and achieving certification
- r. Informs chapter leadership about training class progress, needs, challenges, and recommendations

3.4.10 Training class representative

Training class representative serves from when elected at the beginning of a training course for 12 months.

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Represents the current training class as a member of the board, attending board and chapter meetings
- c. Participates as a member of the training committee [see 5.2.12] planning for the subsequent class

- d. Participates as a member of the annual financial examination committee [see 5.3.1]
- e. Reports back to the current training class to provide trainees information about chapter business
- f. Talks to the subsequent training class about selecting a training class representative

3.4.11 Volunteer service projects director

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Leads and coordinates volunteer service project opportunities, ensuring projects are organized and support the chapter's service mission and board direction
- c. Maintains and uses the established form and process for members to request approval of new VS projects, using VMS requirements as a guideline [Reference link at: <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- d. Reviews and recommends approval or disapproval of VS project requests in coordination with the VS Projects Committee [Reference CMOP 6.8 Appendix 2]
- e. Coordinates with the membership director to establish and manage volunteer opportunities in the chapter's Volunteer Management System (VMS)
- f. Coordinates with project leaders to ensure responsibilities are fulfilled [see 6.3]
- g. Ensures that complete and accessible descriptions of VS projects are available to all chapter members through chapter communication tools

3.5 Duties of other board members

3.5.1 Immediate past president

In the absence of an immediate past president, the president assigns these responsibilities to a previous past president or another board member.

- a. See 3.1—Duties of all board members
- b. Ensures all officers and directors perform their duties and responsibilities as stated in this COH and are familiar with program guiding documents (i.e., Bylaws, CMOP)
- c. Provides continuity from prior board to ensure local policies and procedures are being followed
- d. Provides counsel to officers and directors on fulfilling duties and responsibilities
- e. Assists the president as requested
- f. Leads an annual review of the chapter's COH and update if necessary to reflect actual chapter policies and procedures as well as to ensure compliance with all TMN state governing documents [Reference <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- g. Chairs the nomination committee [see 5.3.2] [Reference Bylaws, Article V, E, 2]
- h. Ensures an active nomination committee is in place by May 1 of each year to fill those new leadership positions that will be vacant and need to be filled for the following new year. In addition, and in the event of the resignation of any Board member, the Chair of the nomination committee will commence a committee and search for replacements.

3.5.2 Chapter advisor

The duties and responsibilities of the chapter advisor are described in detail in Appendix 1 of the CMOP and in Article V, B of the Bylaws. Also see 3.1—Duties of all board members

4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD

4.1 Authority

The board is responsible for the success of the chapter and has the authority to conduct the business of the chapter as defined in the Bylaws. [Reference Article VI, A. 2-3]

4.2 Committee oversight

All committees and their activities are subject to review and approval by the board.

4.3 Expenditure limits

The board will honor any expenditure limits set by the chapter.

4.4 Voting

All business before the board requires approval by majority vote of board members in attendance (either in person or via electronic method) at a board meeting where a quorum is present. All official board votes shall be recorded in the minutes. If a director's position consists of two members, acting as co-directors, the combined vote of the co-directors counts as a single vote.

4.5 Setting dues

The board may set annual membership dues payable to the chapter, with approval of a majority of members present at a duly called and convened general membership meeting.

- a. The board must notify voting members at least 30 days prior to the general meeting that the subject of dues or their increase will be brought before the convened general membership for action
- b. The board, under special circumstances, may waive part or all an individual's annual membership dues on a case-by-case basis, if approved by a majority vote of the board
- c. Dues shall be payable on or before January 31 each calendar year; if dues are not paid by January 31 each calendar year, then all privileges afforded a TMN member are rescinded until dues are paid (a TMN member who is not current in the payment of dues will be considered inactive and categorized as such in VMS)

4.6 Records retention

The board must conduct chapter business in compliance with the chapter records retention policy, that in turn must meet requirements as outlined in the state policy. [Reference TMN Chapters Records Retention Policy at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]

- a. Ensures the chapter has a records retention policy in place
- b. Follows the TMN Chapters Records Retention Policy
- c. Establish and maintain a remote data storage system—that is, the Google Drive, giving appropriate access to chapter members responsible for retaining records of their positions
- d. Train all chapter members who are in leadership positions (officers, board members, committee chairs, project leaders) in the requirements of the records retention policy and the proper use of the chapter's designated data storage system

5 COMMITTEES

All committees serve subject to the oversight and approval of the board. The president appoints committee chairs. A director may also serve as the committee chair for the standing committee under that director's purview. If more than one committee, clarify leadership of each committee. The chair is responsible for seeing that the committee fulfills its responsibilities and meets its objectives. Committees may meet remotely.

