

**Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
June 18, 2008**

June 2008 Board Minutes

Present: Dan Behringer, Warren Ferguson, John Huecksteadt, Phyllis Muska, Jim Stanley, Priscilla Stanley. Gracie Waggener for Lee Kneupper, New Class Representative, Donna Snow Robinson for Janet Csanyi

Absent: Janet Csanyi, Martha Miesch, Annie Rendon, Lee Kneupper, Jerri Workman

The June meeting was called to order at 1:30pm by President Jim Stanley.

1. Treasurer's Report: The June starting balance was \$5,718.92. The expenses included: three \$50 tuition rebates to Class of 2007 members for \$150, reimbursement to Bill Burns for the State TMN Curriculum for the Class of 2008 for \$783.31, and reimbursement to Warren Ferguson of \$112.05 for printing of the New Class recruitment color brochures and of \$86.54 for Chapter meeting program speakers' dinners from January through April 2008. The income was \$150 from tuition reimbursement donations by Janet Csanyi and Bill and Pat Perkison. The current balance is \$4,266.37. The Treasurer's Report is appended to the archival copy of the Minutes.

Jim Gardner submitted a receipt for \$170 for materials to build a water guzzler in Kerrville-Schreiner Park. The Board had approved a grant of \$150 for this project, and that amount was paid by the Treasurer.

A receipt for \$2.35 for bolts was also submitted. In the past, members had submitted various receipts for ongoing projects and had been paid. With over 100 active members, this policy made it difficult to stay on budget. Given the tighter financial situation this year due to our increased expenses for our website hosting and meeting room rental fees, the Board reviewed the Chapter reimbursement policy. Membership Director John Huecksteadt moved that "Expenses under \$100 not included in the budget require prior approval by the President or Treasurer if the member expects reimbursement. Any expense under \$10 will be considered a donation, and AT director Dan Behringer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Chapter Operating Handbook (COH) Revision Committee Report: Committee members include Past-President Phyllis Muska as Chairperson, Membership Director John Huecksteadt and Treasurer Martha Miesch. The revised edition of the COH will be sent out for review soon.

Some changes that have been made include the selection of the New Class Representative to the Board. In the past, a volunteer was accepted. Now nominations will be taken from the New Class and the Board members attending the classes for election by the New Class.

The Director of Class Training will now be the same as the Class Manager. This Director will appoint members of the New Class Committee which must contain two members of previous classes.

Deadlines have been added, where appropriate, for tasks in various functions necessary to recruit the New Class. This will better define the responsibilities of the Membership, Class Training and Communications Directors where they work together to accomplish tasks.

3. Report on the Status of the New Class Applications: Membership Director John Huecksteadt has sent out applications but has not received any back yet. Our newspaper publicity has not appeared on all the papers in our area yet. Newsletter Editor Donna Robinson will work to get our publicity in the papers, while Janet Csanyi is away. John has received inquiries from working people wondering why we don't have training on nights or weekends so they can participate. It is very difficult to fit a 4 to 4.5 hour class in

in the evening. It is also difficult for our speakers, many of whom travel long distances. On Saturday, our preferred class room at the Texas Lions Camp is unavailable, and there are higher fees for other rooms. Perhaps most importantly, about 80% of our members are retired and prefer daytime classes.

4. Progress Report on Becoming a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization: Vice-President Warren Ferguson is our liaison with our member, Billy Walker, a lawyer who is willing to work *pro bono* to obtain our incorporation as a Texas non-profit organization. Our Chapter would be responsible for the filing fees involved. This does **not** include help getting our Tax Exempt status in Texas or the Federal 501(c)(3) designation. Warren reported that significant changes were made to the Texas Non-profit Law in November 2006 which make it significantly more difficult to become a non-profit organization. He discussed this with Michelle Haggarty, the TMN Program State Coordinator, who understands that the current TMN Bylaws provided by the State Program to chapters appear not to conform to the new requirements. A reasonable period is allowed for organizations to make changes to come into compliance with the new law and she is working on it. Michelle indicated that the new path to non-profit status might be a presentation at the TMN State meeting this fall. Our chapter is still reviewing the pros and cons of pursuing non-profit status.

Membership Director John Huecksteadt will check on how the Fredericksburg Nature Center became a 501(c)(3) and what filing annual obligations they have. Secretary Priscilla Stanley will see if the Texas AgriLife Extension can provide us with any helpful information.

5. Communications Director Janet Csanyi is represented today by Past-Communications Director and current Newsletter Editor Donna Snow Robinson. Donna reported that she has some newsletters copied at the Texas AgriLife Extension to place in Riverside Nature Center and other places to attract prospective members. She prints some color copies of the newsletters to send to people without e-mail on our prospective member list.

6. Vice-President Warren Ferguson reported that our July speaker will not be available and he will find another speaker. He is trying to find another speaker. **Update:** Warren has Diane Dismukes from TPWD coming for the July chapter meeting who will speak on Archeology in Texas.

For our August meeting when all the New Class members will be invited, Warren is trying to get Lonnie Childs, a member of our TMN chapter and of NPSOT- Fredericksburg to give his very engaging presentation on the adventures and accomplishments of the early Texas naturalists. The Board will provide a reception for our Class of 2008 members beginning at 6:15 pm before the meeting.

7. Chapter T-shirts: Secretary Priscilla Stanley reported that she had contacted Gilbert-American Company, which had made 50 Chapter T-shirts in 2005. They still have our art work so there will be no setup fee. The T-shirt colors we ordered before (daffodil, tan and moss green) are no longer available. Gracie Waggener suggested that we take advance orders with payment to minimize the financial risk. Previously we sold out of some sizes, and had other sizes unsold for quite a while.

Update: Gracie Waggener works in the advertising and promotions area and had several other suggestions. Gracie agreed to take on this project and deal with a local vendor she knows who will make us the embroidered shirts.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, July 23 at 1:30 pm at Riverside Nature Center in the Nature Science Lab. Hill Country Chapter members and Advisors are always welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Stanley

Secretary

7/7/08