

# CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK

## Blackland Prairie Chapter January 2026

T E X A S

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### Texas Master Naturalist Program

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.

# **CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK**

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- 2) Jean Suplick – 2023 COH Review Committee
- 3) Gina McKnight – Grants Committee Chair
- 4) Michelle Connally – Communications Director
- 5) Rick Travis – President (2025), IPP (2026)
- 6) Stephanie Gonzalez – Secretary
- 7) Sumi Srikanth – Chair Asian American Committee (2026)
- 8) Vicki Sanders – Vice President (2025), President (2026)

### **COH Advisors**

- 1) Heather Fell – VH/AT Director
- 2) Kim Musquiz – 2025 Class Representative
- 3) Linda Nixon, Treasurer
- 4) Marla Layne – Community Engagement Director (2025)
- 5) Mike Roome, Accessibility Committee Chair
- 6) Nancy Casillas, Training Class Director
- 7) Tina Burke – Community Engagement Director (2026)

# CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK

## Blackland Prairie Chapter

### Texas Master Naturalist Program

#### 1. **CHAPTER ORGANIZATION**

**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 *Bylaws* at <https://txmn.org/bptmn/members/> and *CMOP* at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]. The Chapter is structured for governance as described in this *COH*.

#### 2. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**2.1 Makeup of the Board** – The Board consists of the officers, the directors, the Immediate Past President, and the Chapter advisor(s). All are voting members of the Board.

**2.1.1** Officers are elected by the membership [**Reference *Bylaws* Article V., A., and E.**] They are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

**2.1.2** Officers are elected by the membership [**Reference *Bylaws* Article V., A., and E.**]

- a. All Officer positions are decided by election.
- b. All elected Officers shall serve for a period of twenty-four months and are eligible for re-election subject to term limits.
- c. The signatory Officers shall include Treasurer, President, and one other officer to be designated.

**2.1.3** Directors are appointed and approved according to ***Bylaws* Article V, F., and G.** They are:

- Volunteer Service/Advanced Training (VH/AT) Director
- Chapter State Representative
- Communications Director
- Membership Director
- Community Engagement (Outreach) Director
- Training Class Director (term is July through end of June the following year)
- Training Class Representative (term is Class graduation through end of June the following year)

**2.2 Term of office** - For officers and directors, the term of office is 12 months for appointed members and 24 months for elected members. They are eligible for re-election or re-appointment.

- a. Board officer elections for Vice President and Secretary are held in even numbered years, and President and Treasurer are held in odd numbered years, to avoid having an entirely new Board at any one time.
- b. No person may serve more than six consecutive years on the Board as an elected or appointed member without a majority approval of the Executive Committee. Preferred: no more than two terms.
- c. Committee Directors/Chairs serve twelve-month appointments. They are eligible for reappointment subject to term limits [**see 2.2a**].

- a. After one year off the Board a person may again be considered for election to the Board or appointment as a Committee director.
- b. Immediate Past President may serve the entire term of the seated President as elected member and no more than four terms as appointed member.

**2.3 Executive Committee** - The elected officers comprise the Executive Committee [see 5.1.3].

### **3. DUTIES OF BOARD**

#### **3.1 Duties of all Board members**

- a. 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.
- 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.

#### **3.2 Duties of officers**

##### **3.2.1 President**

- a. See 3.1 and 4 - Duties of all Board members.
- b. Serve as chair of the Board of Directors.
- c. Prepare an agenda for each Board and Chapter meeting.
- d. Preside at Board and Chapter meetings.
- e. Sign all Board-approved documents that may be legally binding on the Chapter.
- f. Ensure that the President is one of the three authorized signatories on the Chapter bank account.
- g. Authorize in writing in advance any payments to be made of \$1,000 or greater from the Chapter bank account. Communicate with Board and Chapter members as needed.
- h. Present a summary of the Chapter's accomplishments each year.
- i. Conduct votes by manual or electronic means as required by responsibilities of the Board [see 4.4].
- j. Present 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.
- k. Appoint all Committee Chairs and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees, assisting as appropriate.
- l. Ensure 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*).
- m. Ensure 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(s) and the TMN state program coordinator's review is obtained.
- n. Presents recognition awards to out-going Officers and Board members.
- o. Write donor appreciation letters.
- p. Communicate with the TMN state office, other Chapters, and state agencies as appropriate.
- q. Be the Chapter's State Representative or appoint an alternate to serve [see 3.3.2].
- r. If there is no Immediate Past President, reassign the duties of that position [see 3.4.1].
- s. Serve as Immediate Past President upon completion of term as President.

### 3.2.2 Vice President

- a. **See 3.1 and 4** - Duties of all Board members.
- b. Assist the President and act for the President in the President's absence.
- c. Meet with the President to recommend Chapter and Board meeting dates and locations for approval by the Board.
- d. Select and secure the venue for upcoming Chapter meetings.
- e. Arranges programs and speakers for monthly Chapter meetings and optional Deep Dives; manages communications and confirmations with speakers; provides introductions at meetings; and arranges for and presents speaker gifts and thank-you notes.
- f. Coordinates with the Communications Director to publish VP-hosted events and supplies all necessary information and materials to support promotion of meetings, Deep Dives, and other VP-hosted events.
- g. Amends, updates, and ensures preservation of the Chapter's electronic "Speakers and Presentations Catalog," which contains full speaker contact information, areas of expertise, and presentation topics for all individuals speaking or presenting at Chapter meetings or Chapter-sponsored advanced training programs.
- h. With the President, coordinate with project leaders to ensure their responsibilities are met. [**See 6.3**]
- i. Oversees planning for the annual holiday party in coordination with Board members and hospitality volunteers, and solicits additional volunteers from the membership as needed for planning, preparation, and event management.
- j. Participate as a member of the annual financial examination committee [**see 5.2.5**].

