

**Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
September 18, 2013**

Present: Carolyn Bean, Vern Crawford, Tom Hynes, Floyd Trefny, Stephen Bishop, Priscilla Stanley, Becky Etzler, Paula Smith, Valeska Danielak, Michelle Haggerty

Absent: Daneshu Clarke, J.D. Clarke

Also present: Eileen Gotke, Jim Stanley

President Vern Crawford called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm.

Acceptance of Minutes for August 2013 Meeting: Tom Hynes made a motion to approve the August minutes. The motion was seconded by Paula Smith. Motion carried.

Scholarship to TMN Annual Meeting - Valeska Danielak suggested that this year's scholarship for attending the TMN Annual Meeting be offered to one of our most active chapter members, Cathy Downs. Eileen Gotke added in support of the idea that Cathy is an excellent example of what a Master Naturalist can be and the timing would coincide with Cathy being awarded her pin for volunteering 5,000 hours.

Paula Smith made a motion to award the funds to Cathy Downs and to amend the budget to include matching funds. The motion was seconded by Tom Hynes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Floyd Trefny presented the Treasurer's Report. The summary report for August 2013 shows a balance of \$14,432.39. Floyd noted that of the \$750 in expenses last month, most went to honorariums.

The Holding account for the TMN State Program shows a balance of \$45,231.22. Expenses included a \$5,000 payment to T Bar M Resort and Hotel. Approximately \$36,000 in deposits was registration fees for this year's TMN Annual Meeting.

Tom Hynes made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report; the motion was seconded by Paula Smith. Motion carried.

Floyd Trefny reviewed the Chapter's budget-to-date and noted that it is difficult to compare actual monthly expenditures to the monthly budget, but the YTD expenditures to budget are easier to review and show that we are running slightly under budget.

Chapter Sponsorship at TMN Annual Meeting – Vern Crawford reported that last year we were a gold sponsor (\$500 contribution) for the TMN Annual Meeting and suggests that we do the same this year.

Stephen Bishop made a motion to donate \$500 to the TMN Annual Meeting and to amend the budget if necessary. The motion was seconded by Floyd Trefny. Motion passed.

Tom Hynes asked why the donation is not in the budget for this year. Floyd Trefny said he will add into the budget with a notation so it is not missed in next year's budget.

Tom Hynes moved that we reallocate the unused \$500 in the budget for Muleshoe to the TMN Annual Meeting donation. (The \$500 allocation to Muleshoe was a carry over error from 2012.) The motion was seconded by Paula Smith. Motion passed.

2013 Class Update - Becky reported that the new class is progressing as expected. She also noted that one speaker sent back the honorarium check and Amazon gift card to be used elsewhere. The class photos have been posted on the chapter's website and posted on the chapter's facebook page.

Nominating Committee Update – Priscilla Stanley noted that the Nominating Committee will use the original applications submitted by members and the newsletter introductory articles for the members to identify new prospects for the open 2014 board positions. Priscilla added that any chapter member may volunteer for consideration and any chapter member may nominate another chapter member. All volunteers and nominees will be considered. Cathy Downs and Phyllis Muska will participate on the Nominating Committee with Priscilla.

Wings Over the Hills – Tom Hynes spoke about a springtime festival put on by the Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center (FFNC). Bill Lindemann asked Tom to speak about the possibility of HCMN becoming a partner for the festival by providing volunteers. The festival occurs each year on the last weekend in April. The Fredericksburg Rotary Club dropped their sponsorship because it did not provide enough funds for their scholarship program. If we do partner with FFNC, any profit funds generated during the festival would be shared with HCMN. Vern Crawford asked if the RNC plant sale happening on the same weekend would diminish the support for the plant sale. Tom will report to Bill that the Board of Directors would be interested in having him speak at the board meeting in October.

RNC Dues Update – Vern Crawford and Floyd Trefny had a meeting with Mary Muse from RNC and presented the idea that annual dues of \$150 would be fair versus the requested \$300. Mary discussed the RNC's budgetary shortfalls to explain the requested \$300 in dues. It was agreed to keep our RNC dues at \$300 and to show a \$150 cash contribution to HCMN for volunteer labor netting our dues to \$150.

Discussion Proposed Changes to HCMN current Bylaws – Floyd Trefny said that he remembered Michelle Haggerty stating last spring that our Bylaws were out of date when compared to the state's bylaws. After reviewing both bylaw documents, Floyd found that one point in particular seemed to be most in need of review, term limits. Tom Hynes spoke next saying he believes we should scrap our current bylaws and adopt the state's bylaws.

According to Michelle, the state's template bylaws have existed since ~2003. The current state bylaws are dated 2011. HCMN bylaws are dated 2009 and were approved by Michelle. Michelle said that the state's bylaws do not limit the number of terms for a BoD member. She stated that although we are the only chapter that differs from the state, there is no issue with our limit.

Floyd stated that his concern is that if a new treasurer is voted in and cannot complete the term, an experienced treasurer could not return to the position due to our bylaw term limits.

A second issue expressed by Floyd is PayPal. The treasurer must provide their name, social security number, address and other personal data to maintain the Chapter's PayPal account.

Vern Crawford stated that no decision is required today. Michelle and the other BoD members agreed and this point will be deferred to the 2014 board when seated.

TMN Attorney Letter – Michelle Haggerty stated that on September 3, 2013 a certified letter printed on legal letterhead was received regarding an incident at a HCMN volunteer event last year. Michelle stated that she will forward the letter to the state legal team for a response.

Officer and Director Reports:

Tom Hynes: Reported that he is working on the holiday party and is searching for a venue. Camp CAMP is not available for our date of December 14. It was suggested that Camp Tecaboca might be an option.

Floyd Trefny: Nothing else to report.

Stephen Bishop: Sandy Leyendecker asked Stephen how to incorporate members from the new counties into her database and how to record their prior hours. Michelle Haggerty suggested that they be setup as transfer members with 'legacy' hours applied. The issue appears to be that their hours are lumped together and not individually recorded. Vern Crawford proposed that he draft a letter to these new members requesting they submit the data by individual for recording purposes. This letter will additionally ask whether each member wants to be an active member of the chapter.

Priscilla Stanley: Nothing else to report.

Carolyn Bean: Nothing else to report.

Daneshu Clarke: Reported via email to the BoD that there have been 203 Advanced Training codes year-to-date.

Becky Etzler: Nothing else to report.

Michelle: Nothing else to report.

Meeting Decisions:

- Approved scholarship funds for attending the TMN Annual Meeting be awarded to Cathy Downs
- Resolution of \$150 membership dues to RNC will be noted in the budget and paid
- Approved the members of the nominating committee
- Bill Lindemann will be asked to address the board meeting next month regarding a partnership with Friends of the Fredericksburg Nature Center for the Wings Over the Hills festival
- Vern Crawford will send a letter requesting both an accounting of volunteer hours and a desire to be a member of HCMN to the new counties
- Bylaw discussion on term limits will be deferred to the 2014 BoD

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 PM.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 23, 2013 at 1:30 PM at RNC.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Bean
Secretary