

Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists

Board Meeting **Minutes**

July 30, 2019

Texas City Prairie Preserve

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m.

The board members present were George Kyame, Cindy Lienen, Lynn Wright, Susette Mahaffey, Janet Mason, Patty Trimmingham, Ellen Gerloff, Maureen Nolan-Wilde, and Monica Duran. This represents 75% of the board. Julie Massey, Jo Monday, Tiffany Cummings, Cindy Saxenian, and Luxie Mohammed were absent. We had Stennie Meadours join us for the meeting.

George welcomed the group and thanked Texas City Prairie Preserve for allowing us to use their facilities for the meeting. He pointed out the restrooms, fire extinguisher and exits. George also reminded us of the chapter meeting on August 1, 2019.

Old Business:

1. The minutes had only one suggestion that was made to help denote who was talking in the reports section. Lynn made the motion to approve the minutes with Janet seconding the motion. The motion passed.
2. Susette modeled the new chapter t-shirts. These will be available in the chapter bookstore at the next meeting for around \$13.00. There will also be long-sleeved shirts available for sale.
3. Julie was not available to comment on Treasures of the Bay, but several board members commented that the training had been a great success with the teachers enjoying every day and wanting to learn more. This was a big investment for the chapter which came to fruition this year. George hosted part of one day at Armand Bayou and received a great reception from the teachers. The training may also make available new chances for chapter members to work with teachers and students at area schools.
4. Susette shared that Camp Wild was a huge success despite the bad weather. The children had numerous opportunities to learn and have fun. She hopes board members will think about volunteering for next year.
5. Stennie spoke about the P3 Symposium on October 29th. She showed us the flier and is in the midst of taking abstracts and applications. She shared that the greatest need was money to cover the food, i.e., lunch for 200 participants. She said that Moody Gardens would provide lunch for 200 for \$3,000.00. She has received 2 donations for \$500.00. Lynn told her that P3 has a budget of \$500.00 that can be used for that purpose. Stennie was delighted to have the budget to use for the lunch. She said the symposium would focus on such topics as research, solutions, and public policy. It will be held in the IMAX theater at Moody Gardens. Since the theater holds 400 people, there will be ushers available to help people in the general public who are interested in hearing portions of the presentation to walk in and then leave.

New Business:

1. Houston Audubon Bird Week will be September 21 – 28 to celebrate Houston Audubon's 50th anniversary. Houston Audubon was established in 1969 as the first environmental group in the Houston area, and it has been actively working to preserve the environment and habitat for birds. With this said, Stennie would like to schedule some bird walks and watches with chapter members for that week. George asked how she would contact the chapter members. Cindy wanted to know how we became a partner in this venture. George made the call to action to make chapter members aware of the opportunity and ask the volunteers to plan a specific time for the bird walk or watch. Maureen said that we should send out through constant contact a request for bird walks in a specific time and place. Stennie shared that the bay area has a dearth of opportunities for the Houston people. Lynn asked what motion needed to be made. The motion was that our chapter, in recognition of Houston Audubon's 50th anniversary during the week of September 21 – 28, take an active role and solicit members of our chapter to host bird walks during the week of the celebration. Lynn made the motion and Patty seconded it. The motion passed. Stennie will write the email for constant contact with herself being the contact person. George remarked that Davis Bulliner is doing bird watches at Sweetwater and Davis Clay at EIH.
2. Stennie had another new volunteer opportunity to share that had been approved last week. Jace Tunnell with the Mission Aransas National Estuarine is doing a survey along the gulf coast and Galveston Bay area about nurdles. He is asking people to do a 10-minute pick up of nurdles on a beach area, put the nurdles in a plastic bag and photograph it, and take GPS coordinates of the place. He is collecting the information for his research. Stennie will do an email about this for constant contact.
3. Maureen shared the information about the annual photograph contest. The pictures must be taken between October 2018 and August 31, 2019, and they must be taken in Texas. She said that pictures that are submitted throughout the year are considered by the judges. She also said that the pictures in our database are used by other organizations like Texas Sea Grant and NOAA. Please send in pictures you have not shared.