5.1 Standing committees

Standing Committees are permanent committees established to conduct the ongoing business and operations of the chapter. Committee responsibilities and activities may evolve over time; however, Standing Committees continue from year to year until modified or dissolved in accordance with chapter governance procedures.

5.1.1 State-required standing committees

- Advanced training committee [see 5.2.1]
- Executive committee [see 5.2.5]
- Membership committee [see 5.2.10]
- Training class committee [see 5.2.12]
- Volunteer service projects committee [see 5.2.14]

5.1.2

Chapter standing committees

- Audio visual (AV) committee [see 5.2.2]
- Communication committee [see 5.2.3]
- Education committee [see 5.2.4]
- Food and fun committee [see 5.2.6]
- History and archives committee [see 5.2.7]
- Interpretive hike committee [see 5.2.8]
- Junior Master Naturalist (JMN) committee [see 5.2.9]
- Outreach committee [see 5.2.11]
- VMS Committee [see 5.2.13]

5.2 Duties of all committee chairs and members

The chapter may add more committee positions or combine these listed, according to the chapter needs. Responsibilities will many times overlap and be shared between chairs and directors.

- a. Communicate effectively with the executive officers, board members, and committee members
- b. Maintain confidentiality when dealing with individual member issues
- c. Whenever possible, maintain the privacy of members' personal information
- d. Strive to further the TMN mission in everything that one does
- e. Adhere to the *TMN Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct* [Reference at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- f. Remember that every chapter and every member represent the public face of the TMN Program and its sponsoring agencies
- g. Serve as a model of leadership and recruit and develop new leaders for the chapter
- h. Communicate the activities, problems, budget reports of their committees or projects to the board as needed, typically at board meetings
- i. Communicate actions of the board to the committee chairs or project leaders typically after board meetings or more frequently as needed
- j. Establish and oversee committees by serving as or identifying committee chairs and recruiting and engaging volunteers as appropriate, and ensuring essential responsibilities are fulfilled when participation is limited

5.2.1 Advanced training (AT) committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the advanced training director and supports the administration of the chapter's advanced training opportunities
- c. Reviews and recommends for approval or disapproval all AT requests and events [Reference CMOP 5.10]
- d. Communicates with the membership director to set up and manage AT opportunities in the chapter's Volunteer Management System (VMS)
- e. Supports AT director in reviewing and approving AT opportunities for chapter members
- f. Assists in publicizing approved AT opportunities to chapter members in a timely fashion by a variety of means such as email notifications or website event calendars, and specifically on the official chapter opportunity communications tool, the LPMN Meetup group

5.2.2 Audio visual (AV) committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the chapter events director and supports the planning and execution of chapter events
- c. Members should have familiarity with current technologies that the chapter uses
- d. Assists the chapter events director to set up, test, troubleshoot, and repack audio-visual equipment used at chapter meetings and chapter sponsored events and training

- e. Assists the president with hybrid meetings: hosting the Zoom meeting, admitting members, noting chat inputs to the president, and raising remote attendees' questions and concerns to speakers and president

5.2.3 Communication committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the communications director and coordinates chapter communications and messaging
- c. The communications committee coordinates and supports all chapter communication functions but does not replace the operational responsibilities of other committees. The communications committee coordinates and supports external outreach and public-facing communications, including chapter events, activities, and community visibility
- d. Coordinates with the vice president, chapter events and outreach directors to publish accurate and timely communication of chapter events and activities
- e. Collaborates with the training class and membership directors to support development and distribution of training recruitment materials
- f. Supports the history and archives function to ensure preservation of chapter memorabilia in any media
- g. Oversees development of content for external communications, including blogs, photography, and video
- h. Oversees chapter communication platforms, including website and social media channels
- i. Maintains internal electronic records related to communications using approved platforms (Google Drive)
- j. Ensures all published content complies with licensing, copyright, release, and TMN Brand Guide requirements
- k. Oversees communication materials for compliance with the TMN Brand Guide and sponsoring agency policies (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service)