### 3.2.3 Secretary

- a. **See 3.1 and 4** - Duties of all Board members.
- b. Conduct necessary Chapter correspondence as assigned by the President.
- c. Record, publish, and preserve the minutes of all meetings of the Board, Executive Committee, general membership, and any special meetings [**see 8.4**].
- d. Keep a record of attendance at each meeting and whether a quorum is present.
- e. Maintain a paper copy or a secure digital record of all minutes and correspondence according to the Chapter records retention policy [Reference at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>].
- f. At Board and Chapter meetings, have access to electronic or paper copies of past minutes, the *Bylaws*, *CMOP*, *COH*, and *Roberts Rules of Order*.
- g. Ensure that a method is in place for maintaining the Chapter's paper and/or electronic files [**see 4.6**].
- h. Facilitate Chapter members' compliance with the Chapter records retention policy.
- i. Because Blackland Prairie is a 501(c)(3) organization, ensure 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. Maintain 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).

### 3.2.4 Treasurer

- a. **See 3.1 and 4** - Duties of all Board members.
- b. Receive all monies for the Chapter and maintain them in a Chapter bank account.
- c. Develop and maintain 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. Pay all bills promptly upon receipt of a written statement, invoice, or receipt and any other required documentation for approved expenses.
- e. Make all financial reports and documents available to any Chapter member or advisor upon request.
- f. Ensure the required three (3) signers are on the Chapter bank account. (**See Bylaws Article IX. B.**).
- g. Maintain/manage the Chapter PayPal account and other similar financial tools. Ensure there are at least two other Board members that can access and use these tools.
- h. Sign all checks, drafts, or other instruments for payment of Chapter money or notes up to \$1,000. If the Treasurer is unable to sign, the President or the designated officer will sign all payment instruments. (**See Bylaws Article IX.B.**).
- i. 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. Present a financial report at all Board and/or Chapter meetings that includes the status of all financial transactions and bank statement reconciliations.
- k. Prepare and submit all annual financial records, reports and audits as required by law and sponsoring agencies.
- l. Present the financial records to the annual Financial Examination Committee [see 5.2.5] following the close of the Fiscal Year on December 31.
- m. Maintain 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 programs such as QuickBooks or Quicken.
- n. For 501(c)(3) Chapters, file the 990N or other tax form with the IRS annually.
- o. For 501(c)(3) Chapters, use a financial management system that meets Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.
- p. Retain 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. Serve as a member of the Chapter's committee for grants, contracts, and donations.

### 3.3 Duties of directors

All directors are appointed by the Board on an annual basis and serve for a period of twelve months aligned with the Chapters' fiscal year. All directors are voting members of the Board.

#### 3.3.1 Advanced Training/Volunteer Service (VH/AT) Director

- a. **See 3.1 and 4** – Duties and responsibilities of all Board members.
- b. Chair the VH/AT Committee. [**See 5.1.1**].
- c. Review and recommend to the Board for action all advanced training and volunteer service opportunity requests and events. [**Reference CMOP 5.10, 6.8**].
- d. Maintain and utilize the Opportunity Request Form for members to request that a program be considered for advanced training or volunteer service credit.  
<https://txmn.org/bptmn/vhat/opportunity-request-form/>
- e. Assign codes and titles for approved advanced training events and volunteer service opportunities in VMS.
- f. Approve Chapter member entries for volunteer service and advanced training hours in VMS.
- g. Appoint committee members as needed to be trained in VMS procedures and assign specific duties.

- h. Ensure training of membership and trainees on how to log their volunteer service advanced training hours in VMS, and how to make changes, as necessary.
- i. Work with Membership Director to provide a process for Chapter members not having access to VMS to report advanced training and volunteer service hours.
- j. Coordinate with the Communications Director to maintain a calendar of approved opportunities for advanced training and volunteer service hours.
- k. Ensure that a complete description of every volunteer service project is accessible to all Chapter members through the Chapter website, event calendar, email announcements, or any other communication methods used by the Chapter.

### 3.3.2 Chapter State Representative

This position may be assumed by the President, or the President may appoint a Board member to assume these responsibilities.

- a. **See 3.1 and 4** – Duties and responsibilities of all Board members.
- b. Work as a Chapter liaison with the TMN state program coordinators.
- 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 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.
- i. Attend the TMN annual meeting or delegate an alternate.

