

GBAC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 29, 2022 via ZOOM

Attendees: Pam House, Tyler Coleman, Ellen Gerloff, Cynthia Hughes, Meade LeBlanc, Cindy Lienen, Janet Mason, Jo Monday, Mohammed Nasrullah, Mike Petitt, Patty Trimmingham

Sponsor: Julie Massey

A quorum was established with 84% of voting members present.

The meeting was called to order by President Pam House at 10:00 AM.

OLD BUSINESS:

The January 8th minutes that had been emailed previously to the board members were offered for discussion. A motion was made by Patty and seconded by Jo to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS:

President (Pam House)

President's Report: Pam reported that EIH is preparing a grant request to Texas Parks and Wildlife for improvement of the nature trails at UH Clear Lake. Pam wrote a letter in support of the project providing assurance of GBAC's intention to supply volunteer hours toward this goal.

Next, Pam reported that the partnership agreement with Houston Audubon Society for projects at Bayside Regional Park had been finalized and executed, and she would keep the Board informed as HAS would begin working on the design for placement and construction of a bird blind at the park and would be assisting with planning for community events to be held in the spring.

Pam also attended the Presidents' Meeting in January, and she learned that another Against All Odds Through Grit and Distance Pin would be awarded to each TMN member who took 8 hours of AT and reported at least 1 volunteer hour in 2021. Pam also mentioned that the recertification pin for 2022 is the Lightning Whelk.

Finally, Pam explained that the C-MOP that was adopted state-wide in November, 2021 would be the C-MOP under which GBAC would be operating, as it was put in place for all chapters, state-wide.

Vice President (Tyler Coleman)

Tyler reported that he was looking forward to the next GBAC Chapter Meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 3rd, as he had taken the lead to arrange the

speaker for that evening, Dr. Allan H. Treiman, husband of Diane Humes and Principal Scientist of the Lunar and Planetary Institute.

Treasurer (Cindy Liening)

Cindy provided the financial report. A motion was made by Ellen and seconded by Janet to accept the December financial report. The motion passed unanimously. Cindy also reported that she had finalized the 2021 financials and had submitted them to Carolyn Miles, CPA, for her review.

Membership (Patty Trimmingham)

Patty reported that there were 139 paid members so far for 2022, and she would be sending reminders. Patty reported the latest figures on 2022 hours, which included 8 contacts mostly through collection of monofilament lines, more than 1700 volunteer service hours, and over 100 hours of AT.

Volunteer Service (Jo Monday)

Jo reported that she had met with Julie Ann Brown of GINTC and Ann of the Parks Board to explore collaborations with them. Jo was pleased about potential volunteer opportunities at the six parks on Galveston Island, including Seawolf Park and the RV Park on the West End. GBAC would be asked to provide volunteer guides for beach and/or bay walks with park visitors on variety of topics, such as birding. The opportunity could be tailored to the interests and passions of the volunteers. Jo would be interested in forming a team to take the next steps in letting the chapter know about these developments and moving forward with planning.

Advanced Training (Ellen Gerloff and Mike Pettit)

Ellen reported that the Urban Harvest presentation had been well-attended with about 50 participants, and she thanked Mohammed for arranging and hosting. The Purple Martins AT on January 27th had also been well-attended with about 60 participants. The next Chapter AT will be a presentation on Diurnal Raptors of the Galveston Bay Area on Monday, February 21st at 2:00 pm. Ellen also mentioned that she and Mike had scheduled a 1.5-hour AT on March 14th from 2:00 to 3:30 pm for Birding by Ear. Ellen also reminded the Board that NOAA's weekly Seaside Chats during the month of February had been approved for AT hours.

New Class (Janet Mason)

Janet reported that the Training Class committee had made the decision to postpone the new class due to continuing issues with Covid. She explained that the 2022 Training Class would take place in person between March 10th and May 15th. The Volunteer Sign-up had been moved to Thursday, February 10th and would be conducted by Zoom, beginning at 10:00 am. Normally the classes meet 11 times, but this year they would meet 10 times. Janet was

happy to report that the 30-member Class of 2022 would be another fantastic class.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion (Mohammed Nasrullah)

Mohammed reported that he was working on an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion AT for March. The presentation would be made by either Latino Outdoors or the Outdoor Foundation, and he would have additional information soon.

Communications (Meade LeBlanc)

Meade reported that she had submitted an article to the Galveston Daily News in recognition of Chris Anastas' achievement of 4,000 volunteer service hours. Meade said that going forward, she would like to do the same for members who reach the 2,500-hour level. Next Meade reported that the Zoom team was reorganizing, and that new volunteers were stepping up to take over meetings in their respective committees, etc. Cindy Liening asked about Smug Mug, and she said she would be willing to update the platform when needed. Meade thanked Cindy and agreed that Smug Mug was on her radar also, and that the committee would be looking for passionate photographers to step up.

