

**Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
December 17, 2008**

December 2008 Board Minutes

Present:

Dan Behringer, Janet Csanyi, Warren Ferguson, John Huecksteadt, Martha Miesch, Phyllis Muska, Jim Stanley, Priscilla Stanley, Jerri Workman, Steve Dodge; Jim Gardner; Bob McKinley, Ward Miller, Gracie Waggener

Absent: Lee Kneupper, Annie Rendon, Will Lummis

The December meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm by President Jim Stanley.

1. Acceptance of Minutes for November Meeting: Board members had no additions or corrections to the Minutes sent to them for review.

2. Introduction of New and Old Board Members: Following this introduction, President Jim Stanley welcomed the New Board members and thanked the outgoing Board members. He noted that our officers are elected by our Chapter members, the Immediate Past-President is on the Board to help provide continuity and take on the difficult tasks as Phyllis Muska has done so well this year, and the New Class Representative is selected from the New Class. All other Directors are appointed by the new President, with the majority approval of the currently serving Board. Jim then discussed the most critical duties of each Board member. The duties of each Board member are defined in our new Chapter Operating Handbook dated 7/23/08, which is available at our "Member's Only" webpage. New Board members are encouraged to ask their predecessor or other Board members any questions that they might have as they perform their duties.

Jim noted that our Chapter has four governance documents:

1. **Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter: Chapter Management Guidelines** – Revised June 20, 2007
- Provided by the TMN State Program Office
2. **The TMN Bylaws** (6/15/08), is given to us by the TMN State Program Office to be adopted verbatim (with the only change permitted being the selection of the term length for our officers).
3. **Our Chapter Operating Handbook** (Revised 7/23/08). (The TMN State Program Office provides a template which each chapter can modify.)
4. **New Class Guidelines** (Revised 11/19/08)

Jim said that his goals for the Chapter have been:

1. Increasing our membership via our Chapter's successful recruiting efforts
2. Increasing the natural resource knowledge of our members
3. Increasing participation in volunteer projects

3. 2008 Year in Review: For the benefit of our new Board members, Jim reviewed the issues handled by the Board in 2008.

Fiscal issues: This year our webmaster submitted a bill for \$900 for six years of webhosting. Riverside Nature Center substantially increased their room rental rates above what our chapter could afford, but then modified the rates to a level we could manage. We can use Nature Science Lab and the Lawson Store without a fee since our Chapter is a non-profit

group member of Riverside. We just received a check for \$1610.29 for our share of the profits from co-sponsoring the Down By the Riverside Native Plant Sale and Nature Fair in October.

Jim thanked Past-President Phyllis Muska, who chaired several Committees this year, for her excellent work in revising the Chapter Operating Handbook and the New Class Guidelines as well as leading the Nominating Committee for the 2009 Board.

4. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Martha Miesch reported expenses this month of \$50 for a Class tuition rebate for Julie Gibson who certified, \$339.91 to San Saba Cap Inc for more Chapter shirts, \$357.23 to John Huecksteadt for TMN badges for the Class of 2008, \$151.65 to Bill Burns for Class of 2008 expenses and a total of \$339.12 to Holiday Party Committee members Jean Parreira, Ruth McArthur and Mary Morten for party expenses. Our total monthly expenses as of December 17 were \$1,237.91. Income included \$117 for TMN Chapter shirts, \$410 for reservations for our Holiday Party, donations of \$125 by Jean Parreira as half of the Cibolo room rental fee for our holiday party and \$49.11 by Cathy Downs for expenses for the holiday party and \$60 for lunches for guests attending the New Class Commencement for a total income of \$761.11. The Chapter balance on December 17th is \$7,641.77. The Treasurer's Report is appended to the archival copy of the Minutes.

Martha also provided a preliminary comparison of our Annual Income and Expenses to date relative to the 2008 Budget adopted by the Board at the beginning of 2008. This year there were no expenses submitted for our Chapter newsletter, publicity or officer and Board expenses. Publicity costs for our Down by the Riverside Native Plant Sale and Nature Fair annual fundraiser were paid by Riverside Nature Center and then our 50% share of the publicity cost was deducted from our share of the profit. There has been an increase in member donations to the Chapter this year and the Board thanks all the members who donated.

Past-President Phyllis Muska noted that 2008 was the first year that our Chapter had approved a formal Annual Budget, based on requirements of the TMN State Program Office. Communications Director Janet Csanyi suggested that the Treasurer's Report information be made available to our members. Secretary Priscilla Stanley indicated that the Treasurer's Report was described in full in words in the Minutes of each Board meeting. The Chapter finances would be much easier to understand if the Treasurer's Report were available in an electronic format to be appended to the Board Minutes posted on our "Members Only" webpage. This issue will be taken up by the new President and new Board in January.

5. Meeting Room Fee for Monarch Larval Monitoring AT Class: Advanced Training Director Dan Behringer had received an e-mail from Ginny deWolf asking if our Chapter would pay the \$25 room rental fee for this training to be held at Riverside. While the class is AT for TMNs, it is open to the public. Secretary Priscilla Stanley suggested letting Riverside sponsor the course and collect their \$6 educational fee from non-RNC members, \$3 fee from RNC members and let TMNs attend free for providing the course. 2009 President John Huecksteadt will discuss this with Ginny.

6. Progress Toward Chapter Attaining 501(c)(3) Non-profit Status: 2009 President John Huecksteadt reported that he was working on this project.

7. Chapter Website to Move to Grovesite: 2009 President John Huecksteadt also reported that our Chapter website would be moving to Grovesite, which is provided to TMN chapters at no cost by the TMN State Program Office. Past President Phyllis Muska and Communications Director Janet Csanyi want to manage the new website.

8. New Chapter Newsletter Editor: Communications Director Janet Csanyi reported that Donna Snow Robinson, who had been our Chapter Newsletter Editor for two years, had asked to be replaced. Janet has recruited Kristie Denbow from our Class of 2008 as our new Newsletter Editor. Kristie has experience in doing newsletters for other organizations. The deadline for submitting information will remain the same, the **10th of the month** to enable the newsletter to reach our members in time to learn about the program and speaker at our Chapter meeting on the fourth Monday of the month.

9. Questions from New Board Members: Jim Stanley asked if any of the new Board members had any questions or concerns. One question was regarding the composition of the Annual Financial Audit Committee. Past-President Phyllis Muska indicated that our Chapter Operating Handbook specifies that the Audit will be performed by the Vice-President, the Secretary and the New Class Representative.

10. 2009 Class Training: 2009 Class Training Director Bob McKinley reported that he had received the revised New Class Guidelines document from Jim and appreciated the information on recommended training topics and speakers that had been added in the 11/19/08 revision to this document. The Board noted that this addition had been Janet Csanyi's idea and her work in assembling input from the other Board members. Phyllis Muska incorporated those data into the latest revision of the New Class Guidelines.

Bob provided a list of members that had been recommended to him for the 2009 Class Training Committee and the Board agreed that they were strong candidates. Bob indicated that he would be forming his Committee and would keep the Board informed of his Committee's progress. The Board told Bob that it often works by e-mail and that he should feel free to ask questions or share information this way if he wished and that he did not have to wait for Board meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, January 21 at 1:30 pm at Riverside Nature Center in the Nature Science Lab. Hill Country Chapter members and Advisors are always welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Stanley

Secretary

12/27/08