### 3.3.3 Communications Director

- a. **See 3.1 and 4** – Duties of all Board members.
- b. Oversee volunteers or committees to handle these various aspects of Chapter communications:
  - history/archives
  - newsletter
  - outreach/ community engagement
  - publicity
  - social media
  - website
  - photos
  - Chapter meeting audio and video
- c. Write publicity press releases for print and electronic media covering training class application, Chapter meetings and special events.
- d. Work with the Vice President to publish monthly Chapter meeting events and special events. (**see 3.2.2.d**).
- e. Work with project leads to publish periodic updates on our Chapter service projects as post event summaries or requesting member participation (**see 6.3.5**).
- f. Work with Community Engagement (Outreach) Director to publicize for member participation in community outreach requests. (**see 3.3.5.e**).
- g. Work with the Training Class Director and Membership Director to develop recruiting materials.
- h. Arrange for printing and distribution of recruiting or promotional materials.
- i. Oversee social media platforms and content developed for Chapter members. Social media should be compliant with the TMN Brand Guide [Reference at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/tmn-brand-marketing/>] and with policies of the TMN sponsoring agencies: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (AgriLife Extension).

### 3.3.4 Membership Director

- a. See 3.1 and 4 – Duties and responsibilities of all Board members.
- b. Serve as a Volunteer Management System (VMS) administrator. [See reference Volunteer Management System Administrator Guide for Texas Master Naturalist Chapter Administrators [<https://texasmasternaturalist.freshdesk.com/support/solutions/articles/1000323877-tmn-vms-admin-guide>].
- c. Maintain a roster through VMS of all Chapter members (including trainees) with pertinent contact information.
- d. Prepare and report membership data to the Board and post the report in Teams for Board review prior to each Board meeting. The membership report includes the record of Chapter volunteer service and advanced training hours from VMS, membership totals, names of members achieving re-certification or earning milestone awards, and other information of relevance to the Board. [Reference CMOP 5. and 6.].
- e. Prepare the monthly AgriLife Impact Report by collecting data from Board members, sharing the completed report with the Board, and submitting it to the AgriLife Advisor.
- f. Present certification and milestone awards at Chapter meetings.
- g. Order and maintain a supply of re-certification and milestone award pins.
- h. Update member profiles in VMS, e.g., re-certifications and milestones, dues paid, inactive or deceased members, or Board positions.
- i. Provide members with a copy of their current criminal background check.
- j. Assure VMS profiles for Chapter members are up to date to allow the system to process the annual criminal background check.
- k. Process transferring member requests.
- l. Facilitate replacement of member name badges with Treasurer.
- m. Assist Chapter members as necessary with use of VMS for reporting volunteer service and advanced training hours.
- n. Coordinate as necessary with Advanced Training/Volunteer Service Director and Training Class Director regarding the Chapter's VMS process and data.
- o. Chair the Membership Committee [see 5.1.5].
- p. Appoint Membership Committee members as needed to be trained in VMS procedures and assign them specific duties.

### 3.3.5 Community Engagement (Outreach) Director

- a. See 3.1 and 4 – Duties and responsibilities of all Board members.
- b. Chair the Community Engagement Committee [see 5.1.2].
- c. Manage incoming requests for Chapter participation in community events, programs, and activities, and vet such requests for alignment with the Texas Master Naturalist mission.
- d. Recommend for approval or disapproval of all Community Engagement (outreach) requests by the Board.
- e. Coordinate with the Communications Director to publicize for member participation in community outreach requests.
- f. Coordinate with the VH/AT Director to determine the correct volunteer service project in VMS members should use when fulfilling Community Engagement (outreach) requests.
- g. Coordinate with the Communications Director to place on the Chapter website content of interest to our local communities.
- h. Assure hospitality (refreshments) are provided at in-person Chapter meetings and events.
- i. Recommend to the Board annual budget amounts required to support outreach and hospitality activities.
- j. Act as Board liaison for the Asian American Outreach Committee [See 5.2.3].
- k. Coordinate as needed with Board-established ad hoc committees.

- l. Recommend to the Board avenues for outreach to underserved constituencies of our local communities.

### 3.3.6 Training Class Director

Note about term of office: The term of the Training Class Director is July 1 through the end of June the following year.

- a. See 3.1 and 4 - Duties of all Board members.
- b. Chair the Training Class Committee [see 5.1.6].
- c. Develop a budget for the class and submit to the Board for approval.
- d. Recommend class tuition fees to the Board for approval.
- e. Work with Membership and Communication Directors to develop recruiting materials.
- f. Work with the membership director to manage the training class application process.
- g. Coordinate with the Membership Director to review applicants and share with the Board as appropriate.
- h. Present to the Board for approval a proposed class syllabus that covers the state-approved Curriculum for Initial Training [Reference *CMOP 2.4*].
- i. Serve as manager for the training class, including planning, curriculum development, calendar, instructors, venues, attendance tracking, etc.
- j. Coordinate all communications with trainees.
- k. Ensure that a mentoring program is in place for trainees [Reference *CMOP Appendix 3*]
- l. Ensure each trainee receives appropriate instructions to use VMS.

### 3.3.7 Training Class Representative

Note about term of office: Class Representative serves from class graduation through the end of June the following year.

- a. See 3.1 and 4 – Duties of all Board members.
- b. Represent the current training class as a member of the Board, attending Board and Chapter meetings.
- c. Participate as a member of the Training Committee [see 3.3.6] planning for the subsequent class.
- d. Participate as a member of the annual Financial Examination Committee [see 5.2.5].
- e. Report back to the current training class to provide trainees information about Chapter business.
- f. Talk to the subsequent training class about selecting a training class representative.