Sponsor (Julie Massey)

Julie reported that the Dolphin Challenge had been set for March 5. She commented that thanks to Mohammed, she had two new schools to consider for the challenge. Julie also mentioned that she was hoping to get another Community-Engaged Intern for the summer, especially because there was funding available if she could demonstrate that the intern would assist with the 3-day Treasures of the Bay Educators' Workshop.

OTHER BUSINESS, DISCUSSION OF 2021 GOALS:

Pam asked the Board to review the Goals of 2021:

- Assign the new class reps a mentor from the board & hold an orientation meeting for new members to the Board. *Janet shared that after the final class session each year, the new class reps are briefed thoroughly about their commitment to the Board and their duties while serving. She added that it would not be a problem to assign a mentor, but that she wondered about the need unless something had been found to be lacking in the information that had been shared in past orientations. Pam and Patty agreed that this goal may have addressed an interim need that would resolve itself once Board meetings were conducted again in person. Patty offered to help Janet work with the next class reps, especially in order to solicit their help in making sure as many of the new class members as possible certify and recertify in 2022.*

Janet approved and said she would do her best to provide appropriate orientation to the new class reps, and she would count on Patty to focus on their VMS training.

- Training program for identifying invasive species – recognition of the species/needs to be ongoing and learning about how to address the issues regarding invasive species. *Mike explained that a group of planters had basically evolved into an evasive species team. He mentioned that Texas Invasives had not made their training program available, but that when and if they did, Mike would bring everyone interested up to speed. To date, nothing had been circulated to the entire chapter. Julie suggested that an Invasives AT would be worthwhile and could increase participation. She mentioned HARC, the Houston Area Research Center, as a valuable resource.*
- Chapter needs to work on being more intentionally inclusive – assign greeters for each meeting and possibly training/be with Patty at the sign-in table *Ellen said that once the chapter returns to in-person meetings, inclusion would be greatly improved, and she would recruit members to be particularly proactive as greeters at the chapter meetings. She encouraged the Board to set the example at chapter meetings and especially with the 2022 class.*
- Disaster Planning Team, to be discussed by Mike Petitt. *Mike reported that work had been done in 2021, and he had shared the resulting information with Tyler as the new vice president. Mike added that the work had been done, and that he was waiting on, although he was not inviting, the occurrence of an event.*
- Creation of slideshows – to be led by Leann, Maureen & Chuck (temporary), and Meade. *Meade complimented Leann for her PowerPoint skills and said that they would do their best to identify a small group of members with those same skills for slideshow needs as they arise.*
- Zoom meeting to recruit volunteers for the different volunteer activities – needs to be an action item. *Jo commented that this should be a continuing goal for 2022. Everyone agreed that it was important to provide members with full access to all volunteer opportunities. Meade commented that the website is an under-used resource and that members should be reminded to check it regularly. Patty mentioned that some aspects of the opportunities should be revamped and be made more prevalent.*
- Succession planning – Identify & train chapter members, Leading a team, Agendas, Scheduling of meetings, etc., and Outreach – Board Members *Pam commented that this is a continuing goal. Julie said that meeting in person will resolve many succession issues and that the Board may be doing much better in this area than we realize.*

Next, Pam called for the Board to Identify 2022 Goals:

- Succession Planning will be an ongoing goal, including:
Identification and training of new chapter members
Building Team Leadership
Taking on Leads or Co-Leads of various committees

Outreach to Acquire new Board members as needed

Pam reminded the Board that 2022 would be Janet's final year to train the new class, that this would be Cindy's final year as treasurer, and that Jo would need someone to step in as Volunteer Services director. Furthermore, Ellen and Mike were working together on AT services because Ellen needs a break. Qualified replacements needed to be identified as soon as possible in order to allow time for shadowing and to insure a smooth transition in several important areas.

- *Focus on Outreach for 2022. The goal is to reformulate Outreach since the time it was first instituted. Consider how Communications and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion can be used as tools to promote outreach. Julie mentioned that this is an important goal in multiple areas. For example, new members need to be recruited and trained, and current members need to be made aware of and recruited for new volunteer opportunities as they arise. Mohammed offered to serve with whoever takes the lead on Outreach due to his interest in promoting diversity in all areas. Meade added that she would like to see partnerships with other community organizations added to outreach. Pam and Meade offered to take the initial lead on Outreach, but that they would be looking for a volunteer to take the reins early in the spring.*
- *Conduct a successful Treasurers of the Bay Educator's Workshop during the summer of 2022. The Board was in agreement to follow Julie's lead and lend their support.*
- *Explore Alternate Timing of Chapter Events, including chapter meetings and training class schedules. As Vice President, Tyler agreed to follow up with Mohammed's help. Mike asked that Tyler be given as much lead time as possible to obtain guest speakers.*
- *Conduct a successful Evening Training Class in the fall of 2022. Janet said that as the current Training Chair, she would continue to explore this goal.*

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Cynthia Hughes