Board Reports:

1. President: George said that he had three important pieces of information to share. He said that he had received official word that a discount for \$75.00 was available for one of the chapter members to the Texas Master Naturalist conference. He would like Marie Asscherick to have that opportunity if she attends; as her husband passed away last year on the way to the conference. Next he said that a purchase of bulk t-shirts would be available at the conference this year. Lastly, he asked if we need to purchase a bulk supply of new class textbooks. They would be available. The state conference will be at Rockwall during October 18 – 20. We do not need more textbooks according to Janet and Patty. We need to be sure that the textbooks are returned by each new class member of the training class to be used in the future.

2. Vice President: Cindy told us that Taylor Bennett would be our speaker at the August 1st meeting. The discussion would be about beach nesting birds of Texas. She did ask for volunteers to arrive at 4:45 to help set up for the meeting.
3. Secretary: Susette shared an incident that happened while she was on vacation. She received an email from George asking her to purchase 4 gift certificates at \$500.00 each for him. She wanted everyone to be aware that people do troll through our website in search of financial gain.
4. Treasurer: Lynn shared her reports. The Statement of Financial Position is a picture of the chapter's finances as it stands today. There is a good bit of money allocated to specific projects to be spent between now and the end of the year. There is still \$364.43 from the Kempner grant to spend. The Statement of Activities shows that we have received \$12,000.00 in donations this year. To date we are doing well across all parts of the budget. Patty made the motion to accept the treasurer's report with Ellen seconding the motion. The motion passed.
5. Membership: Patty reported that the new recertification pins are now being created and should be available for the October chapter meeting. There are other pins that are back ordered as well. We have 225 members who have paid their dues. Sally Shroyer has transferred to another chapter near her college. Volunteer service hours for July are 3,079.75 and AT hours are 130.25. Patty is setting up a new email address for chapter members to use to contact the membership team.
6. Volunteer Service Director: Jo was absent. Patty commented that the team had met last week and approved several new opportunities. The group will work to simplify some of the VMS descriptions.
7. Advanced Training Director: Ellen reported that there is nothing new scheduled for the fall. The Green Fire film has all the spaces filled with a waiting list. They will work to accommodate people around August 7th. November 16th is Ecology Part 4. Meanwhile other opportunities are available through other organizations.
8. New Class: Janet reported that the state is trying to quantify the curriculum for new members. She said that they will develop a pretest and posttest for new members and send a link to let them take it. Then there will be a third test to take a year after they have finished the curriculum. It will be optional. Maureen commented that it seems like the state is asking us to teach to a test. Monica commented that it was important that the curriculum reflect the environment in which you live and work. The new class committee will meet in the next few weeks to begin preparation for next year. They will talk about the return of textbooks and scholarships/financial aid.
9. Communication: Maureen shared the article in the *Coast* magazine about the monofilament project. She said that Facebook posts, especially on the monofilament project are being shared by other entities. George asked if the state Texas Master Naturalists have a Facebook page to which Maureen answered yes. George asked about someone from another chapter wanting to have their workdays on our calendar. Jerry Hamby would like to post work at the tree nursery at Exploration Green.
10. Class Representative: Monica said that she was glad to hear the conversation about the workings of the chapter, especially about volunteer and AT opportunities.
11. Sponsor: Julie was absent.

There were a couple of other conversations outside of the board reports. Maureen would like to see our plaques hanging on the walls at Carbide. George said that he would endeavor to get those hung for the members to see.

The other discussion was about printing out each of the reports each month. Patty and Cindy both pointed out the amount of paper that we use for the reports. They suggested that the reports be sent out ahead of the board meetings so that people can print out their own reports. George and Monica both said that they preferred an electronic version of the reports. Ellen said that people really liked having The Midden in paper form rather than online. Maureen suggested that we choose how we want the information and print it out if we want a paper copy. The decision was made for no print copies to be made for the next board meeting

George wrapped up the meeting by saying that we had covered a good bit information after having skipped a meeting for July.

Patty made the motion to adjourn the meeting with Monica seconding the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.