## 3.4 Duties of other Board members

### 3.4.1 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 and 4 – Duties of all Board members.
- b. Provide continuity from prior Board to ensure local policies and procedures are being followed.
- c. Provide counsel to officers and directors on fulfilling duties and responsibilities.
- d. Assist the President as requested.
- e. Conduct an annual review of the Chapter Operating Handbook (COH) and determine whether updates are needed to reflect current Chapter policies and procedures and ensure alignment with all TMN state-governing documents. Implement revisions if warranted.
- f. [Reference <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>].
- g. Chair the Nomination Committee [see 5.2.6] [Reference *Bylaws, Article V, E, 3*].

### 3.4.2 Advisor

The duties and responsibilities of the Chapter Advisor are described in detail in **Appendix 1 of the CMOB** and in **Article V, B of the Bylaws**. Also see **3.1 and 4** – 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* Article **VI, A. 2-3**. Board approval requires either a majority vote of Board members in attendance at a Board meeting where a quorum is present, or a majority vote of Board members via electronic media.

**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. The Board shall not run a deficit or request a credit line.

**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.

**4.5 Setting dues** – The Board may set annual membership dues payable to the Chapter, with approval of a majority of Chapter members present at a duly called and convened general membership meeting.

- a. The Board must notify all 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 of 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. Members will be encouraged to pay dues on or before December 1 to allow appropriate time for budget planning. Dues not paid at or before the February Chapter meeting will be assessed a \$5 late fee. If dues are not paid at or before the March meeting of each calendar year, all privileges afforded a certified 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.
- d. Current dues are \$25 with timeline and penalties as addressed in this section. Use of PayPal requires a user's fee. Fiscal year is January 1 through December 31.

**4.6 Records retention** – The Board must conduct Chapter business in compliance with the Chapter records retention policy, and 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. Ensure the Chapter has a records retention policy in place.
- b. Establish and maintain a remote data storage system (such as Microsoft Teams) that gives 24/7 access to Chapter members responsible for retaining records of their positions.
- c. 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. The chair is responsible for seeing that the committee fulfills its responsibilities and meets its objectives. Committees may meet in-person or virtually/remotely.

### 5.1 Standing Committees

Standing committees are permanent committees established by the Chapter to support its ongoing, long-term work and to carry out responsibilities essential to regular operations. Unlike ad hoc committees, standing committees have continuing duties that extend from year to year and are not tied to a single, time-limited task.

Each standing committee described in this section must be maintained by the Chapter. The Board may add additional standing committees as needed to support Chapter functions or to address emerging operational requirements. The scope of each standing committee shall be defined in writing by the Board, and membership shall consist of individuals appointed by the President or the designated Director, based on the skills and experience necessary to fulfill the committee's ongoing responsibilities.

Standing committees typically report to the appropriate Director; however, if a Director position is vacant or not assigned, the committee may report directly to the Board. Standing committees remain active unless restructured or dissolved by formal Board action.

- Advanced Training/Volunteer Service Committee
- Community Engagement Committee
- Executive Committee
- Grant Committee
- Membership Committee
- Training Class Committee
- Youth Engagement and Stewardship Committee

#### 5.1.1 Advanced Training/Volunteer Service (VH/AT) Committee

- a. Serve under the leadership of the VH/AT Director.
- b. Assist in reviewing and approving advanced training and volunteer service opportunities for Chapter members.
- c. Support the VH/AT Director in reviewing, organizing, assigning codes, and notifying members of approved advanced training and volunteer service opportunities.
- d. Assist in managing the Chapter's advanced training and volunteer service opportunities in VMS.
- e. Assist in drafting a complete description of those project activities for which volunteer service hours may be accumulated and ensure the descriptions are kept up to date where all Chapter members can easily access them (e.g., on the Chapter website).
- f. Advise project leaders in fulfilling their responsibilities regarding the types of activities allowed by the federal classification guidelines and the TMN mission [see 6.3].
- g. Direct information regarding the calendar of events to the Communication Committee as it becomes available and coordinate publication on the VH/AT calendar.
- h. Provide training as necessary.

### 5.1.2 Community Engagement (Outreach) Committee

- a. Serve under the leadership of the Community Engagement Director.
- b. Support the Community Engagement Director in communicating with community members requesting Chapter participation in events, programs, and activities.
- c. Assist with coordinating Chapter membership for the staffing of approved outreach events, programs, and activities.
- d. Manage transporting and setting up items needed to support outreach events, such as tables, banners, and display items. Also assist with maintenance of those items.
- e. Provide hospitality (refreshments), including set-up and clean-up, at in-person Chapter meetings and events. Manage inventory of items needed for hospitality and maintain service items as needed. Recruit helpers as necessary.
- f. Manage a list of Chapter members who may be called upon to present specific topics of expertise to our local communities.
- g. Assist with identifying avenues for the Chapter to connect with underserved constituencies in our local communities.

### 5.1.3 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is composed of the elected officers and chapter advisor of the Chapter [Reference *Bylaws, Article VI, B1*].

- a. With the Immediate Past President and the Advisor, approve proposed directors to fill vacancies in a position.
- b. 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 *Process for Disciplining or Removing Members* at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>].
- c. 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, H, 2*].

### 5.1.4 Grant Committee

The Grant Committee makes recommendations to the Board for funding Chapter member projects and programs that align with the Chapter's mission of education, restoration, and conservation.

