

Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
March 17, 2010

Present: Koy Coffey, Cathy Downs, Steve Dodge, John Huecksteadt, Susan Longacre, Sandy Pena, Jim Stanley, Priscilla Stanley

Absent: Laura Baker, Gracie Waggener

President John Huecksteadt called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Approval of the Minutes for the February meeting: The Board reviewed the February Minutes. Sandy moved to approve the Minutes and Koy Coffey seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Officer and Director Reports:

2. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Cathy Downs presented the Treasurer's Report for February as well as our 2010 Budget vs. our expenditures and income to date, organized in the same categories as we need to track for our 501(c)(3) annual reports. The Board thanked Cathy for this very helpful information. Jim Stanley moved to approve the Treasurer's Report and Koy Coffey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. New Class Committee: John Huecksteadt announced that Cathy Downs had agreed to become the Class Manager/New Class Director to fill this vacant position, as well as continue as our Treasurer. The Board thanked Cathy for filling this critical position as well as continuing to develop our enhanced financial reporting system for our 501(c)(3) status. The Board agreed that in this special situation, and in recognition of Cathy's excellent prior performances as a Class Manager and New Class Director, that she could serve in both Board positions this year. The Board pledged to support Cathy in the classroom and wherever else she might need assistance.

Cathy reported that the Committee hoped to have Dr. Baron Rector present "Uniqueness of the Hill Country". Craig Hensley will give the "Birds" presentation, Bill Lindemann will present "Geology of the Hill Country" and Bill Armstrong will present "Prescribed Burning". The Committee is still searching for a "Soils" speaker now that Charles Stickler is no longer giving talks from retirement. New Class Committee meetings will be on April 12, May 12 and June 9. The Class expenses are on track with the budget and the Committee is moving forward well.

4. Membership Director: HCMN Chapter Annual Report: Membership Director Koy Coffey reported that our Chapter 2009 Annual Report to the TMN State Program Office had been completed and submitted on time.

Koy also reported that applications for our Class of 2010 will start going out this month to the 26 people currently on our Prospective Trainees list. We will have a TMN outreach/recruiting table at the Riverside Nature Center Earth Day Celebration and Native Plant Sale on April 17th.

Our 2010 New Class recruiting brochures are ready for distribution by Susan Longacre in Kerr County, Norma Bruns in Kendall County, Phyllis Muska in Gillespie County and Anne Cassidy in Bandera County.

Koy told the Board that the Snow Ball Silent Auction had raised \$1,400 for our Nature Partner, Riverside Nature Center. Our Chapter's contribution to this effort was providing one winner with advice on choosing a tree for the winner's property and advice on planting it.

5. Advanced Training (AT) Director Steve Dodge reported that we continued to have plenty of high-quality Advanced Training opportunities approved for our members. The special AT Canyon Lake Gorge Geology Field trip, led by Cathy Downs and Gracie Waggener (both HCMN members and experienced Tour Guides for the Gorge tours), included 24 HCMNs, 18 of which were taking the trip for the first time.

Steve noted that by March 17th, he had already approved 50 AT events for our chapter. A Forbs ID class will be given by John Huecksteadt on April 10th and the next Forbs ID Class will be in the Fall after one of the New Class Training sessions. AT information can be found on our chapter website in the Calendar selection in the public area of the website.

6. Volunteer Projects Director Priscilla Stanley provided updates on two projects:

Riverside Nature Center (RNC) had considered starting a Junior Master Naturalist program for kindergarten through 3rd grade children with our chapter as a partner. We have many new Volunteer Projects starting this year so we were concerned that we did not have the available TMNs to do a good job as a partner in another new project. Priscilla discussed this concern with Stephanie Perry of the RNC Education Committee and they agreed that it would be best to have a Junior Naturalist program at RNC sponsored by RNC. We would approve this project for TMN Volunteers and Stephanie, an HCMN member, will be the Volunteer Project Coordinator for our chapter.

Our Love Creek Preserve Volunteer Project started in 2002 has become active again through the efforts of Bob McKinley, our TMN Project Coordinator working with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) personnel. On March 9th, twelve of our TMNs spent the day helping TNC staff Bill Carr and Rebecca Flack count the endangered Tobusch fishhook cacti. Our teams found nearly twice as many of these cacti as in previous counts. It is possible that the cactus population increased, but TNC personnel also believe that the dedication of our TMNs increased the count as well.

Priscilla reported that the proposed changes to our Chapter Operating Handbook that the Board discussed last month had been sent to our membership prior to this Board meeting as required by our Chapter Operating Handbook. These changes were fully described in the

February Board Minutes and involve no changes in how our chapter operates. The changes incorporate guidance from the TMN State Program Office on criteria for approving Volunteer Projects into our Chapter Operating Handbook to make it easier to find and to ensure that our members have easy access to this information.

Priscilla requested that the Board approve these proposed changes which it had discussed and agreed upon last month. The Board approved the changes unanimously.

7. Vice President Sandy Pena reported that the speaker for our July 26 meeting will be J. David Bamberger on how he restored his Selah Ranch. We anticipate high attendance from our members and the public so this meeting will be held in the UGRA Auditorium.

Our chapter has grown and we are having more public participation at our monthly chapter meetings as well. Thus Sandy is looking for a larger meeting space at a reasonable cost for 2011. The new Salvation Army Kroc Community Center in Kerrville is being considered. UGRA charges non-profit nature organizations \$65 for evening meetings in the auditorium.

Other suggestions included:

- The new Kerr Wildlife Management Educational Building which can seat 100 people.
- The Farm Bureau Building in Fredericksburg also has a significantly larger capacity than our current room at Riverside Nature Center.

8. President John Huecksteadt reported that our 501(c)(3) is still making good progress.

John also noted that we needed to begin planning our Annual Chapter Family Picnic which traditionally replaces our June meeting and could be either Sunday June 27 or Monday, June 28.

With all business discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Stanley

Acting Secretary for:

Gracie Waggener

Secretary