

Texas Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter Board Meeting

Riverside Nature Center

Monday February 27, 2017

ADMINISTRATIVE

Present: Brenda Fest, Craig Childs, Ann Dietert, Kris Bobbitt, Lisa Flanagan, Tom Harrigan, Dave Davies, Reggie Cox, Paula Harley, Vern Crawford, Larry Eskridge, Bridget Langdale, Kathy Ward.

Absent: Michelle Haggerty, Roy Watson, Claire Mitchell.

Quorum met: Yes.

WELCOME AND REVIEW AGENDA

President Brenda Fest called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm and welcomed all present.

OPERATIONAL

The Minutes from the previous meeting on January 27, 2017 were approved.

The Treasurer's Report from the previous meeting on January 27, 2017 were approved.

The Vice President's Report on Programs was presented by Craig Childs. A list was provided of the speakers for the monthly meetings. September and October 2017 are to be determined. Speakers for 2018 are in the works.

Rufus Stephens will be the speaker with book signing for the November 2017 meeting. He and Jan Wrede have a newly published book "Attracting Birds in the Texas Hill Country.

Katherine Hayhoe a climate scientist has been contacted but has not replied yet.

Most speakers have been declining the stipends. Robert Macias accepted the stipend, but he has not yet cashed the check.

Ninety-two people attended the January meeting; the quarterly report re meeting attendance was discussed.

There needs to be a temperature monitor person at the back of the room during the speaker presentation as it gets very cold due to the close proximity to the vents.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Chapter Application Process was presented by Larry Eskridge.

He is working with Alan Davis of Alamo Chapter as their class is similar to the newly increased class size this year. They accept 40 students per class and hold two class sessions per year. Their application process is three to four weeks. Their Scholarship Program is called Financial Aid Tuition, which the board agreed was a better name as it eliminates the appearance of being selective in subjective areas other than just financial need. Alamo Chapter's Evaluation Program is described as a cleaner version of Larry's similar draft program. The three questions from TXMN are 1. Participation in advance of attending the class, 2. Previous volunteering, and 3. What is the financial need.

The total number of awards previously set was a total of \$400 from TXMN, with one financial aid of \$200 and two of \$100 each.

Tuition will be collected AFTER the student is selected, not before with all of the refund issues experienced in past years.

The Application Period will be from April 1 to June 30, beginning in 2017

The Pay Upon Acceptance change will be instituted this year 2017 class. Brenda noted that the Operations Manual will need to be amended to reflect these changes.

When instituted, these changes will have the application come first, the background check before acceptance, and the payment is the last step.

On another topic, Larry has completed the Honey Creek map for the new class.

Kathy Ward has the blank Beginning of Year surveys.

For those who did not email them, and she will have those available at this evening's meeting.

Kathy said that the Chapter will have a table at Wings over the Hills on April 27-28 Friday and Saturday. Volunteers are needed.

Chapter sponsored Advanced Training was presented by Brenda.

Brenda talked with Jim Stanley regarding having Lost Maples as an Advanced Training rather than as the CHAPTER Annual Picnic. Jim will talk with Thomas Redwine about offering an CHAPTER sponsored Advanced Training instead by having docents for the subject-matter hikes. In the past, the picnic events were poorly attended. Other locations mentioned were Enchanted Rock, Canyon Lake Gorge, Old Tunnel. Should it be held quarterly?

Blooms and Barrels information was presented by David Davies.

It is being held by the Hill Country Master Gardeners on Saturday, April 8 at the Youth Center. Claire participated last year and said that having a table there was good publicity for the Chapter as a common type of interest is in both groups.

Reconnect with Non-Accepted Candidates

It was suggested that those applicants who did not make it into the class be added to the email list for AT. Lisa will follow-up on this.

DIRECTORS REPORTS

Membership with Lisa Flanagan

Kristi has a new application that will be put on the website on April 1. Lisa will send the board members an application with a rating system from Larry. The meeting date for the July board meeting was set for July 10th. This is the meeting that the board selects the new class. The earlier time in July will allow enough time to select the new class and match them with mentors in time for mentor training in the first week of August.

Advanced Training with Tom Harrigan

There have been 74 AT classes to date for 2017. Tom is exploring the use of the VMS System for email communications due to the Gmail spam filter system that limits the number of addressees per email. Tom is going to train as a VMS approver so he can use the VMS system to send AT emails.

Volunteer Project with Claire Mitchell

Not present.

Communications with David Davies

The rack card for 2017 is at the printer. After discussion, it was decided to spend more money for a two-year supply \$250 rather than spending more money by purchasing new cards every year for \$150. The generic cards are the trifold format shrunk to two pages by eliminating specific class information. Ann Dietert said that it was okay to spend the money based on the budget.

Regarding the Care Committee, it was noted that all of the honor recipients are going to the pre-meeting event at Mamacita's. The recipients will line up early in the back room for photographs. By Wednesday, the newspaper articles/photographs will be ready for the newspapers.

New Class Committee with Reggie Cox

Reggie advised that she was not at the class committee meeting, but she provided a summary. All but two speakers have confirmed that they will participate in the 2017 class. The New Class Committee has been great! Brenda reminded that the tentative class schedule should be sent to Michelle by March 1 for approval. A larger committee is needed this year for work.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Collection of Tuition Payments

Ann Dietert advised that the Amazon account required a personal credit card to insure the account. There was a brief discussion to explore another method to accept payments and a motion by Kathy Ward and seconded by Vern Crawford that a committee should be formed to look into the payment collection approaches.

Consider a Later Time for Board Meetings

There was discussion about the pros and cons of starting times for the meeting and whether to limit the length of the meeting to two hours. A motion was made by Ann Dietert to start the Board Meetings at 2:30pm on Mondays, it was seconded by Kathy Ward. It passed.

Additional Items

Brenda advised that the Liability and the D&O insurance payment was due April 15, 2017.

A new license plate specifically for Texas Master Naturalists costs the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles \$250 to initiate. TXMN suggested that if every active Master Naturalists member donated one dollar, that fee could be paid. Kathy Ward made a motion that Chapter will forward one dollar for every active member to fund the Texas Master Naturalist license plate initiation. Lisa Flanagan seconded. The motion passed.

REVIEW DECISIONS

Both the Minutes and the Treasurer's Report were accepted by motion/vote.

A motion by Kathy Ward and seconded by Vern Crawford that a committee should be formed to look into the payment collection approaches for the members of the New Class. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Ann Dietert to start the Board Meetings at 2:30pm on Mondays, it was seconded by Kathy Ward. It passed the board.

Kathy Ward made a motion that CHAPTER will forward one dollar for every active member to fund the Texas Master Naturalist license plate initiation. Lisa Flanagan seconded. The motion passed.

The next meeting of the CHAPTER Board is on Monday March 27th at **2:30 pm**. Note the new time!