5.2.4 Education committee

- a. See 5.2 – Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the education director and supports the functional areas of the chapter's educational opportunities
- c. The education director, volunteers, liaisons, and committee chairs are standing members of the education committee consisting of these various programs and elements of chapter education:
 - Jr. Master Naturalist program
 - PPLT homeschooling program
 - Texas Water Specialist certification program
 - Volunteers who maintain educational materials (tubs/totes/bins)
- d. The education committee coordinates with the JMN chair to support and assist as needed, including the educational materials
- e. The education committee coordinates with the PPLT homeschooling liaison to support and assist as needed, including educational materials
- f. The education committee coordinates with the Water Specialist Certification program liaison to support and assist as needed, including educational materials
- g. Members throughout the chapter contribute to educational materials. These materials are to be available to all volunteers and committees such as outreach events and interpretive activities. The volunteer working with the education director coordinates with members including inventory, check-out process, updating, notifying chapter members of what is available, and storage at AgriLife Extension facility.

5.2.5 Executive committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. The executive committee is composed of the elected officers of the chapter [Reference Bylaws,

Article VI, B.]

- c. With the immediate past president and the advisor, approve proposed directors to fill vacancies in a position
- d. In matters of discipline or removal of a member from TMN, review allegations and supporting documentation to make a recommendation to the TMN state program coordinator. [Reference Bylaws, Article V, H.] [Reference Process for Disciplining or Removing Members at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- e. In matters of serious incidences of malfeasance or behavior inconsistent with the principles of the chapter (of a board member other than an elected officer), review the issues and vote to remove that board member from position if necessary [Reference Bylaws Article V, I, 2]

5.2.6 Food and fun committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. The food and fun committee chair manages the volunteers for this committee
- c. Operates under the leadership of the chapter events director and supports the planning and execution of chapter events
- d. Maintains inventory and supplies
- e. Coordinates meals and refreshments for monthly chapter meetings
- f. Coordinates meals and refreshments for training class orientation and subsequent two training classes and graduation
- g. Trains and provides supplies for the training class food and fun volunteers.

5.2.7 History and archive committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the communications director and supports chapter communications through preservation of historical records
- c. Historian serves as chair of the history and archives committee
- d. Organizes chapter history through documents, photos, articles and electronic media
- e. Maintains the historical records of the chapter. Historical records include:
 - Chapter member recognition
 - Chapter newsletter archives
 - Chapter projects
 - Chapter scrapbook
 - Events and meetings
 - Training classes
 - Historical board and chapter meeting agendas and minutes

5.2.8 Interpretive hike committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the outreach director and supports community outreach through interpretive programming
- c. Interpretive hike chair manages and oversees the interpretive hike committee
- d. Ensures hike leaders are trained according to TPWD's interpretive hike program
- e. Coordinates with Meetup organizer as needed to announce interpretive hike training that qualifies as Advanced Training
- f. Coordinates and schedules seasonal interpretive hike programs for the public and private groups
- g. Acts as communication point person between the state parks and the chapter regarding the interpretive hike program

5.2.9 Junior Master Naturalist (JMN) committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members

- b. Operates under the leadership of the education director and supports the education functional area
- c. Oversees the JMN committee when convened. The JMN committee is responsible for all aspects of the JMN project, including:
 - Arranging for refreshments during meetings
 - Developing a curriculum
 - Developing program marketing, an application process, and trainee recruitment plans
 - Maintaining appropriate liability documents
 - Planning and facilitating JMN field trips
 - Recruiting and scheduling of speakers
 - Session scheduling and venue procurement
- d. Prepares and manages a budget to support the activities of the JMN project

5.2.10 Membership committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the membership director and supports the administration of chapter member services
- c. Assists the membership director in managing the chapter's records and reports within VMS (The membership director may designate an assistant VMS administrator to assume some of these responsibilities.)
- d. Supports the membership director in ensuring the accuracy of hours and activities logged into VMS (The membership director may designate an assistant VMS administrator to assume some of these responsibilities.)
- e. Assists in maintaining the current roster of members
- f. Assists the membership director in tracking and reporting the names of members who have completed the Initial Training course, achieved initial certification, achieved re-certification, and earned milestone awards
- g. Helps publicize and celebrate member achievements (e.g., at chapter meetings, on the chapter website, in newsletters, at volunteer recognition events)

5.2.11 Outreach committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the outreach director and supports the outreach functional area
- c. Supports the planning, coordination, and execution of outreach programs, events, and festivals
- d. Assists with event logistics, including setup, takedown, materials handling, and on-site participation
- e. Researches and recommends community outreach opportunities aligned with the TMN mission
- f. Assists in developing outreach materials, educational content, and event themes
- g. Supports recruitment and coordination of volunteers, including scheduling and communications
- h. Assists in maintaining outreach materials, supplies, storage, and equipment (including outreach tubs)
- i. Assists in publicizing outreach events and promoting participation
- j. Collects and reports outreach impact data

