

Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists

Board Meeting **Minutes**

October 1, 2019

Texas AgriLife at Carbide Park

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. George welcomed everyone to the meeting reminded us of the safety information about the building and exit routes. He asked us to meet at the basketball pavilion.

The board members present were George Kyame, Cindy Liening, Susette Mahaffey, Janet Mason, Maureen Nolan-Wilde, Julie Massey, Jo Monday, Ellen Gerloff, Monica Duran and Cindy Saxenian. This represents 71% of the board. Lynn Wright, Patty Trimmingham, Tiffany Cummings and Luxie Mohammed were absent.

Old Business:

1. George commented that the minutes were well written and could be used as a guide to plan the agenda. Cindy Liening made the motion to accept the minutes as written with Janet seconding the motion. The motion passed.
2. George had asked last month that the awarding of a chapter scholarship be added to the agenda for this month. He likes the idea of the \$1,500.00 scholarship and wants to be sure that we advertise to the people who are interested. He asked if it was merit based and thinks the applicant should be able to outline their qualifications. George also thinks it would be fine to divide the monies in half and give two \$750.00 scholarships. Ellen agrees that we should have the \$1,500.00 for a scholarship opportunity. Cindy agrees and thinks we need to set aside the money and keep them separate from the other funds. She suggested that we need to set a maximum of 3 scholarships with the funds divided evenly. Maureen also agrees and would like to have a committee to set the guidelines for the scholarship. She believes the committee should be non-board members. Maureen and Jo both expressed the need for the chapter to live within its budget and remain within a zero-based budget. Cindy commented that she always sets up her budgets with a little breathing room for unforeseen expenses. Maureen said that the money to run the chapter comes from gifts rather than dues, and we have chosen not to raise the dues in quite a while. George then said that we need to decide whether to vote on this awarding of a scholarship or to table it until next month. Maureen said that she thought the money should be reserved for higher education rather than for a workshop or something like that. Julie said that scholarship was based on volunteer work that was done with the chapter. She said that originally the scholarship was set up by chapter members who had worked with the scholarship programs at colleges. Jo recommended that we establish an ad hoc committee to look at the scholarship and work to develop criteria and guidelines for the awarding of the scholarship. George commented that the board had been very generous about funding of both the scholarship and Treasures of the Bay this year. Maureen said that we should decide on an amount for the 2020 budget. Maureen made the motion that

we set aside \$1,500.00 for a scholarship for the 2020 budget. Ellen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ellen then said that speaking of scholarships, what is the status of scholarships for the new training class? Lynn has budgeted \$150.00 for two scholarships. Susette remarked that at the follow up luncheon for the training class, we talked about rewording the application to say 'need based financial aid'. Maureen reminded us that we vote on the budget in November. Jo reminded us all that the role of the treasurer is not to set the organization's budget but to receive input to develop the budget. No other action was taken.

3. Susette asked that the board vote to set aside money for the Beach hero project. The issue was a cash flow problem rather than the absence of funds. The money left in the monofilament project would not cover the money needed to purchase supplies for the 4 fall programs of the Beach Hero program for GISD schools. We have performances at Parker and Burnet in October and at Morgan and Oppe in November. Maureen said that she thought that the sale of cards at the chapter meeting might well cover the expense for art supplies. Jo made the motion to set aside money not to exceed \$350.00 to fund the Beach Hero project. Ellen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

New Business:

Cindy Lienen said that she had received an email in reference to the Texas Water Specialist certification from the state. George said that both he and Susette had received the same email. He had forwarded it to Patty to take care of.

Reports:

1. **President:** George had several items to share. First there are several changes at Galveston Island State Park. Now that Lisa is no longer with the park, Kyle is taking care of reservation and planning for visiting groups. Contact Kyle O'Haver to make reservations. Jo said that school groups need to go through him even if one of us leads the group. Secondly, Chris Anastas has suggested that we carpool to the state conference, and George will draft an email to let people contact each other and make plans. Next, we have received the wagons/ carts that Jim had requested for work at the prairie restoration projects, and George will deliver those carts to the places where they are needed. Lastly, George wants us to apply for the Excellence in Ecology award through TCEQ – Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The deadline for submission is October 11th. He said that when we look at our mission statement, outreach is an important part of our work.
2. **Vice President:** Cindy said that the program was ready for the Thursday chapter meeting with T'Noya Thompson speaking about Galveston Bay. She said that Tawy and Cliff Muehe would take care of the barbeque for the December chapter meeting. Maureen said that she had three speakers who were recommended by Scott Buckel. Cindy says that she asks people to plan to speak for 45 minutes with 10 minutes set aside for questions.
3. **Secretary:** Susette shared the latest events with the regards to the Lost Bird project for Featherfest and the Beach Hero project. The 4 performances for GISD would happen within the next 6 weeks. She had shared the information with other teachers at the

environmental conference last week and several said that they were interested in trying to replicate the Beach hero project and asked for materials for the Lost Bird project.

