

Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists
Board Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2018
Texas AgriLife Building– Carbide Park

The meeting was called to order by George Kyame at 1:00 pm.

Present: George Kyame, Julie Massey, Jo Monday, Ellen Gerloff, Lynn Wright, Jim Duron, Patty Trimmingham, Robin Kendrick-Yates, Mike Petitt, Tim Long, Sally Pachulski

George welcomed everyone and went over the safety of the building, the fire evacuation route, location of fire extinguishers and AED devices.

George mentioned chapter members in the Daily News: Robin and the P2 Bayou Crew (Oct. 9), Dave Bary commentary on state park (Oct 20), Anne Woodson pictured with article regarding state park (Nov 5). Great job to everyone.

Old Business

1. Oct 2nd Board Meeting Minutes (George)
 - a. The minutes of the Oct 2, 2018 board meeting were reviewed.
 - b. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Lynn, seconded by Tim. Motion was passed.

2. Proposed revisions to the Chapter Operating Handbook (COH) and Bylaws (Lynn)
 - a. At the last meeting the board approved the revised COH and Bylaws.
 - b. Julie has approved them.
 - c. Lynn is waiting for Michelle Haggerty to approve them.
 - d. They will be mailed to the membership for approval (at least 30 days before Chapter meeting)
 - e. The Chapter will vote on the COH and Bylaws at the December meeting.

3. Proposed 2019 Budget (Lynn)
 - a. Lynn did not receive any other modifications to the proposed budget.
 - b. A motion to approve the 2019 budget was made by Tim, seconded by Ellen. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

New Business

1. Chapter Plastic Usage (Sally Pachulski)
 - a. Sally read a letter that she and Stephanie Shipp wrote regarding reducing the use of plastics at our Chapter meetings (letter is attached to these minutes).
 - b. Several Chapter members signed the letter in support.
 - c. The letter recommends adopting plastic free meetings and field trips and to create a committee to help make this happen.
 - d. A motion to create a committee to recommend alternatives for single use plastic and other recyclables was made by Lynn, seconded by Robin. Discussion: The committee should create goals and how to achieve them. Sally and Stephanie will be the leads. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

2. Scholarship Recommendation (Julie)
 - a. Julie only received one scholarship application.
 - b. Sally Shroyer (class 2018) is going back to school at Stephen F Austin.
 - c. A motion to approve a \$1,500 scholarship for Sally for the Spring semester was made by Julie, seconded by Jo. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

3. Heroes for Galveston Beaches (Lynn)
 - a. Two elementary schools in Galveston will be having a art contest called “Heroes for Galveston Beaches”.
 - b. The focus will be what they are doing or are planning to do about combating plastic pollution budget should be a reflection of what is needed to complete our goals.
 - c. A motion to approve \$250 for art supplies from the outreach budget for this project was made by Lynn, seconded by Tim. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

4. Plastic Pollution Conv. - reimbursement (George)
 - a. Item was scratched from agenda; it had already been taken care of.

5. Chapter T-shirts (Patty)
 - a. It was noted at the state conference that several Chapter had their own t-shirts.
 - b. Patty inquired as to whether it would be OK if our Chapter could have t-shirts.
 - c. The board thought that was a good idea as long as no TXMN trademarks were infringed upon.
 - d. Patty would ask around to see if anyone would want to take on this project.

6. Treasures of the Bay (Lynn)
 - a. Lynn reminded everyone that it was time to collect nominations for Treasurers of the Bay awards.
 - b. Julie had all the information from last year.
 - c. Julie and Lynn will get together and send out an email to the membership.

7. December board meeting (Lynn)
 - a. Last year we went to a restaurant but it was noisy.
 - b. Lynn offered to host the December board meeting at her house.
 - c. The board accepted the offer and decided to meet at 12 noon, Dec 4th at Lynn’s house.

Board Reports

President (G. Kyame)

1. Report on State conference.
 - a. Conference was a success with 2 sold out hotels and over 600 attendees.
 - b. Around 20 or so from our chapter attended.
 - c. George attended several workshops that were very intense as well as the president’s breakfast.
 - d. Members from our chapter took home 6 awards for the photo contest.
 - e. The 2019 state meeting will be in Rockwall.
 - f. The 2019 recertification pin is the Golden Cheeked Warbler.

2. George attended celebration of life ceremonies for two members: Odie Asserick and Ray Parker.
3. 2019 Board nominating committee.
 - a. George, Julie, Sara, and Maureen will be on the committee
 - b. Ellen will do AT again
 - c. Tim and his wife are moving to Florida.
 - d. George hopes to have a full slate by Nov. 15th.

Vice President/State Representative (T. Long)

1. Tim has spoken with the BBQ supplier, the cost for the December Chapter meeting is estimated to be \$745.
2. We will be back at Walter Hall park.
3. Members will bring side dishes.

Secretary (P. Trimmingham)

1. Nothing to report.

Treasurer (L. Wright)

1. The October financial reports were presented.
 - a. There were a few expense transactions.
 - b. Balance sheet is in good shape.
2. Motion to accept the October financial reports by Patty. Seconded by Tim. Motion passes.

