

## Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists

### April Board Meeting **Minutes**

April 2, 2019

#### Texas AgriLife at Carbide Park

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

The board members present were George Kyame, Cindy Liening, Lynn Wright, Susette Mahaffey, Julie Massey, Robin Kendrick Yates, Mike Pettit, Patty Trimmingham, Jo Monday, Ellen Gerloff, Maureen Nolan-Wilde. This represents 92% of the board. Janet Mason was absent. We had two visitors, Stephanie Shipp and Tiffany Cummings.

George commented that this was the first board meeting of spring. He welcomed Tiffany Cummings who is a member of the 2019 training class. He went over the safety information and asked what we should do in the case of a volcano? He suggested looking back in history to Pompeii to discover the answer.

#### **Old Business:**

1. Maureen made the motion to accept the minutes as written and Cindy seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.
2. Julie is requesting \$5400 to offer Treasures of the Bay staff development on June 18 – 20. This staff development opportunity has not been offered since 2011. The closing date for applications is May 1<sup>st</sup>. The program will be Day 1 at Carbide with the overview and focus on watersheds, Day 2 at Armand Bayou with the focus on prairies and the bayou, and Day 3 at GISP covering beach and bay. Lynn asked for clarification of Julie's request. She wanted to clarify that if this should become a yearly request it, it would need to become part of the budget. George wanted to know if the class would be cancelled if the minimum of 16 was not reached. The program would be cancelled if that is the case. Jo asked if we needed a motion made. She made the motion to allocate monies up to \$5400.00 to cover the cost of Treasures of the Bay. Robin seconded the motion, and it was passed.
3. Susette clarified the information about the July meeting. There are two meetings scheduled in May. The dates are May 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The May 28<sup>th</sup> meeting will serve as the June meeting because of Camp Wild. The July and August meetings are being combined into one meeting on July 30 which will be held at the Texas City Prairie Preserve. July 28, 29, and 30 is the statewide Texas Agri-Life conference which is being held here this year. With around 400 people expected to attend, every space at Carbide is reserved for the conference. Julie said that she would need volunteers to help with that event.
4. Stephanie Shipp who serves as the co-chair of the Green Team was with us today to share more information about the work of that group. She shared the actions that have happened since December. The plan is to report to the board every six months. The Green

Team has identified its mission to encompass transformation of the way the Galveston Bay Area Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists and its members think about, use, and dispose of plastics and other waste materials in the chapter. Their charge and activities to date are:

- To explore the elimination and replacement of single use plastics at the on-site meetings and events.
- To explore how to handle and replace the use of single use plastics at off-site meetings and events.
- To explore what to do with the single use plastics we already have.
- To set parameters for all plastic usage.
- To explore ways to increase recycling.
- To rise awareness within the chapter.
- To report their findings to the board.

The Green Team has identified several overarching recommendations for board consideration. They are:

- The chapter should include ‘being a single use plastics free’ organization as part of its ‘branding’.
- The chapter should be an effective advocate for single use plastics reduction and plastics alternatives.
- The chapter should share the approaches and outcomes of this effort with other interested TMN chapters and learn what, if any, practices they are implementing.
- The chapter should develop and include a plastic pollution impacts and mitigation module to share with the upcoming training for new GBAC-TMN classes.
- The board should continue to encourage GBAC members to participate in the chapter’s single use plastics and plastics reduction efforts and provide volunteer hours as an incentive.
- Going forward the board should keep the Green Team in place.

One caveat was shared and discussed during this report. The chapter must not take a political stand or be seen taking a political stand on any actions from any group. Maureen asked that the team send weekly bits of information on how to be more single use plastics aware for publication in the chapter communications. Julie suggested that we visit a recycling center as AT.

5. Julie shared information about the bayside Regional Park MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). This is a county park in Bacliff with one acre that Stennie and Sandie want to return to prairie. It is a one-year contract that requires the MN to provide materials and labor. The chapter would need to provide 750 plants and any other needs to plant the acre. The board wants more information about what promises have been made. We will revisit this next month.