- a. The President appoints the Grant Committee Chair.
- b. The Committee Chair or President appoints members to the Committee. The Committee or the general membership may at any time recommend candidates to the President or Committee Chair.
- c. The Treasurer acts as an ex-officio Committee member and as the committee's Board liaison and maintains financial records of approved projects.
- d. The Committee Chair shares Committee recommendations and activities to the Board through submission of monthly Board reports.
- e. The Committee will solicit grant applications, evaluate them against an established rubric, and recommend projects and programs for grant awards. [See **Appendix 4**].
- f. The Committee Chair updates the President as needed on its activities.
- g. One or more Committee members may be asked to attend a Board meeting to apprise the Board of the Committee's activities in person.

### 5.1.5 Membership Committee

- a. Serve under the leadership of the Membership Director.
- b. Assist the Membership Director in managing the Chapter's membership records and reports within VMS. The Membership Director may designate a Committee member as a VMS administrator to assume some of these responsibilities.

- c. Assist in preparing the monthly Membership and AgriLife Impact reports by tracking and reporting Chapter volunteer and advanced training hours, and the names of members who have achieved re-certification or earned milestone awards.
- d. Assist in presenting awards at Chapter meetings.

#### **5.1.6 Training Class Committee**

Read the most current version of the *BPTMN Member-in-Training Handbook* to become familiar with the requirements, guidelines, and precedents of the initial training course.

- a. Serve under the leadership of the Training Class Director.
- b. Help plan, implement, and evaluate the Chapter training curriculum and develop the calendar for the Initial Training course.
- c. Acquire the *TMN State Curriculum* for each class member and prepare additional class materials as needed.
- d. Help select presenters and make arrangements for their class/presentation including materials, handouts, and audio-visual equipment needed.
- e. Help arrange for speaker gifts, travel, lodging needs, confirmation, and thank you letters as applicable.
- f. Help arrange for publicity in coordination with the Communications Director, e.g., newspaper articles, flyers, brochures, electronic media.
- g. Help arrange for training venues and required facilities equipment for all class periods.
- h. Assist in organizing and hosting volunteer project fairs for members-in-training enrolled in the Chapter's initial training course.
- i. Assist with planning and execution of class field trips.
- j. Ensure there is a method in place for tracking attendance of trainees and monitoring their progress toward completion of the initial training course.
- k. Host training class orientation and course completion events.
- l. Arrange for refreshments/amenities during class periods as applicable.

#### **5.1.7 Youth Engagement and Stewardship Committee**

The Youth Engagement & Stewardship Committee is responsible for planning and supporting youth-focused educational and outreach activities, maintaining related resources, and exploring the development of youth programs in alignment with the Chapter's mission.

- a. The President appoints the chair of the committee. The Committee Chair appoints committee members in consultation with the President and the Community Engagement Director. The Board or general membership may at any time recommend committee candidates.
- b. The Community Engagement Director acts as an ex-officio member of the committee and serves as the committee's Board liaison. The Director will report committee recommendations and activities to the Board.
- c. Committee members plan and staff outreach and educational events for children and youth in support of the Chapter's mission.
- d. The committee shall meet at least monthly to review upcoming outreach opportunities, assess potential youth involvement, plan programs, discuss staffing needs, and address budget and resource considerations.
- e. The committee will inventory, organize, and maintain youth-focused outreach resources, including educational trunks and associated lesson plans, and maintain a centralized record of these materials accessible to Chapter members.

- f. The committee will explore the feasibility of establishing a Junior Master Naturalist or similar youth program for the Chapter and develop recommendations for consideration by the Board, subject to Chapter and Texas Master Naturalist guidelines and approval.
- g. The Committee Chair, or a designated delegate, takes meeting minutes including meeting date and time, attendance and brief statements of conclusions and recommendations. Minutes are distributed to committee members and the Community Engagement Director for review.
- h. One or more committee members may be asked to attend a Board meeting to apprise the Board of the committee's activities in person.

## **5.2 Ad hoc committees**

Ad hoc committees are established to address a particular, specific, and short-term purpose that falls outside the responsibilities of standing committees. These committees exist only for the duration of the assigned task and are dissolved once their work is complete.

Every Chapter must form the Financial Examination Committee and Nomination Committee. Additional ad hoc committees or task forces may be created by the Board as needed to address specific tasks or purposes. The Board determines the scope, membership, and duration of each ad hoc committee. The scope of each committee shall be defined in writing by the Board, and membership shall consist of individuals appointed by the Board who possess the skills or experience necessary to accomplish the assigned task. Upon completion of its assigned purpose, the committee shall be formally dissolved by Board action.

- 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee
- Accessibility Committee
- Asian American Outreach Committee
- Cissy St. John Giving Fund Committee
- Financial Examination Committee
- Nomination Committee

### **5.2.1 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee**

The Anniversary Celebration Committee is responsible for creating plans to celebrate BPTMN chapter's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026.

- a. The President appoints the Committee Chair.
- b. The Committee Chair appoints committee members. The committee or the general membership may at any time recommend committee candidates to the Committee Chair.
- c. Committee will provide regular reports to the Board and request approval for funding as plans are finalized.
- d. Committee will dissolve at the end of 2026.

### **5.2.2 Accessibility Committee**

The Accessibility Committee contributes to the Chapter by advocating for the removal of barriers to experiencing nature and promoting inclusive participation in Chapter activities.

- a. The Committee Chair appoints members to the committee. The committee or the general membership may at any time recommend committee candidates to the Committee Chair.
- b. The President appoints the committee chair.
- c. The President acts as an ex-officio committee member and as the committee's Board liaison and will report committee recommendations and activities to the Board.
- d. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly.

