

Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists

Board Meeting **Minutes**

September 3, 2019

Texas AgriLife at Carbide Park

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. George welcomed everyone to the meeting reminded us of the safety information about the building and exit routes.

The board members present were George Kyame, Cindy Liening, Lynn Wright, Susette Mahaffey, Janet Mason, Patty Trimmingham, Maureen Nolan-Wilde, Julie Massey, Jo Monday, Tiffany Cummings, and Cindy Saxenian. This represents 79% of the board. Ellen Gerloff, Monica Duran and Luxie Mohammed were absent. We also had Debbie Repasz and Denice Apgar join us for the meeting.

Old Business:

1. The first item of business was the minutes from the July meeting. Maureen made the motion to accept the minutes and Patty seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted.
2. There were several articles from the Galveston County News that were shared with the group. Several of our chapter members were pictured, mentioned or highlighted in the articles.
3. The Texas Master Naturalist Conference was discussed. All the hotel rooms and spaces in the sessions were gone after only 3 days. George commented that it was now standing room only. This makes it difficult for people who want to attend to get a space. George is having conversations about this at the state level. Perhaps a much larger venue is in order!

New Business:

1. Debbie Repasz and Denice Apgar spoke to the board about a new volunteer opportunity. They would like for Resoft Park which is a county park in Brazoria County to be added to VMS as a new volunteer opportunity. They need people to help monitor the number and types of birds in the rookery (five islands in the pond), help remove apple snails, and help to begin planting a wetland area around the 3-acre pond. The park was founded in 1996 and improvements are being made to make it a flagship park for Brazoria County. Jo told them that they needed to fill out the application at our website for a new volunteer opportunity and turn it into the Volunteer Committee.
2. Julie requested that we add another item to the new business. We have received an application from Lewis Linton who is attending the University of Texas at Dallas for the GBAC scholarship. The scholarship committee recommends that we give him the \$1,500.00 that is allotted in the budget for scholarships. Lewis has worked at Camp Wild for 15 years and is an accounting and finance major. There was some discussion about FOGIPS offering a scholarship each year for youth counselors who help with the camp.

Jo made the motion to accept the recommendation of the scholarship committee to give Lewis Linton a scholarship of \$1,500.00. Cindy Liening seconded the motion and it passed. Maureen did request that the scholarship team share with the board the process they use to select a scholarship recipient. Cindy said that she thought it was important for our chapter to support the program and higher education. George requested that we put the giving of a scholarship on the October agenda for further discussion.

3. Maureen and Cindy Liening told us about the Certified Guide Nature Course that has been developed and is being offered through GINTC – Galveston Island Nature Tourism Council. Maureen said that 2 years ago GINTC saw a program that trained people to become guides for nature in the area. GINTC has paid people to develop a curriculum to become a guide in the Galveston area. There are two levels of certification – ambassador and certified nature guide. The courses are on the computer. The certified nature guide also has an onsite training component. The courses are not approved for AT but are available for Master Naturalists. George said the first level was designed for people in tourism like hotel personal or people who work in the tourism sector. Patty wanted to be clear that these courses are for your own personal edification and that for volunteer service you cannot be paid. Several of our chapter members were very active in the development of this program.
4. Susette did a quick review of the document that compared the changes in the Chapter Operating Handbook. There were some job description changes but nothing that was significant. If anyone wishes to comment on the changes, those comments are due by September 15th.

Board Reports:

