

**Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter
Board Meeting
September 19, 2007**

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEM STATUS:

June - Action Item C: Check into how to list our chapter meetings in the Kerrville Daily Times Club & Organization Meeting Calendar – **Donna Snow Robinson or Sharon Corley - Pending**

July - Action Item C. Communications Director Donna Robinson volunteered to edit volunteer project descriptions for use on our website. Please submit projects to her by the end of August. - **Donna Robinson In progress:** Donna has received 3 volunteer project descriptions so far.

July Action Item E. Provide information to Donna Robinson on the building of the accessible trail for our September newsletter – **John Huecksteadt - In progress**

SEPTEMBER 2007 Board Meeting

Present:

Dan Behringer, Cathy Downs, Betty Gardner, John Huecksteadt, Phyllis Muska, Donna Snow Robinson
Jim Stanley, Priscilla Stanley, Jerri Workman

Absent: Marilyn Murrmann, Bill Perkison

The September meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM by President Phyllis Muska. The Board meeting was held 30 minutes later than usual to accommodate the members that attend the New Class training.

1. TMN State meeting (October 11 – 14) Volunteer Project Fair: Our Chapter will enter the **Handicapped-Accessible Trail** (known as the “HAT trail”) being built by the Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center at Lady Bird Johnson Park in Fredericksburg. The need for this trail was recognized last year when the Class of 2006, including one member in a wheelchair, met at the Fredericksburg Nature Center. There were no accessible trails to the nature exhibits for our member with disabilities. The new trail, which meets ADA standards, goes to the new bird blind (also under construction), the butterfly habitat and some scenic overlooks above the creek. Several of our Chapter members are working on this project. After the Class of 2007 met in the park, we were pleased to find a substantial increase in volunteers for this project (GL-04-C).

2. Treasurer’s Report: In the absence of our Treasurer Marilyn Murrmann, there was no Treasurer’s Report this month.

3. When can the New Trainees begin counting hours for Advanced Training (AT)?

Background: Since its inception in 2002, our Chapter has not allowed trainees to begin counting Volunteer hours or AT hours until October 1st (approximately halfway through the training). The rationale had been that we wanted the trainees to concentrate on their course work and not be overwhelmed by too many hours going to TMN too soon. Also we wanted trainees to know that TMN is basically about science, and not about a lot of detailed rules on hours reporting.

This year, the Board made a one-time exception to allow trainees to count a Plant ID class to be given on September 26 as AT (see Item 9 in the August Minutes). This year, the New Class began receiving the TMN member e-mail announcements of Volunteer projects and AT during class, which led them to want to participate. President Phyllis Muska proposed allowing the trainees to begin counting AT hours anytime after the training classes began, as had been described in the article about TMN training in the Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine about six months ago. Also, our trainees were starting to volunteer on Chapter projects. The Board agreed that is in everyone’s best interest to encourage this participation in both Volunteer projects and AT.

Past-President Jim Stanley moved that "The New Class can begin recording and counting Volunteer hours and Advanced Training hours anytime after their first class. Reporting details will be discussed in class at a later date." The motion was seconded by AT Director Dan Behringer and carried.

4. Chapter Election of Officers Moved Back to November: In July 2007, the Board had agreed to move the election of 2008 officers from the November Chapter meeting to the October Chapter meeting. (The December meeting is a holiday party and not a regular meeting). The thought was that the new officers would have time to shadow the current officers and thus better understand their jobs.

It was discovered that the State TMN Bylaws, which had been adopted by our Chapter, require the election of officers to be at the last regular meeting of the year, and the new officers take their offices immediately. Thus, the Board decided to rescind their earlier action and restore the elections to the November Chapter meeting. In the discussion, it was decided that the retiring officers and Directors remain available to the new officers and Directors for advice so this election schedule will not be a problem.

Curriculum Director Cathy Downs moved to "Change the election of officers back to November". Communications Director Donna Robinson seconded and the motion carried.

5. Annual Chapter Budget: In the process of reviewing and modifying the State TMN Chapter Operating Handbook template, it was noted that the Chapter is supposed to have an Annual Budget. Instead, our Treasurer Marilyn Murrmann had provided an annual list of categorized expenses for 2006. The new Treasurer will put together a budget for 2008 using these helpful data from 2006 and 2007.

6. Request for Project Funding Proposals from our Membership: President Phyllis Muska suggested asking the membership for projects relating to the beneficial management of natural resources and nature education for consideration by our chapter for grant funding. The Board members concurred.

7. Chapter Holiday Party: Our Holiday Party rotates among our four counties each year. This year it will be on **Thursday, December 1st** in Gillespie County in Fredericksburg. The Holiday Party Committee reported that they planned to hold the party at the restaurant in Lady Bird Johnson Park with "heavy hors d'oeuvres" and perhaps pot luck desserts.

8. Chapter Programs: Vice-President Betty Gardner reported that the program for the **September 24th** meeting will be "**Monarchs: What's In a Garden**" by our member Kip Kiphart on the development of his butterfly habitat on his property.

The **October 22nd** meeting will be "**Priority Native Plants in the Hill Country**" by Jan Wrede, the Education Director at Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne. This program identifies woody native plants that are decreasing in the wild that she recommends planting and caging to help them re-build their numbers. She notes that the over-population of deer in the Hill Country is a significant factor in the loss of these plants so she recommends considering hunting deer and exotics.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM.

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, October 17th at 2:00 PM. Hill Country Chapter members and Advisors are always welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla B. Stanley

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Chapter Secretary