- e. The Committee Chair schedules meetings and provides the meeting agenda.
- f. The Committee Chair takes high level meeting minutes including meeting date/time, those in attendance or not and whether attendees were in person or remote, statement of major points of discussion, and brief statements of conclusions and recommendations. They also distribute the minutes to all in attendance and incorporate any feedback.
- g. The Committee Chair updates the President monthly on its activities and meetings and provides them a copy of any meeting minutes.
- h. One or more Committee members may be asked to attend a Board meeting to apprise the Board of the committee's activities in person.

### **5.2.3 Asian American Outreach (ASAMO) Committee**

The ASAMO Committee aims to engage with Asian Americans in our communities and introduce and cultivate interest in the TMN Program. The committee will provide periodic updates to the Board highlighting their progress and outcomes.

- a. The President appoints members to the Committee. The Committee or the general membership may at any time recommend to the President Committee candidates.
- b. The Outreach Director acts as an ex-officio committee member. They also act as the committee's Board liaison and will report committee recommendations and activities to the Board.
- c. The Committee selects a chair from among its members.
- d. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly.
- e. Committee members are attendees and participants in the Chapter outreach events throughout the year, as ambassadors to the Asian American community.
- f. The Committee Chair takes high level meeting minutes including meeting date/time, those in attendance or not and whether attendees were in person or remote, statement of major points of discussion, and brief statements of conclusions and recommendations. They also distribute the minutes to all in attendance and incorporate any feedback. Finalized meeting minutes are forwarded to the Community Engagement Director for archiving.
- g. One or more Committee members may be asked to attend a Board meeting to apprise the Board of the Committee's activities in person.

### **5.2.4 Cissy St. John Giving Fund Committee**

The Giving Fund Committee will formulate ideas for utilizing the funds given to the chapter by Cissy's estate.

- a. The President appoints members to the Committee. The Committee or the general membership may at any time recommend to the President committee candidates.
- b. The President appoints the Committee Chair.
- c. One or more Committee members will attend Board meetings to recommend and seek approval for the specific use of these funds.
- d. The Committee will dissolve once the funds are spent. The goal is to utilize all funds by the end of 2026.

### **5.2.5 Financial Examination Committee**

- a. Conduct the annual examination of Chapter financial records [**Reference *Bylaws Article IX***]
- b. Members include Vice-President, Secretary, Training Class Representative, and Chapter Advisor.
- c. The President appoints the Committee Chair.
- d. Treasurer provides financial records for review.
- e. Results of the 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. This takes place at the first Board meeting of the next fiscal year.

### 5.2.6 Nomination Committee

This Committee must be used for the selection of officer candidates. It may be used for recommending director candidates.

- 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 E.3.*
- c. The 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. 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.
  - i. Officer candidates must be Certified Texas Master Naturalists and members in good standing.
  - ii. The Nomination 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 the amount of service hours attained.
- f. Election procedure:
  - i. 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 at which the election will be held.
  - ii. The Nomination Committee will conduct the election at the general membership meeting at which the election is scheduled, consistent with the Chapter's two-year election cycle.
- g. TMN state program coordinator may provide oversight to a Chapter's nomination process.

## 6. CHAPTER PROJECTS

- 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 VH/AT Director. Members may request approval for a new project via the online VH/AT Opportunity Request form at: <https://txmn.org/bptmn/vhat/opportunity-request-form/>
- 6.2 **Travel time** – Members may include a reasonable, typical amount of travel time when recording volunteer service hours. Travel time should not include side trips for personal activities. Following the criteria for TMN Service, travel within the Chapter's territory is generally fine. 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 a Board level and following criteria for service project approval.
- 6.3 **Responsibilities of project leaders**
  - 6.3.1 Keep the chapter membership informed of events concerning the project, including information about location, date, time, and equipment needed for workdays.
  - 6.3.2 Provide contact information for the leader at each workday.
  - 6.3.3 Ensure that the President and Communications Director are informed of details so event listings can be kept up to date on the Chapter website.
  - 6.3.4 Record impact data in VMS about each workday or appoint one of the volunteers to do it.

- 6.3.5 Report on the project periodically via newsletter, email blasts, newspaper articles, or at a Chapter meeting.
- 6.3.6 Submit a budget request for expenses associated with the project.
- 6.3.7 Work with the chapter board to solicit grants or donations if appropriate. The TMN state office must be notified of any grants of \$5,000 or more received by the Chapter.
- 6.3.8 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.
- 6.3.9 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.

## 7. MEMBERSHIP [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 has completed Initial Training course requirements.
- **Certified Texas Master Naturalist** – an active member who 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 **Transfers** - 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 Blackland Prairie Chapter has regularly scheduled membership meetings 12 times per year on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm CST unless otherwise advertised. Any number of members present at a meeting, in person or remotely/virtually, constitutes a quorum.

8.2 **Board meetings** - The Chapter Board has regularly scheduled meetings 12 times per year, typically at 7:00pm CST on the Thursday before the scheduled Chapter meeting unless otherwise noted. A majority of the members of the Board must be present in person or remotely/virtually 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 notice 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 a. and b. above 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. These items should always 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**].
- 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). 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. AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK**

### **9.1 Amendment or revision**

**9.1.1 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.

**9.1.2 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.

**9.1.3 Membership approval** - The general membership will have the opportunity to discuss the changes at the meeting. Approval requires a majority vote of those in attendance, either in person or remotely/virtually.