1. **President:** George had several items to share. He told us that Penny Bessire was going to give up the Emeritus program. She no longer has the time to devote to it. Madeline Barnes will deliver the Midden to the state conference. A letter needs to be sent to Marathon Oil on our letterhead to inform them of the chapter project on monofilament at the conference. He would like Marie Asscherick to have the opportunity to use the scholarship for the conference if she chooses to attend. He said that Emily Morse would have flyers on volunteer opportunities. He wants us to think about the travel time that is spent to do volunteer service activities. Is it time well spent to get to the site and do the service that is required?!
2. **Vice-President:** Cindy shared that T’Noya Thompson would be the speaker for the October chapter meeting. She represents the Galveston Bay Foundation and would be talking about the health of the bay.
3. **Secretary:** Susette shared that the work had already begun for Featherfest and that the Eskimo Curlew statue would be installed at GISP on March 28, 2020.
4. **Treasurer:** Lynn presented the financial report. She said that most of the Kempner funds have now been spent. The chapter received a personal donation of \$200.00 but no corporate donations. Exxon is limited to giving the chapter \$5,000.00. Lynn shared the proposed budget for 2020 and asked us to look at it and offer suggestions. She said that the state has not yet requested the \$300.00 that we give to help support the state

conference. Maureen made the motion to accept the treasurer's report with Susette seconding the motion. The motion passed.

5. **Membership:** Patty said that the final edition of the directory should be out next week. She sent her report through email. 124-chapter members have recertified to date with 17 members of the new class having done their initial certification. Recertification pins are to be shipped at the end of August. Patty will not be present for the October meeting. Dorothy Hogg and Beverly Morrison will be handling the membership/check-in table for her at the October chapter meeting.
6. **Volunteer Service Director:** Jo shared that the Treasures of the Bay training had been a great success, and plans were being made to offer it again next year. The volunteer committee is working to make modifications in the descriptions of volunteer opportunities in the VMS system and make the system less cumbersome.
7. **Advanced Training Director:** Ellen was absent, but her report is as follows: The *Green Fire* movie and discussion on Wednesday August 14 was a huge success with high ratings from the 65 people attending. Madeleine's thoughtful questions following the movie generated stimulating discussions and some "true confessions". The ice cream social that followed the movie was lots of fun.
Upcoming presentations:
Introduction to League City Ghirardi Family WaterSmart Park by Charriss York. Monday October 28. 12:30-3:00. League City Civic Center Room 3. 300 West Walker, League City. Carpool to Ghirardi Family WaterSmart Park. 1910 Louisiana Ave. 2.5 AT hours. Limit 30. Signups start at October chapter meeting.
Why Ecology Matters-Part 4 by Cindy Howard. Demographic Techniques: how populations are determined. Saturday November 16. 9:00 – noon. Extension Office. 3 AT hours. Signup starts at October chapter meeting.
8. **New Class:** Janet said that the dates were set for the new class training: February 20 – May 7, 2020. There are 40 people who have shown an interest in applying.
9. **Communication:** Maureen shared the packets of the Beach Hero cards that will be sold to purchase supplies for the program this 2019-2020 school year. She has submitted a proposal for Susette and herself to present a display board and/or presentation at the P3 conference in October. People are coming to her with the request to make presentations at various venues and events. She would like the Outreach Committee to help in recruiting people to learn the information and be able to share when needed. Julie suggested that the Communication Committee meet with the Outreach Committee to prepare a plan.
10. **Class Representatives:** Tiffany asked for more information about the awards meeting in December and the expectation for decorations. The meeting will again be at Walter Hall Park. Cindy followed up with a question to further clarify the expectation of the new class and the decorations for the December meeting.
11. **Sponsor:** Julie will send out requests for nominations for Treasures of the Bay for the awards ceremony in December. She said that the P3 Symposium will be at Moody Gardens on October 29th. She wished to thank Jo, Janet, and Mitch Philpott for helping with the science night that they just held for 4H. The pirate themed night had been a big

success. She wants to do one on electricity and perhaps dress up for the one on October 30th. She also wants to do an evening on marine archeology. She also thanked those who helped with the County Extension Agent Conference in July. It went very well with a large crowd. She is also thinking about our chapter offering to host the state conference or offering to host a regional conference of about 5 chapters in the area. It is something for us to think about. George said that the Dallas chapter also has 200 members which may be why the conference spaces filled up so quickly. If we were to hold a regional conference, we would be sure there was space for everyone who wanted to attend.

With all the business and reports covered, Patty made the motion to adjourn the meeting with Janet seconding the motion. The motion passed. We adjourned at 3:33.