

Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter

Board Meeting

March 19, 2014

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

Absent: Roy Walston

Also present: NA

President Vern Crawford called the meeting to order at 1:30PM.

Acceptance of Minutes for February 19, 2014 Meeting: Kathy Ward made a motion to approve the February minutes. The motion was seconded by Lisa Flanagan. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: February's Report for the regular account: We had ten checks cleared totaling \$1952.52 and three deposits totaling \$2600. (Note that a donation of \$500 deposited on 12/31/13 did not process until January) The other two deposits were the \$2000 Exxon grant and \$100 in donated certification refunds. The balance is \$17,402.94.

February's Report for the holding account: There were no cleared checks and no deposits. The balance was \$43,159.07.

Sarah Hilburn made a motion to approve the February Treasurer's reports. Stephen Bishop seconded the motion. Motion carried.

March's Report for the regular account: We had six cleared checks totaling \$318.79 and one deposit of \$50 as a donated certification refund. The ending balance as of 2/28/14 was \$17,134.15

March's Report for the holding account: A \$25,000 check cleared that was written as a booking deposit for the annual Master Naturalist conference to be held at Mo Ranch. The ending balance as of 2/28/14 was \$18,159.07.

Kathy Ward made a motion to approve the March Treasurer's reports. Liz Ross seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Budget Discussion: Diane McMahon talked to Floyd Trefny about the trifold display board. Floyd Trefny stated that in the future we should decide where we take the money from before we make a motion to spend the money. Diane suggested that we add a line item for "Membership" next year. Discussion followed on where to expense the \$372.53 for the cost of the trifold display. \$150.00 from the "Speaker Honorarium" line from the administrative budget, \$100 from the "Binder" line and \$125 from the "Copies" line of the Class Training budget.

Becky Etzler made a motion to accept the budget amendment. Lisa Flanagan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Becky Etzler asked to have additional money added in her "Mailing" line. \$30 will come from the "New Class Mailing" line from the Class Training budget. We will also amend the budget and add a "Membership" line under administrative budget. The new line will have \$405 expensed.

Becky Etzler made a motion to accept the budget amendment. Lisa Flanagan seconded the motion.

TCEQ-Texas Environmental Excellence Award: Michelle Haggerty shared that the Texas Master Naturalist program was nominated for the Texas Environmental Excellence Reward in the Civic Community category back in November. The award will be accepted by Michelle Haggerty in May. Vern Crawford will share the news with the general membership in a newsletter in the "President's Message".

Youth Protective Screening Procedures: Much discussion followed on the pros and cons of requiring all members to be screened. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service states that all members need to get a background check. Michelle Haggerty stated that it is a requirement to have all members screened every three years. Michelle shared that she has several chapters that comply with this guideline. The policy states that if you have direct contact with youth or adults, you must have a background check. If you apply with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the cost is \$10.00. Texas Parks and Wildlife will screen for no cost. Michelle Haggerty stated that she would help with this endeavor. Sandy Leyendecker could pull up an "active" list so that we can start with the active members. Pros-this policy protects the chapter. Cons-Michelle has had very few negative comments. Vern Crawford stated that he and Becky will work with Michelle Haggerty to revise the recruiting brochure and another motion will be made when we have more information from Michelle Haggerty in two months.

Becky Etzler made a motion to revise the volunteer pledge portion of the New Class application to state that all members will need to have a background check and there may be a nominal fee. Kathy Ward seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2014 Class Update: Liz Ross reported that Rufus Stephens and Carter Kearns have not confirmed their dates. The Love Creek Preserve field trip has not been scheduled, October 10, 2014 is a suggested date for this field trip. The curriculum has been ordered. The new class committee is on track.

Class Recruitment Brochure: Vern Crawford passed around the brochure for edits. Vern Crawford reminded the Board that this brochure is a recruiting tool. The brochure reflects the current volunteer statistics. Bob Wiedenfeld wanted to know what line item the cost of printing of the brochures would be expensed. The printing cost will come from the "Supplies" line in new class committee budget. Kristie Denbow gave the chapter a quote of \$175 plus some shipping costs for printing 500 copies.