**9.2 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**

**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/>

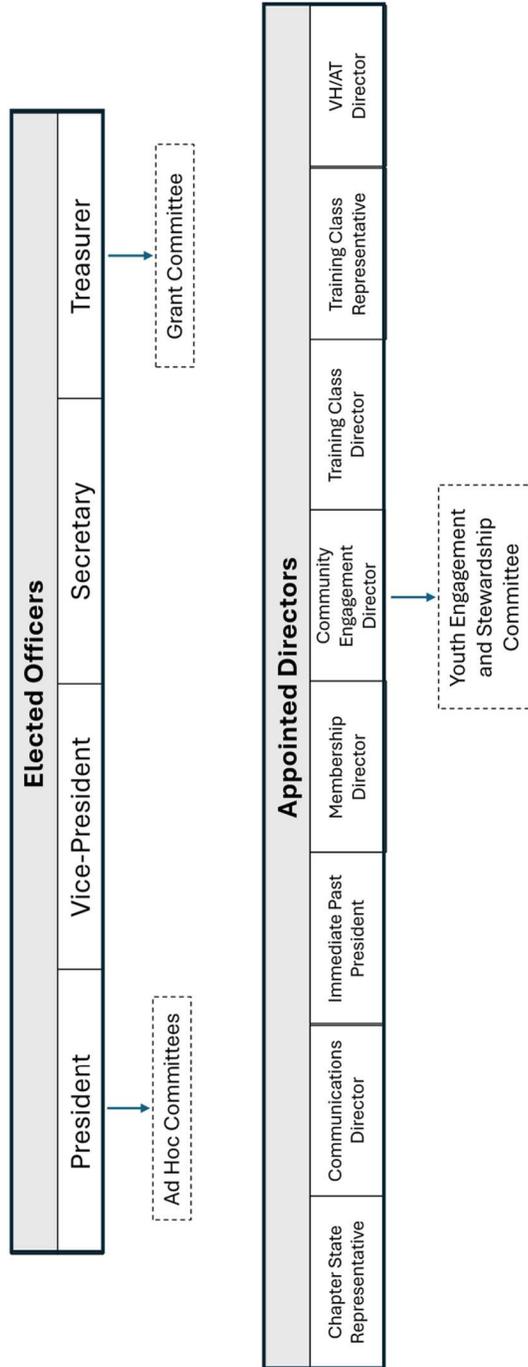
**10.3 Volunteer Management System (VMS) help desk:**  
<https://texasmasternaturalist.freshdesk.com/support/home/>

**10.4 Chapter website:** <https://txmn.org/bptmn/>

11. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 LOCAL LEVEL ORGANIZATION CHART

Blackland Prairie Chapter Governing Board



## **APPENDIX 2 GRANTS, DONATIONS, AND CONTRACTS REFERENCE**

If in the future the Chapter institutes a Grants, Donations, and Contracts Committee, the following duties suggested by the TMN State Program Office should be adopted.

- a. Any grant or donations solicited for the Chapter must be approved by the 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 or more must notify the TMN State Office. Chapters are encouraged to share with the TMN State Program coordinators 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 into any contract, MOU, or MOA without prior review and approval by the TMN State Office.
- g. Functions of this committee may include:
  1. Review grant opportunities for the Chapter.
  2. Coordinate grant application process.
  3. Track progress of grants.
  4. Ensure that reports are made to grantors as to the progress on grant spending.
  5. Monitor MOUs and MOAs. Form ad hoc subcommittees as necessary for monitoring each MOU/MOA. The project leader of projects that fall under the MOU or MOA should chair the subcommittee and must report regularly to the Executive Committee.

## APPENDIX 3 TPWD OPEN CARRY OF FIREARMS – TPWD VOLUNTEER POLICY

### **Open Carry of Firearms- TPWD Volunteer Policy**

**Date: December 2015**

**General Policy-** Members of the public are authorized to carry firearms in accordance with state law in the areas of the Department that are generally accessible to the public. Department volunteers will not take actions to discourage members of the public from the lawful carrying of firearms in areas of the Department that are generally accessible to the public.

**On-Duty Prohibition for Volunteer Open Carry-** Volunteers shall not openly carry firearms either on Department premises or while on-duty for the Department unless the volunteers have specific volunteer duties that require firearms handling and the volunteer is handling firearms in the manner required for performing those volunteer duties. A non-commissioned volunteer holding a handgun license under Government Code Chapter 411 may possess a handgun on department property if carried in a manner in which the presence of the handgun is not openly discernible to the ordinary observation of a reasonable person.

**Prohibition Relating to Department Clothing and Weapons-** A volunteer whether on or off duty, shall not wear any clothing, identification card, or other items identifying the volunteer as a Department volunteer while openly carrying a firearm. A volunteer with a job duty that requires the handling or transportation of firearms or other firearms equipment may possess that equipment while wearing an approved uniform or Department identification in a manner approved by a volunteer supervisor.

**Visitors to Non-Public Secure Portions of Department Facilities-** The Department may post signs designating non-public secure areas of Department facilities pursuant to Government code 411.207. Non-commissioned visitors to the designated non-public secure areas shall be directed to secure any personally owned weapons in their locked personal vehicle prior to entering a Department secure area.