5.2.12 Training class committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the training class director and supports the administration of the chapter's training classes
- c. Plans, implements, and evaluates the chapter training curriculum and develops the calendar for Initial Training course
- d. Acquires the TMN state curriculum for each class member and prepare additional class materials
- e. Ensures presenters are selected and arranges for their presentations including materials, handouts, and required audio-visual equipment

- f. Arranges for speaker gifts, travel, lodging needs, confirmation, and thank you letters
- g. Ensures publicity is arranged, e.g., newspaper articles, flyers, brochures, social media
- h. Ensures all training venues have the necessary equipment within their facilities for all class sessions
- i. Assists with class field trips
- j. Ensures there is a method to track attendance of trainees and to monitor their progress toward completion of the Initial Training course
- k. Coordinates with the membership director to monitor training hours in VMS
- l. Hosts training class orientation and course completion events
- m. Coordinates with the food and fun committee for refreshments and amenities during class sessions and graduation

5.2.13 Volunteer Management System (VMS) committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the membership director and supports member services tracking and reporting
- c. Manages the chapter's Volunteer Management System (VMS)
- d. Manages VMS data entry volunteers
- e. Ensures chapter members are appropriately trained to enter and maintain volunteer and advanced training hours in VMS
- f. Ensures chapter member hours are reviewed and approved in a timely manner
- g. Manages hours reported to ensure timely recognition of chapter members' certification and milestone awards
- h. Update user defined fields including advanced certification such as angler education
- i. Manages coding of new volunteer and advanced training opportunities to VMS
- j. Maintains the chapter's use of VMS for reporting volunteer service hours and advanced training hours [Ref. State Chapter Management and Operations Protocols, Appendix IV, Volunteer Management System]
- k. Maintains a roster of all chapter members with pertinent contact information and shares with president annually
- l. Assists the secretary with preparation of annual reports as required by the TMN state organization

5.2.14 Volunteer Service (VS) projects committee

- a. See 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members
- b. Operates under the leadership of the volunteer service project director and supports the administration of volunteer service project opportunities
- c. Reviews and recommends for approval or disapproval all VS requests and events [Reference CMOP 6.8]
- d. Communicates with the membership director to set up and manage VS opportunities in the chapter's Volunteer Management System (VMS)
- e. Assists in publicizing approved opportunities to chapter members in a timely fashion by a variety of means such as email notifications and website event calendar, and on the official chapter opportunity communications tool, the LPMN Meetup group
- f. Supports VS projects director in reviewing and approving VS volunteer opportunities for chapter members
- g. Assists in drafting a complete description of those project activities for which volunteer service hours may be accumulated and assure the descriptions are kept up to date where all chapter members can easily access them (e.g., on the chapter website)
- h. Assists in organizing and hosting volunteer project fairs or similar events for chapter members (specifically for members-in-training enrolled in the chapter's Initial Training course)

- i. Assists in managing project opportunities in the chapter's VMS
- j. Assists project leaders in fulfilling their responsibilities [see 6.3]

5.3 Ad hoc committees

Ad hoc committees are formed for a particular and specific short-term purpose. Every chapter must form the first two committees described below. Additional committees or a task force may be formed by the board as needed to address specific task or purposes projects or programs. See also 5.2—Duties of all committee chairs and members.

5.3.1 Annual financial examination committee

- a. President appoints the chair (not a bank signatory)
- b. Conducts the annual examination of chapter financial records [Reference Bylaws Article IX]
- c. Members include vice president, secretary, training class representative, and chapter advisor
- d. The Treasurer provides financial records for review
- e. Results of the annual financial examination will be reported and recorded in the minutes at the board meeting following the completion of the audit with signed attestations from each committee member

5.3.2 Nomination committee

This committee must be used for the selection of officer candidates. It may be used for recommending director candidates. The Chair of the nomination committee [see 5.3.2] [Reference Bylaws, Article V, E, 2] ensures an active committee is in place by May 1 of each year to fill those new leadership positions that will be vacant and need to be filled for the following new year. In addition, and in the event of the resignation of any Board member, the chair of the nomination committee will commence a committee and search for replacements.

