

Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter  
Board Meeting  
January 22, 2014

Present: Sarah Hilburn, Vern Crawford, Kathy Ward, Diane McMahon, Priscilla Stanley, Becky Etzler, Stephen Bishop, Liz Ross, Bob Wiedenfeld, Rod Boertje, Donna Oliver-Leep, and Lisa Flanagan.

Absent: Michelle Haggerty and Roy Walston

Also present: Tom Hynes and Floyd Trefny

President Vern Crawford called the meeting to order at 1:31PM.

Review Procedures/Expectations: Vern Crawford explained that the agenda is used as a timeline to help stay on track so that we can adjourn on time.

Acceptance of Minutes for December 2013 Meeting: Lisa Flanagan made a motion to approve the December minutes. The motion was seconded by Kathy Ward. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Floyd Trefny presented a summary of the two accounts for Diane McMahon. Then he presented the Treasurer's Summary Report for December 2013 showing a balance of \$17,024.41.

The Holding account for the TMN State Program shows a balance of \$43,159.07

Becky Etzler made a motion to approve the Treasurer's reports. The motion was seconded by Kathy Ward. Motion carried.

Finance Committee Discussion: Stephen Bishop asked for clarification of the purpose of the finance committee and to be removed from the task force considering a finance committee. Floyd Trefny was concerned about the Treasurer being the only person involved with Chapter finances. A finance committee would ensure a smooth transition. The finance committee would review processes and large transitions performed by the Treasurer. Vern Crawford asked for a show of hands of members who felt we needed a finance committee. The majority did not want a finance committee at this time. Diane McMahon asked if we could wait on making the decision whether we needed to establish a finance committee until she had more time to learn her role as treasurer.

Contact List: Becky Etzler pointed out Rod Boertje's e-mail address was incorrect. Tom Hynes stated that the Chapter's e-mail address was omitted. Vern Crawford will make the corrections and resend the list.

Annual State Report: Vern Crawford reviewed highlights of the annual State Report. Vern Crawford stated that the report was so comprehensive because of the outstanding database that Sandy Leyendecker created. Tom Hynes asked why the incorporation of the Western Edwards Plateau Chapter was not included as one of the successes. Vern Crawford stated that we do not know how many members will be involved in our chapter so it is difficult to say that the merger was a major success. Our volunteer hours increased by 50% over last year's total. Stephen Bishop reported nine new projects. Albert and Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area and Love Creek Preserve generated many hours. Lisa Flanagan asked about our ethnicity, 100% Anglo. Much discussion followed on whether we should change some of our training procedures in an attempt to balance our ethnicity. Vern Crawford stated we need to reach out to other ethnic groups during recruitment. Becky Etzler stated that the time and day of our classes really limit who can take the classes. Our current schedule targets the retired group. Priscilla Stanley stated that the Chapter has a high graduation and involvement rate so we should take this in consideration before we start changing things. Vern Crawford stated we may want to get a task force together to investigate possibly adding an evening or weekend class in one or two years.

2014 Class Guidelines: Becky Etzler stated the 2014 Class Guidelines were ready to be approved except for a couple minor mechanical errors.

Kathy Ward made a motion to accept the 2014 Class Guidelines with stipulation that the mechanical errors be corrected. Liz Ross seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Exxon/Mobil Grant: Sarah Hilburn reported that Nyta Brown wanted the Chapter to hold Old Tunnel's grant money until there was enough money donated that the chapter could buy the lap top for research. Floyd Trefny stated that the lap top costs about \$4000. This is a special computer that is needed for the harsh conditions in the tunnel. Becky Etzler asked if the Chapter ever asked the membership for donations. Discussion followed on possible ways to get donations. It was stated that, with Nyta Brown's permission, we could put an article in the newsletter explaining the need for the lap top. A copy of Nyta Brown's e-mail will be kept in the finance files and in the minutes' notebook.

2014 New Class Update: Liz Ross reported the committee met on Monday. The reception is scheduled for Monday, August 18. If they are available, most speakers will remain the same with a couple exceptions. Two new topics, bees and butterflies, will be researched and possibly added to the schedule. Urban systems will be stressed in relevant topics. Love Creek Preserve will be added as a new field trip replacing Hondo Creek. The committee will still require new class members to attend three of four field trips but some discretion can be made for those not physically able to attend some of the field trips.

