

**Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
August 20, 2008**

August 2008 Board Minutes

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

Absent: Annie Rendon

The August 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.

2. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Martha Miesch reported Expenses this month of \$70.36 for a one time setup fee for the logo on our chapter T-shirts with our new local vendor, \$11.36 for laminating for RNC and Kerrville-Schreiner Park Butterfly Garden and \$75 for room rental at RNC for our Chapter meetings for March, April and May, for a total expense of \$156.72. Income included \$3,450 in Trainee Application fees (including \$50 per trainee to be rebated if they certify by December 31, 2009) and a \$100 donation from the Stanleys, for a total income of \$3,550. It is our expectation that we will be close to breaking even on the Class expenses. The Treasurer's Report is appended to the archival copy of the Minutes.

3. Class of 2008 Recruitment Update: Membership Director John Huecksteadt reported that he was still expecting several more applications which could total 35 trainees. John continues to scan and e-mailed these applications to all the Board members for review as he receives them. John had recommended that all applicants to date be accepted and the Board agreed unanimously.

4. Preparations for the New Class Reception: While in past years the New Class Committee had hosted a reception for our new trainees at our August Chapter meeting both to meet and welcome the trainees and to have the trainees meet our members and each other, that will not be happening this year. Thus the Board will host the reception for our Class of 2008 members at our August 25th Chapter meeting. Secretary Priscilla Stanley, the Reception Coordinator, reported that seven Board members would provide food and beverages, and we expected a group of from 40 to 60 people, and the public was invited to this meeting as well. Gracie Waggener, attending for New Class Representative Lee Kneupper, graciously offered to bring food as well. The reception will run from 6:30 to 7:00 pm before our Chapter meeting.

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.

6. Chapter T-shirts: Gracie Waggener, our Chapter Committee Chair, reported that she will have samples of the T-shirt colors, the knit shirts, the fishing shirts and an embroidery sample to show our members at our August meeting. She will take orders and collect money in advance at the meeting.

7. Status of Revisions to Class Training Guidelines: Past-President Phyllis Muska asked for comments from the Board by the end of September on the current Class Training Guidelines document. Phyllis and Cathy Downs, a former Class Manager and Class Training Director, will be updating the document and then will send the draft to the Board for review.

8. Results of Discussion Regarding 501(c)(3) status: Membership Director John Huecksteadt spoke with Bill Elliot, a lawyer who obtained 501(c)(3) status for the Fredericksburg Nature Center. Mr. Elliot indicated that it was a three step process.

1. First he had filed for incorporation with the State of Texas on a three page form. We would need Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and we could use those of Fredericksburg Nature Center as a model.
2. We would then file for a Tax ID number for a cost of approximately \$25.
3. We would apply for Federal tax exemption. He found the IRS to be helpful.
4. We would file for Texas sales tax exemption. Since the form is available online now, this step can be accomplished in a few days.

Annual filings and donor acknowledgement letters are required.

We need a Board of Director, which we have.

We need to search for a corporate name that is available. Our first choice would be Texas Master Naturalists - Hill Country Chapter.

The TMN State meeting in late October will have an AT session on becoming a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Dan Behringer moved, to proceed by contacting Michelle Haggarty, the TMN State Coordinator, to get more information on the 501(c)(3) AT course. Vice-President Warren Ferguson seconded the motion which carried.

John had spoken with two TMN chapters that had become 501(c)(3) organizations. They estimated that total cost as being between \$200 and \$500.

Our Board wants to determine the estimated cost more closely before proceeding.

9. TMN Native Plant & Tree Sale Status: The Down By the Riverside Nature Plant Sale and Nature Festival has been planned by a committee of TMNs and Riverside members for months. The Nature Festival plans are complete. The usual nurseries have been contacted to determine plant availability and the drought has taken its toll on plant availability at some vendors. We plan to visit three vendors in San Marcos and New Braunfels four weeks before the sale to see if we can select plants and hold them with a deposit. We will also assess whether we need to find additional nurseries where we can select our plants. Our chapter members are volunteering well for this event which is our annual fundraiser.

10. Holiday Party in December: President Jim Stanley reported that no one had contacted him about working on the Holiday Party so he would make some calls. The Board would review the history of our chapters Holiday parties and set a budget by the September Board meeting.

11. Canyon Lake Gorge Training: AT Director Dan Behringer reported that several members of our Chapter were interested in volunteering at the Canyon Lake Gorge in Comal County. Docent training will be offered soon. Typically our Volunteer Projects are within our four county service area, unless we are working on a State TMN or other agency project (TPWD Expo etc) or our assistance has been requested by another TMN Chapter. Canyon Lake Gorge is a special case since it is led by Dr. Bill Ward, our long time Geology instructor and Friend of the chapter recipient. The gorge is a unique place to study geology in a canyon formed by major flooding in 2002 and thus is of special interest to some of our members and the public. The Board agreed that we should contact the Lindheimer Chapter in Comal County to see if they would support some of our members volunteering in their service area.

12. Nominating Committee: Past-President Phyllis Muska, also Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that she had formed a committee of Gracie Waggener, Anne Cassidy and herself. She had determined that Board members who had served one term in an office and wished to continue in that position included Martha Miesch as Treasurer and Janet Csanyi as Communications Director .

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, September 17 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

9/7/08