- a. For elected officers, proceed in accordance with Bylaws, Article V, D. 2. Election Process
- b. For director positions, proceed in accordance with Bylaws, Article V, E. 2 and 3
- c. President appoints members to the committee, chaired by the immediate past president
- d. Committee must review the required skills, duties, and responsibilities of each position with the proposed candidate to assess the candidate's understanding and willingness to perform the functions of the position prior to nominating the candidate
- e. The committee presents a slate of candidates to the president, considering the following attributes (selection of candidates based on these attributes would maintain experience and continuity for the board while recruiting new members to serve):
 - Officer candidates must be certified Texas Master Naturalists and members in good standing—an exception is made for chapters in their first year of operation
 - The committee shall endeavor to select candidates from the chapter membership who demonstrate appropriate skills for managing the position for which they are being nominated. Candidates should not be selected only on length of time in a certain position, length of time in the chapter, or on amount of service hours attained
- f. Election procedure:
 - The president must publish the slate of officer candidates to the chapter membership in writing at least 15 days prior to the last general membership meeting of the calendar year
 - The nomination committee will conduct the election at the last general membership meeting of the calendar year
- g. TMN state program coordinator may provide oversight to a chapter's nomination process

5.3.3 Grants, donations, and contracts committee

This committee will be convened as required.

- a. Any grants or donations solicited for the chapter must be approved by the chapter board
- b. Membership on the grants and donations committee should at least include the chapter treasurer and the project leader of a project that has grant funding or receives donations
- c. Any chapter that receives a grant or donation of \$5,000.00 or more must notify the TMN state

- office—chapters are encouraged to share with the state office any news of grants or donations received
- d. The term of service for the committee or any subcommittees is based on the specific functions performed by the committee or on the required reporting period of a Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement (MOU/MOA), grant, donation, or project
 - e. Volunteer service hours cannot be used as match for any grant, contract, or MOU/MOA
 - f. Chapters cannot enter any contract, MOU, or MOA without prior review by the TMN state office
 - g. Functions of this committee may include:
 - Review grant opportunities for the chapter
 - Coordinate grant application process
 - Track progress of grants
 - Ensure that reports are made to grantors as to the progress on grant spending
 - Monitor MOUs and MOAs via ad hoc subcommittees as necessary for monitoring each MOU/MO—the project leader of projects that fall under the MOU or MOA should chair the subcommittee and must report regularly to the Executive Committee.

6 CHAPTER PROJECTS

The chapter maintains an established process and form for proposing new Volunteer Service (VS) projects, using the information required for setting up opportunities in the Volunteer Management System (VMS) as a guideline. [Reference: <https://texasmasternaturalist.freshdesk.com/support/home/>]

6.1 New projects

A new or expanded volunteer service project may be proposed by any active chapter member, following the instructions provided by the VS projects director. [Reference <https://txmn.org/lostpines/>]

6.2 Travel time and territory

Members may include a reasonable and typical amount of travel time when recording volunteer service hours; however, travel time must not include side trips for personal activities and may not exceed the total number of hours served. Travel time must not be included for Advanced Training (AT), chapter meetings, or initial training for participants.

Travel within the chapter's territory is generally acceptable. Travel to service projects outside of the chapter's territory but within the chapter's trained ecoregion may be approved at the board's discretion. Travel outside of the chapter's trained ecoregion needs to be critically reviewed and approved at the board level and follow criteria for service project approval.

6.3 Responsibilities of project leaders

- a. Keep the chapter membership informed of events concerning your project, including information about location, date, time, and equipment needed for workdays
- b. Keep your director (if appropriate) informed of your project status
- c. Provide your contact information as the leader for each workday on Meetup
- d. Ensure that the president and website editor or calendar keeper are informed of details so event listings can be kept up to date
- e. Record impact data in VMS about each workday or appoint one of the volunteers to do so
- f. Report on projects periodically via the newsletter, email blasts, newspaper articles, and/or chapter meetings. Store photographs and videos in the Google shared drive's appropriate folder.
- g. Submit a budget request for expenses associated with the project—expenditures up to or equal to \$249.99 are permitted. Amounts \$250.00 or more require pre-approval by the board.
- h. Work with the chapter board to solicit grants or donations as appropriate—the TMN state office must be notified of any grants of \$5,000.00 or more received by the chapter. Notify the state regarding all grants, awards, and recognitions.
- i. Maintain contact with partners at the event venue or worksite for your project (partners may include cities, counties, schools, parks, non-profit organizations, or site supervisors)

- j. Maintain an updated file for the project on the chapter's data storage system. Include pictures, reports on workdays, and partner and volunteer contact information
- k. Maintain physical inventory records for project materials, supplies, audiovisual equipment, and tools within their functional area

7 MEMBERSHIP

This section describes the principles and administrative framework for chapter membership, consistent with TMN bylaws. [Reference *Bylaws*, Article IV]

7.1 Non-discrimination and inclusion

Membership in the chapter is open to individuals aged 18 or over, based on the equal opportunity policies of the state sponsoring agencies, TPWD, and AgriLife Extension.