Kathy Ward made a motion to approve the brochure when the typos are corrected. Sarah Hilburn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Liz Ross made a motion to budget \$200 from the "Supplies" line from the Class Training budget. Kathy Ward seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chapter Operating Handbook Review Ad Hoc Committee: Vern Crawford stated that the committee will be formed to review our current practices and ensure that all the practices are aligned with the Chapter Operating Handbook and with the Bylaws.

Recruitment Activities in Western Edwards Plateau Counties: Donna Oliver-Leep wanted recruiting suggestions. She is visiting local businesses in Junction. Becky Etzler shared an email request for "bee keeping" information from Junction ISD. The Junction radio station will post information for no cost. Donna Oliver-Leep is recruiting a lot for the six counties.

Riverside Nature Center Plant Sale Volunteers: Priscilla Stanley stated that this event is sponsored by the Native Plant Society of Texas Kerrville Chapter and Riverside Nature Center. This event gives our chapter a lot of publicity since over 50% of the volunteers are Hill Country Chapter Master Naturalists. Jim Stanley is recruiting volunteers.

Chapter Picnic: It will be from 10:00-2:00 on May 17, 2014 at Albert and Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area. There will be a two hour nature walk that will count for Advanced Training. Members will bring their own lunch, the chapter will probably provide water. Information will be listed in the newsletter.

Wings Over The Hills Booth Staffing: Tom Hynes will be coordinating the staffing.

Hill Country Master Gardener Plant Sale Booth Staffing: Becky Etzler and Vern Crawford will be volunteering.

Revise Calendar Dates: Kathy Ward volunteered to man a booth at the Cibolo Nature Center's "Almost Native Plant Sale" on April 4-5, 2014. Becky Etzler shared that Cynthia Burgin wanted to know if our chapter wanted to have a booth or table at a Muleshoe event. We will discuss this when we have more information. Vern Crawford stated any time that we can make an appearance, it is good publicity. The Board Retreat will be on January 10, 2015.

Adopt-A-Highway: Lisa Flanagan suggested that we might add this activity to our volunteer projects. We would pick up trash on the roadside four times a year. We would have to select a road and a project coordinator. This topic will be discussed at a later Board meeting.

Officer and Director Reports:

Stephen Bishop: Stephen Bishop reported that our chapter had accumulated 5,000 volunteer hours from January 1-February 28, 2014.

Becky Etzler: Becky Etzler reported March awards: four initial certifications, four recertifications and four milestones. She has two new transfers in the works. Our Chapter website is doing well, 21 people have replied that they wanted to join our chapter.

Donna Oliver-Leep: Asked that the Board continue to keep her informed.

Rod Boertje: Rod Boertje reported that our chapter had 70 advanced training opportunities.

Kathy Ward: Kathy Ward wanted to know if any Board member wanted to attend the speaker's dinner. She also reported that she got a good response for members wanting to house speakers.

Liz Ross: Nothing else to report.

Bob Wiedenfeld: Nothing else to report.

Diane McMahon: Nothing else to report.

Priscilla Stanley: Nothing else to report.

Sarah Hilburn: Nothing else to report.

Vern Crawford: Nothing else to report.

Meeting Decisions:

*Approved the February 2014 minutes

*Approved the February and March Treasurer's reports

*Approved the 2014 Class Schedule

*Approved amending the budget and adding a "Membership" line under administrative expenses. This line will be expensed \$405

*Approved the 2014 Class Recruiting Brochure

*Approved budgeting \$200 for the cost of printing the brochures

*Approved revising the volunteer pledge on the New Class application to reflect the background check policy of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.

The next meeting will be April 23, 2014 at 1:30 PM at Riverside Nature Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sarah Hilburn
Secretary