

## **GBAC BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**April 5, 2022 via ZOOM**

Attendees: Pam House, Leanne Criswell, Ellen Gerloff, Cynthia Hughes, Meade LeBlanc, Cindy Liening, Susette Mahaffey, Jo Monday, Janet Mason, Mohammed Nasrullah, Mike Petitt, Patty Trimingham and advisor, Julie Massey

A quorum was established with 86% of voting members present.

The meeting was called to order by President Pam House at 1:00 p.m..

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The minutes of the March meeting that had been emailed previously to the board members were offered for discussion. A motion was made by Patty and seconded by Mike to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Pam welcomed Susette Mahaffey back to the Board in her capacity as Past President and thanked Susette for her continued support of GBAC.

Next, Pam discussed the next chapter meeting, scheduled for Thursday, April 7. She explained there would be brief presentations given by Beach Heroes, the Green Team, and the AT Committee. Janet offered to welcome the new training class members to their first chapter meeting and to provide an overview of their first few sessions. Pam reminded the Board that Andrew Bennett would be the guest speaker discussing the Big Thicket National Preserve.

Pam also reminded the Board that April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. Pam suggested that in honor of the occasion, that the chapter conduct a Come & Go morning at Carbide Park with cake and items available for purchase in the chapter store. The board agreed on the morning of Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m..

Next, Pam inquired about the Board's interest in moving regular board meetings from 1 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month to perhaps an evening meeting. She asked if other board find themselves experiencing issues with the timing. Discussion ensued, and numerous conflicts were mentioned. The consensus seemed to be that the board members had built their schedules around saving the first Tuesday afternoon of each month for the meetings.

Pam mentioned making an exception for the date of the next board meeting that would have normally been held on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Pam asked if the Board would

consider the date of Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. for the May meeting of the Board, and it was agreed.

## **BOARD REPORTS:**

President (Pam House)

Pam reported that she had met with the presidents of five other regional chapters to tour the Omni Hotel at 4 Riverway in Houston in advance of the TMN Annual Meeting. TMN had negotiated a favorable rate of \$95 per night, and the facilities seemed spacious and satisfactory for the group.

Pam also mentioned that there is a new feature of the state website called AgriLife Learn where state merchandise and supplies could be ordered.

Treasurer (Cindy Liening)

Cindy provided the financial report. A motion was made by Meade and seconded by Ellen to accept the February financial report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Cindy also reported that Carolyn Miles, CPA, now had all the information she needed to finalize her review of the chapter's 2021 financials

Membership (Patty Trimingham)

Patty reported almost 5,600 VS hours and 432 AT hours had been recorded for the month of March. She was also pleased to report Impacts had tripled from February to March. Patty would be updating the latest directory which would be ready before the end of the month.

Volunteer Service (Jo Monday)

Jo explained that the title of her report was "Is it Volunteer Service, or is it Advanced Training?" In the past, mandatory training for a specific project, such as Dolphin Challenge, would count as volunteer service rather than AT. However, it had come to the attention of Jo, Patty for Membership and Ellen for Advanced Training, that there has been some confusion and some frustration for the lack of a standard policy for reporting training/practice hours. The committee of three met, and the new policy in effect as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, is that all training will now qualify as Advanced Training hours.

Advanced Training (Ellen Gerloff and Mike Petitt)

Ellen was pleased to report strong attendance for the Community AT on March 29 as well as for the Monarch Butterflies. The next AT sessions to be scheduled are "Get Ready for the City Nature Challenge (Learn/Review iNaturalist)" presented by Scott Buckel on Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:15 p.m., the rescheduled "Oysters – Refuge, Food, Habitat" presented by Shane Bonnot on Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2:00-3:00 p.m., and "Dendrology 101-Everything You

Want to Know about Trees" presented by Chris Ebling on Thursday, June 23, from 2:00-3:15 p.m..

#### New Training Class (Janet Mason)

Janet reported that the first three training sessions went very well. She thanked Leanne and the 2020 class for providing a wonderful luncheon and making the first class enjoyable and memorable. Janet will make sure that the new class can take advantage of the ListServe that is available online.

#### Equity Diversity and Inclusion (Mohammed Nasrullah)

Mohammed discussed the 4<sup>th</sup> AT in the series on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion that took place Tuesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. The presentation was successful, and he praised the Zoom team for the excellent job they did in support of the presentation. He mentioned his desire to work with Outdoor Foundation in the future, particularly for the potential of receiving funding from their organization for local outreach to minority youth. Mohammad said he would be brainstorming soon with the Diversity Committee in order to develop a mission and set goals for 2022 and beyond.

#### Communications (Meade LeBlanc)

Meade began with Smug Mug and mentioned that Gene Fisseler was taking the lead on photography. Meade mentioned that she intended to do some recruiting for Communications from the 2022 class.

#### Class Reps (Leanne Criswell)

Leanne expressed appreciation to everyone who contributed to the successful luncheon held for the first session of the 2022 Training Class.

#### Chapter Sponsor (Julie Massey)

Julie thanked the chapter for a very successful Dolphin Challenge with seven schools represented and 9 teams competing. She thanked Mohammad for reaching out to Iman Academy, that participated for the very first time.

Julie was pleased to report that two interns would be reporting soon, one for the summer and one for an entire year. The summer intern will work on understanding how immigrant communities impact the recreational and commercial fishing industry. The other intern will come from the USDA Science Interpreter program from Texas A & M. The degree is designed to teach students how to communicate science with the public. Julie said that the chapter would be hearing from the interns in the coming months, as the interns would be making presentations for AT's and chapter meetings as part of their assignments.

Julie continues to work on timing for the Treasures of the Bay class this summer, as well as a Fall Evening Training Class in which classes would be

held on Thursday evenings and field trips would be conducted on Saturdays. She mentioned that as many as five Armand Bayou staff members would be interested in an evening class.

**FINAL THOUGHTS:**

Pam asked the Board to continue to plan for a Day Away in the summer, perhaps following the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Jo reminded the Board to be alert to finding the next Volunteer Service director.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Hughes