7.2 Member categories

- Texas Master Naturalist-in-Training (Member-in-Training)—a member enrolled in a chapter's Initial Training course
- Texas Master Naturalist—an active member who is current on all dues and has completed Initial Training course requirements
- Certified Texas Master Naturalist—an active member who is current on all dues and has met all the requirements of initial certification and thereafter, attains annual recertification

7.3 Membership status

7.3.1 Criminal background check

All persons who are chapter members in any category must submit to and pass the required annual criminal background check.

7.3.2 Dues

Members must be current in the payment of any dues set by the chapter.

7.3.3 Transfer members

Members may transfer between chapters within the state of Texas. [Reference CMOP, 3.2]

7.3.4 Reinstatement

Members who have been moved to inactive status may petition a local chapter for reinstatement, providing all chapter membership requirements are met.

8 MEETINGS

8.1 Chapter meetings

The chapter has regularly scheduled monthly membership meetings on the third Monday of the month. December meeting dates change to accommodate holidays. Any number of members present at a meeting, in person or remotely, constitutes a quorum.

8.2 Board meetings

The chapter board has regularly scheduled monthly meetings beginning in January, on the first Thursday of the month. A majority of the members of the board must be present in person or remotely to constitute a quorum.

8.3 Meeting remotely

All meetings may be conducted by remote communication technology if the following requirements are met:

- a. Reasonable notification is given to persons entitled to participate in the meeting and includes relevant information to be discussed
- b. The system provides access to the meeting in a manner or using a method by which all meeting participants can communicate with each other

- c. Minutes include documentation that the requirements in items a. and b. were met

8.4 Minutes

Minutes are the legal record of a meeting and are never destroyed. They include actions considered by the board or general membership and business topics discussed. The following items must be included:

- a. Date and place of meeting—if held by remote communication technology or with a combination of remote and in-person attendees, that must be stated [see 8.3.c]
- b. Who presided at the meeting and who recorded minutes if the secretary was absent
- c. Time of call to order and of adjournment
- d. The number of members in attendance (to establish a quorum)—this may include the titles of officers and directors in attendance
- e. Whether previous minutes were approved (as published or as corrected)
- f. Summary of the treasurer's report (beginning balance, totals of income and expenses, and ending balance)—the entire report will be attached to the minutes
- g. Motions made and votes taken—include names of those making motions; names of seconders are not necessary; discussion on motions is not usually included, but may be signified by a phrase such as, "After much discussion, the motion carried"
- h. The fact that a report from a committee was given, but not usually the details of the report unless it involves a recommendation or requires a vote
- i. Name of presenter of a program and the topic, but no summary of the program

9 ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF HANDBOOK

9.1 Initial adoption

For a new chapter, the proposed COH must be distributed to chapter members in writing (conventional mail, email, or equivalent means) at least 15 days before the next general meeting, with notice that the ratification vote will be held at that meeting.

9.2 Amendment or revision

9.2.1 Board approval

Amendments or revisions to this COH must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the board members in attendance, either in person or remotely/virtually, at a regular board meeting.

9.2.2 Notification requirements

The general membership must be notified in writing (conventional mail, email, or other equivalent means) of the proposed amendments or revisions at least 15 days before the next chapter meeting, with notice that the ratification vote will be held at that meeting.

9.2.3 Membership approval

The general membership will have the opportunity to discuss the changes at the chapter meeting. Approval requires a majority vote of those in attendance, either in person or remotely.

9.3 State office notification

Once a chapter has adopted, revised, or amended the COH, an electronic copy must be sent to the TMN state office within 30 days.

10 REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

This section includes references to the state and chapter websites and includes other important resources.

10.1 TMN state website:

<https://txmn.tamu.edu>

10.2 State documents

All referenced state documents (or guides to creating chapter-specific documents) can be found on the state website at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>.

10.3 Volunteer Management System (VMS) help desk

<https://texasmasternaturalist.freshdesk.com/support/home/>

10.4 Chapter website

The Chapter Website is the primary source for membership information, detailed operational documents, forms, procedures, event information, and other chapter resources.

<https://txmn.org/lostpines/>