Report on Chapter Meeting Speakers: Kathy Ward reported that native bee speaker, Michael Warriner from TPWD will be the speaker on April 28. Kathy Ward has someone to speak on "critters" in soil. Kathy Ward asked board members for speaker suggestions. Kathy Ward is going to ask Nyta Brown to speak on bats. Lisa Flanagan suggested talking about birds in a riparian environment. Sarah Hilburn suggested a speaker talk about "Basic Birding".

Unfinished Business for the New Board to Discuss:

- 1) Vern Crawford stated that Minutes needed to be taken at any monthly meeting where chapter business was conducted; voting to elect the four 2014 officers in November and approval of the Chapter Operating Handbook. Priscilla Stanley stated Minutes from the board elections in November need to be approved by the membership. Vern Crawford stated the Minutes can be approved at the January 27, 2014 meeting. Vern Crawford will e-mail the Minutes to the membership before the January 27, 2014 meeting. Copies of the Minutes will also be available at the meeting.
- 2) Honorary members (also known as Friends of the Chapter) incorporation should be addressed in the Chapter Operating Handbook.
- 3) Two years of Chapter Minutes are missing (2003 and 2004). Vern stated we should work towards a central storage of chapter records; Drop Box.
- 4) Vern Crawford shared that the 2014 commencement location would remain at Cibolo Nature Center, it will not be changed to the Pioneer Pavilion at LBJ Park.

January Transition Retreat: Tom Hynes and Floyd Trefny stated how important it would be to have a retreat so that there is a smooth transition between Boards. Offices and positions could be explained and clarification of how the offices and positions are connected would be stressed. Critical items could also be discussed ahead of time so that time is not lost at Board meetings.

Kathy Ward made a motion to have a retreat on a Saturday within the first two weeks of February and invite the past Board, newsletter editor, webmaster, and database manager. Diane McMahon seconded. Motion passed.

Officer and Director Reports:

Kathy Ward: Nothing else to report.

Diane McMahon: January 28 - February 6, Diane will be in Alaska. Floyd Trefny stated that 50% of the transition has occurred between him and Diane McMahon.

Stephen Bishop: Stephen is working on the transfer of new members from the Western Edwards Plateau merger.

Priscilla Stanley: Priscilla asked the Board to consider Leanne Beauxbianne's request that she be allowed to count training she receives from her employer, TPWD, on interpretation and nature education as Advanced Training for our Chapter. Leanne wants to use her off-duty TPWD training hours to get her 2013 recertification.

Priscilla Stanley made a motion to accept Leanne Beauxbianne's TPWD off-duty training hours as Advanced Training for her 2013 recertification. Kathy Ward seconded. Motion passed.

Sarah Hilburn: Nothing else to report.

Rod Boertje: Rod is transitioning and hopes to get the Excel report soon.

Becky Etzler: Becky Etzler had questions about some of the chapter's mail. Becky Etzler asked if the Chapter had any memberships to other organizations. Floyd Trefny said the Chapter did not belong to any other organizations. Becky Etzler asked if the Board wanted to look at certain mail. Vern Crawford told Becky Etzler to use her discretion of whether to share or discard mail. Becky Etzler asked if the three new transfer members need to sign the pledge at the end of the Training Application and should they be required to attend certain New Class sessions. Discussion followed and it was decided that the new transfer members will sign the pledge and be encouraged to attend some of the New Class sessions about Hill Country ecosystems. Becky Etzler found a framed mission statement and asked if it could be displayed at all New Class sessions. The frame was given to Liz Ross. Kristie Denbow has created a link to notify certain recipients when a contact has been updated.

Vern Crawford: Nothing else to report.

Bob Wiedenfeld - Bob is working on components of his communications and the timeline for dispersing the communications.

Liz Ross: Nothing else to report.

Lisa Flanagan: Nothing else to report.

Meeting Decisions:

- \*Approved the December 2013 minutes
- \*Vern Crawford will correct the contact list and resend to the Board.
- \*Agreed to put the proposed finance committee on hold
- \*Approved 2014 New Class Guidelines
- \*Vern Crawford will schedule the Transition Retreat during the first two weeks of February.
- \*Approved Leanne Beauxbeanne's request.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:01PM.

The next meeting will be February 19, 2014 at 1:30PM at Riverside Nature Center.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah Hilburn  
Secretary