

**Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
July 23, 2008**

July 2008 Board Minutes

Present: Dan Behringer, Janet Csanyi, Warren Ferguson, John Huecksteadt, Lee Kneupper, Martha Miesch, Phyllis Muska, Jim Stanley, Priscilla Stanley, Jerri Workman

Absent: Annie Rendon

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

1. Acceptance of Minutes for June Meeting: Board members had no additions or corrections to the Minutes beyond the e-mail responses received after the Minutes were sent out for review.

2. Chapter Operating Handbook Update Approval: Past President Phyllis Muska provided the Board with a detailed review of the changes recommended by her Committee of Membership Director John Huecksteadt, Treasurer Martha Miesch and herself.

A significant change involved the Chapter's reimbursement policy. In the past most expenses were simply reimbursed. In an attempt to control expenses to accommodate our unanticipated increased operating costs this year, the following reimbursement policy was added: Expenses under \$10 will be considered a donation. Expenses between \$10 and \$100 require approval by either the President or the Treasurer. Any expense greater than \$100 requires Board approval, unless it is part of a budgeted expense.

After the review, Vice-President Warren Ferguson moved to accept the Chapter Operating Handbook as revised. AT Director Dan Behringer seconded and the motion carried.

Phyllis Muska and former New Class Training Director Cathy Downs will update the Class Training Guidelines document.

3. Class of 2008 Recruitment Update: Membership Director John Huecksteadt reported that he had received 27 applications. John had scanned and e-mailed these applications to all the Board members for review before the meeting. John recommended that all applicants be accepted and the Board agreed unanimously. Two applicants requested consideration for financial hardship. The Board agreed to halve the \$100 tuition but maintain the \$50 to be refunded upon certification by December 31, 2009. Chapter expenses are currently at or somewhat above the \$100 tuition fee for the classes.

4. Financial Review and Status of Solicitation of Donations from Members: Vice-President Warren Ferguson noted that post-2006 laws for 501(c)(3) organizations have specific rules for reimbursements that we would have to follow if we obtain this non-profit status. Secretary Priscilla Stanley noted that some members have been disappointed that their funding requests were not approved and recommended that the Board share information on the unanticipated higher expenses this year as being the reason that fewer grant requests can be approved. Some projects have been successful in obtaining grants from other organizations.

The steps taken so far to manage our financial issues have included our new rules for reimbursement to maintain spending within our budget. New Class Representative Lee Kneupper noted that our balanced budget approved in January anticipated \$3,000 in donations, and to date we only have those from generous New Class members donating their \$50 rebates to the Chapter. President Jim Stanley noted that some boards of other organizations are required to make a donation to the organization every year. The Board decided to consider using the President's message in the newsletter to indicate that contributions to our chapter are welcome, but we are not yet a 501(c)(3).

Membership Director John Huecksteadt moved that a statement be drafted for the newsletter and sent to the Board for review. Dan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Program for August 25 Meeting: Vice-President Warren Ferguson reported that our speaker would be Lonnie Childs, a Chapter member, giving a presentation on the remarkable achievements of the Early Texas Naturalists.

While in past years the Class Planning Committee has provided a Reception with refreshments when the New Class is invited to their first Chapter meeting, this year no such plans have been forthcoming. The Board agreed to host a reception for our new trainees before the Chapter meeting. Secretary Priscilla Stanley was appointed to coordinate the reception. The trainees will be invited to arrive at 6:30 pm in their acceptance letter. **Update:** The Class Training Committee will bring the name badges that will also be used in the class.

6. Holiday Party in December: President Jim Stanley noted that in the past, the Holiday Party had rotated among our four counties. Since the party had been in Kerr County in 2006 and in Gillespie in 2007, the standard rotation would be to Bandera and then Kendall counties. He suggested that since we have fewer members in each of those counties, we might consider letting those counties work together on the event. The Board agreed and noted that arrangements for the December party should be made soon.

Treasurer's Report: The expenses included: \$150 for water guzzlers in the south side of Kerrville-Schreiner Park to attract deer for anticipated harvesting. The City of Kerrville matched our grant. Other expenses were for the New Class materials, including \$171.19 for two binders/trainee and \$30.10 for printing binder covers in color. There was no income this month. The current balance is \$4,214.08. The Treasurer's Report is appended to the archival copy of the Minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, August 20 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

8/6/08