## **New Business:**

A. Cindy wanted to talk about the procedures for handling corporate gifts and/or donations to the chapter. She is involved in two different projects where the question has come up about how the donations are handled. She asked if we had any guidelines or if they could be earmarked for certain projects. Lynn said that unless a donation was specified for a specific purpose or was 'restricted', the monies went into the general budget fund. Julie suggested we put a system in place to handle these funds. She suggested we might look at other non-profit organizations to see what they do with these types of gifts. George asked that we table this discussion until next month.

## **Reports:**

1. George said that we do have a team to represent us at Exploration Green on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. He said that Beach and Bay had been cancelled for the year due to construction at GISP. He also said that the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary shirts from the October conference had arrived.
2. Cindy has finished looking at the applications for the class members of the 2016 and 2017 classes in an effort to identify future leaders for the chapter. She said that the monofilament team would make the presentation at the April meeting. Dr. Chris Marshall would be out of the country for the August meeting. Julie asked to offer him the program for the October meeting.
3. Susette had no report.
4. Lynn went through the Statement of Financial Position which is a picture of the chapter's financial position. She then went through the Statement of Activities vs Budget. The chapter has received 2 contributions. One from the Blanchard's from Marathon. The other gift was made to help pay for the trawler for the new class and was given in honor of Julie Massey and Alice and Wayne O'Quin. The chapter remains in sound financial condition. Patty made the motion to accept the treasurer's report and Cindy seconded the motion. The motion passed.
5. Patty reported that 220 members have paid their dues for the year with only 6 who have not paid. There are still no recertification pins to give out at the Thursday meeting. We would be presenting Jim Duron with a plaque to recognize his 20,000 hours of service. The VMS system has changed. You must enter you hours within 45 days. The system managers for our chapter no longer have access to make changes after that time. An appeal must be made to the state. It is important to get your hours entered in a timely fashion!  
The state is working to streamline the transfer process between chapters so that it will be less work for the chapters to take care of the transferring of members in and out of a chapter.

6. Jo said that the Volunteer Service Committee had met and were in the process of reviewing the categories in the VMS system for our chapter.
7. Ellen said her report was the same as last month.
  - ✓ The Ecology Still Matters – Part 3 has been postponed until June 22 at Carbide. People would have to re-enroll in the AT opportunity.
  - ✓ Mary Christian is collecting money for the Beginners' Guide to Solitary Bees on April 27<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$15.00 for materials for the beehive.
  - ✓ There are sign ups to visit the Attwater prairie chickens at NASA. Contact Janet Mason or Sandy Parker.
  - ✓ Green Fire: Life and Work of Aldo Leopold will be on Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to noon.
8. Janet was absent. Julie has her report.
9. Maureen said that we are having about 1500 people watch our Facebook posts. She encouraged us to Like the Facebook pages. She invited people to come to Morgan on April 17<sup>th</sup> to see the artwork done by the second graders. It is their product from our visit in January to talk about being a 'Beach Hero' and caring for our beaches.
10. Robin and Mike had nothing to report.
11. Julie asked Mike, Robin, and Tiffany to begin to think about the 2019 class representatives for the board. She reported for Janet that the new class was going well. Mark Kramer had gone above and beyond to make the last class at Armand Bayou a big success!  
Julie said that the Leadership Advisory Board would be meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00. The discussion will be about the upcoming Texas Community Futures Forum. The meeting should last about 1 hour.  
Julie will be out of town most of next week. She has a meeting at College Station with the Sea Grant to present information about our chapter. Then she will be in Washington D.C. for the Dolphin Challenge competition.
12. George asked if there was any other business. Since there was none, Patty made the motion to adjourn with Maureen seconding the motion. The motion passed.  
The meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.