- 4. Treasurer:** Lynn sent her report through email, and Maureen gave her report at the meeting. She attached the September financials and the 2020 proposed budget. She did not receive any changes to the proposed budget, so she proposes that we vote next month to finalize the 2020 numbers.

As far as the financials, there was not much activity in September. Here is a recap:

- \$53,222.96 in the bank, \$4,527.97 is restricted
- \$55.43 of income from the sale of 6 Beach Heroes card packets
- \$300 sent to the TMN organization to sponsor the State meeting
- \$154 spent on renewal of Constant Contact (email program)
- \$170 spent on supplies (trash grabbers and snake chaps) for the NICK team (shoreline recovery)

Lynn would like to hear from everyone about the 2020 budget. She has sent money to the state to help with conference expenses. Ellen asked a question about the money spent for the state conference. The discrepancy was money that was billed from last year that did not come in until after the beginning of this year. Maureen made the motion to accept the treasurer's report. Janet seconded the motion and it passed.

- 5. Membership:** Patty was not present. Susette shared some of the highlights of her report. We have 225 paid members with 200 of those members reporting at least an hour of service. We have dropped 6 members and 17 members of the new training class have completed their initial certification.
- 6. Volunteer Service:** Jo said that 2 requests have been made for volunteer service opportunities. One was made by Beverly Morrison for work to clean and restore Nassau Bay Peninsula Wildlife Park. That request has been approved. The other request was for Resoft Park, and the paperwork has not been completed and turned in to Jo.
- 7. AT Director:** Ellen said that the report was the same as last month. We have 2 more AT presentations this year. The team has offered 20.5 hours of AT training over the year. She said that Lynn and John Wright would be doing the raptor training again next year on February 24th.

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 reported that the training committee has met and will be increasing the cost of the class by \$10.00 to \$160.00. She said that 52 people have shown an interest in the class and so the new class would probably have 24 members. She said that the training at Sheldon Lake would be replaced by a session at EIH and Exploration Green. George suggested several people who could help with the presentations on that day. Janet

said that the Meet and Greet would be November 21, and the Volunteer Luncheon would be January 17th. She said that she would need a new person to recruit people to make introductions, and Ellen said that she would like someone to take over the placement of mentors.

- 9. Communication:** Maureen said that they would make the announcements of the winners of the photo contest at the October chapter meeting. She thinks that several people will be surprised. The chapter will have people making a presentation at the Ecofest in League City on October 12th, and three proposals have been accepted for the P3 conference. Those that have been accepted are for Beach Heroes, Monofilament and the Green Team kayak group. The conference will be October 29th at Moody Gardens. She reminded us that outreach happens in many ways and often the most effective is through pictures. Our Facebook pages get many hits, and the pictures are used by other organizations.
- 10. New Class representatives:** Monica wanted to know how to field questions and requests from Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts for volunteer opportunities. George said that we have no assets or property on which to work; so, we don't have a place for them. He said that we might connect them to people who need help with service projects. Jo said to refer Girl Scout requests to her. Monica also said that she knew college students who were interested in becoming Master Naturalists. The conflict is with their classes and scheduling. Cindy said that she had missed the last two meetings, because she did not receive information about them. Maureen told her where to look and to check her email to be sure that our emails were not being blocked.
- 11. Sponsor:** Julie reported that Sara Snell was battling cancer and would like cards and calls. She asks for all our good wishes and for us not to forget her. Julie also said that the office space was tighter since a couple of people have had to move into the volunteer room for office space. For the time being, meeting space is at a premium. Dolphin Challenge will be February 1st with activities on January 31st. On October 22nd she will be hosting 4H science night. The theme is the Chemistry of Halloween. The evening will be 6:30 to 8:00 with dinner at 6:30. The group ranges in age from 9 – 17. In November the Gulf Coast Master Naturalist chapter wants to meet some of our group at GISP. Plans are being made for that. Treasures of the Bay award nominations are being solicited for the December meeting.

In closing, Maureen asked when nominations will be made for the new officers for 2020. Susette reminded people that plans for Camp Wild 2020 are already underway. Julie said that she would have cards at the chapter meeting for people to sign for Sara.

At 3:21 Maureen made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Janet seconded the motion and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.