## APPENDIX 4 GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### Grant Program Guidelines 2026

#### Statement of Purpose:

The Grant Committee of the Blackland Prairie Texas Master Naturalist Chapter provides funding to Chapter Members for projects and programs that support the Chapter's motto of education, restoration, and conservation and align with the Texas Master Naturalist (TMN) Program Mission Statement:

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.

#### Types of Grants:

- Micro Grant up to \$500.00 reimbursement\*.

\*Please note, at the discretion of the Grant Committee and with the approval of the Board, grant allocations may be awarded at higher levels or for multi-year opportunities.

#### Project Eligibility:

- Grant proposals must outline innovative and comprehensive project(s) consistent with the TMN Program Mission Statement.
- Project must provide for education, restoration, and preservation in Collin, Hunt, or contiguous counties.
- Project applicant must be a Blackland Prairie Chapter member in good standing and a certified Master Naturalist.
- The project must demonstrate a well thought out plan and leadership.
- Members of the Grant Committee may submit grant applications for their projects but must recuse themselves from participating in the committee's assessment of their project.
- Members of the Board of Directors may submit grant applications for their projects but must recuse themselves from participating in the Board's voting to approve funding of their project.
- If applying for continued funding for an ongoing BPTMN approved grant project, applicant must schedule a site visit or touch base with the Grants Committee.

#### Grant Administration:

1. Grants will be awarded in January and July of each year. Update reports are due to your BPTMN Grant Committee/Board Member liaison quarterly.
2. Grant awardees must electronically acknowledge a grant award letter outlining the project agreement with the Chapter and the method of reimbursement.
3. Update reports are due to the BPTMN Grant Committee/Board member liaison quarterly.
  - a. January grant award due dates are April 5th, July 5th, and October 5th with the final report due January 5th. If the project concludes prior to the end of the award period, a final report may be submitted earlier than January 5th.
  - b. July grant awards dates are October 5th, January 5th, and April 5th, with the final report due July 5th. If the project concludes prior to the end of the award period, a final report may be submitted earlier than July 5th.

- c. Update reports should include expenditure receipts along with reimbursement forms, project images, and project summaries. All receipts must be submitted prior to submitting the one year report.
  - d. Update reports may be used in “Shaking the Trees” and the chapter’s newsletter.
4. Expenditures incurred prior to the grant award date will not be reimbursed by the Chapter.
5. Project reimbursements cannot not be made if quarterly reporting requirements have not been met.
6. Once approved, a project may not be changed without Board approval.
7. It is the grantee’s responsibility to update the Grant Committee regarding any changes in the implementation of the grant project including:
  - a. Revision of original work plan.
  - b. Late quarterly report.
  - c. Delays in purchasing supplies or materials.
  - d. Unspent funds; and/or
  - e. Inability to complete the project.
8. Award recipients are encouraged to participate in a presentation to the Chapter in some form, ex. new member orientation, chapter meeting presentation, deep dive, walking tour, field trip, etc.
9. Chapter projects may also be considered by the Board for submission to the state TMN program’s annual Project Fair.

## **Grant Committee Guidelines**

The Grant Committee solicits grant applications from the general membership for monetary grants to support their projects and programs. Projects and programs must align with the TMN Program Mission Statement and the Chapter motto of “education, restoration, conservation.” The Grant Committee assesses the applications against rubric below and makes funding recommendations to the Board.

The committee will follow these guidelines:

- The Grant Committee will open the grant application season twice a year,
  - September 1 with applications due by September 30. The Grant Committee shall review and score applications in October. The Board shall approve recommended grants at the November board meeting. Projects approved in November will formally be awarded (begin) on January 1 and end December 31.
  - April 1 with applications due by April 30. The Grant Committee shall review and score applications in May. The Board shall approve recommended grants at the June board meeting. Projects approved in June will formally be awarded (begin) on July 1 and end June 30 of the next calendar year.
- Suggest initial committee members should serve through at least one round of applications before new committee members are appointed.
- Committee members’ duties include reviewing applications, scoring applications using an approved rubric, participating in making award recommendations, and communicating with project managers once awards have been granted.
- Any member of the Grant Committee or Board may submit a grant application but must refrain from participating in scoring the application and/or voting for approval of the application.
- Advertising will be done through the Chapter’s website and directly to members. Notice of open application season may be placed in “Shaking the Trees” and shared during Chapter meetings.
- Ongoing support of the granting program may be done through North Texas Giving Day, a Chapter grant account, or other means if the Board chooses to continue this program once initial grant funding is depleted.
- The Grant Committee will operate from a rubric when scoring applications.

**Grant Committee Assessment Rubric:** While the rubric will be the primary scoring component, the committee reserves the right to discuss and review applications and present a final slate to the Board.

- Overall Budget - does the budget match the scope of the project? Is this a reasonable curated budget? Score: 0-20 points
  - Matching funds - are matching funds available to use? Are there additional in-kind resources being applied to the project? Score: +5 points
- Project Planning - is there a solid plan outlining the entire scope of the project's goals, objectives, and process? Is the timeline reasonable and easy to maintain? Score: 0-50 points
  - Is this a new project? Score: +10 points
  - Is this project located in Collin or Hunt County? Score: +10 points
  - Does this project work with any of our chapter's current partner organizations? Score: +5 points