Membership (J. Duron)

1. Jim's report was based on Oct 29th instead of the 31st but numbers are pretty close.
2. Our chapter is over 1000 volunteer service hours ahead of last year.
3. We have 137 who have recertified.
4. Our impact hours have exceeded last year.
5. He will send out an email regarding the cutoff date for the December awards.
6. Jim will be having a 'plaque party' to get the plaques updated for the December meeting.

AT Director (P. Trimmingham for E. Gerloff)

1. Last for the year GBAC Sponsored AT: Nov 17th , 9:30 – noon: Ecology Matters! Part 2, Cindy Howard.
2. Raptor class will be coming in February.
3. Chris Anastas and Candace Annen went to Monarch monitoring training, they might do an AT in the new year.

Volunteer Services (J. Monday)

1. Nothing to report.

Class Representatives (R. Kendrick-Yates, M. Pettit)

1. Nothing to report.

Chapter Sponsor (J. Massey)

1. NNOCCI conference was a success.
 - a. There were 17 attendees and thoroughly enjoyed the Texas hospitality.
 - b. They learned about Harvey's impact, sea turtles, kayaking, the state park and other activities.
 - c. They came away with a new perspective on working in the environment.

2. Marathon Oil is hosting "Growing up Wild" training.
 - a. 10 available spots
 - b. November 13th, \$60 fee

3. 4-H Science nights
 - a. Julie helped with the October night 'Ickology'.
 - i. The kids really enjoyed it.
 - ii. Jamie and Bill Ashby were of great help.
 - iii. The fun included volcanic pumpkins, fish dissection and fish quiz bowl.
 - b. The November science night will be 'Agricabana'
 - i. Focusing on where food comes from, Nov 30th
 - ii. Julie will send out email for volunteers.

4. We will be doing a Dolphin Challenge in 2019.
 - a. It's a Ocean Science Quiz Bowl.
 - b. 12 schools are interested.
 - c. Email will go out for volunteers; there are a lot of positions to be filled.

Motion was made by Lynn and seconded by Patty to adjourn at 2:59 pm. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted, Patty Trimmingham

6 November 2018

Dear Mr. Kyame and Members of the Galveston Bay Area Chapter Texas Master Naturalist Board of Directors,

In November 2017 the Galveston Bay Area Chapter-Texas Master Naturalists was awarded first-place in the Gulf Guardian Award Civic/Non-Profit Category by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Gulf of Mexico Program in recognition of cleaning up and raising awareness of plastic pollution in the Galveston Bay area. Our members are proud that the chapter received this prestigious award and, more importantly, that our chapter integrates plastic pollution education into so many activities, from beach clean ups to school and public outreach events. The powerful local, regional, and federal partnerships that have been forged by chapter leaders around this initiative also instill a sense of pride. Our growing understanding of the negative impact of plastics on our wildlife, environment, and the food and water we ingest underscores the timeliness and importance of this effort.

From the first day of TMN training, we were made aware of the importance that the chapter places on the environmental necessity of the slogan reduce, reuse, recycle. Our chapter is accomplishing so much! It feels now is the time to bring this undertaking closer to home by committing to no longer providing single-use plastic at any event and to strive to reach a goal of plastic-free meetings and activities.

Anyone who has purchased anything in the last ten years knows that, more likely than not, the purchase will contain plastic packaging. Paper cups contain "biodegradable" or "compostable" plastics which may or may not compost. "Compostable" forks and spoons may not compost unless they are sent to a commercial composting facility to which we may not have access. The choices are not easy. Nor can our use of plastic be justified by stating that we dispose of it properly; our landfills are overflowing with non-biodegradable plastic and many recycling facilities are decreasing intake as global markets have drastically reduced their acceptance of plastic waste. Finding substitutes for plastic products, especially cost-equivalent substitutes, can be challenging. However, that cost should be outweighed by having our choices and actions reflect our stated priorities. As the chapter's specified goal in reducing plastics was to create a behavior change to support current and future stewards of the Galveston Bay Area, our chapter needs to continue to update and rethink our own use of plastic and other nonrenewable products. From training to field trips to meetings, plastic is present: plastic materials for our educational activities and programs; plastic bags with plastic SWAG; plastic water bottles and utensils, and both Styrofoam and plastic cups at our meetings. It will be challenging but let's work together to find a way to stop unintentionally contributing to the very problem that our chapter has been actively combating.

We ask that the board take two actions:

- 1) Adopt a goal of plastic-free meetings and activities;
- 2) Create a committee to investigate how we can further reduce and best eliminate our use of single-use plastics and eventually reduce our use of all plastics. The committee would work with a relatively short deadline (six months or less) to present recommendations. Stephanie Shipp and Sally Pachulski are willing to be on this committee should the board consider their participation appropriate.

Our chapter can set an example for all chapters and make a statement that, in order to uphold the Texas Master Naturalists Code of Ethics and act as trustworthy and ethical stewards of the environment, the chapter will work to reach the goal of discontinuing the use of all single-use plastic and strive for plastic free events, meetings and field trips.

We appreciate your action on this very important matter.

Stephanie Shipp
Sally Pachulski
Anne Franklin
Chuck Snyder
Penny Bessire
Peggy Carrol
Debra Pence
Bobette Brasfield
Stennie Stirling Meadours
Root Choice
Robin Kendrick-Yates
David Bulliner
Dianne Forthman
Sandy Parker