

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST, HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER BOARD MEETING  
Riverside Nature Center  
January 27, 2020

The meeting was called to order by President Elsa Roberts at 2:30 p.m.

Members present were: Elsa Roberts, Katy Kappel, Nancy Scoggins, Jeralyn Hathorn, Carla Stang, Deb Youngblood, Sheryl Pender, Catherine Gauldin, Tom Burke, Frank Garcia, and Lisa Flanagan. Members absent were: Vern Crawford, Michelle Haggerty, and Roy Walston.

**Operational:**

1. The minutes of the December 16, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Katy, seconded by Lisa. The notes for the January 11, 2020 board orientation were also approved on a motion by Nancy and seconded by Catherine.
2. Vice President Katy Kappel reported that she secured Dr. Jim Gallagher as the speaker for the March 23, 2020 chapter meeting. She also informed the board that she has initiated conversations with the Cailloux Foundation with regards to obtaining a grant from them. There was discussion as to how the grant would be used such as paying for the new class tree wire cage materials and/or new laptops. Katy requested board member's input on future topics for the chapter meetings.
3. Treasurer Nancy Scoggins presented the financial reports. A motion to approve was made by Katy and seconded by Tom. As of today all 2019 checks have cleared the bank. She also indicated that she would like to move to an Excel spreadsheet in lieu of the current format, and that the holding account would need to be reorganized. Nancy also requested that board members verify that their addresses are correct so that checks could be mailed directly in addition to being written on the fly.

**Director's Reports:**

1. Membership Director Carla Stang informed the board that she had already received three prospect forms for the 2020 class. Carla also informed the board that she had secured a table at the Barrels and Flowers event and would like for Lenore to put a request in the newsletter for suggestions for other events where a table would be beneficial.
2. AT Director Deb Youngblood reported that she's logged in 86 AT events so far this year. She's been researching criteria appropriate events outside our immediate area that can be included and feels that it would be important for our chapter to have a presence. Catherine suggested the Wildlife Rescue/Rehab trainings in San Antonio as an AT.
3. Communications Director Catherine Gauldin handed out the last of the 2019 rack cards and reported that the first press release was printed on January 8, 2020. Previous discussion had taken place with regards to changing the picture on the rack cards to reflect a more diverse membership. Kristie's response indicated that she did not have any suitable pictures showing diversity. Catherine is continuing to interview Milestone Recipients for future articles. There was some discussion among the board regarding the reluctance of some of the interviewees to speak about their volunteer efforts. The board members agreed that it needs to be emphasized that this type of information is not self-serving but rather beneficial to the chapter. Catherine intends to write articles with topics that target the specific area of the newspaper she is submitting the release to. She currently has 12 media outlets and 2 radio spots.
4. Project Director Tom Burke requested that board members funnel any projects that they know of to him and that all emails from Mary Pearl regarding upcoming events be sent to him and he and Deb will determine their classification i.e. AT, project, etc. He also stated that he and Kristie will highlight projects that are short on manpower in the newsletter, especially in areas where we are trying to attract prospects.
5. Class Director Sheryl Pender gave a report on the goals of the New Class Committee and her intention for the class to have as great of an experience as her class did. She is focusing on the curriculum to assure that mandates for core topics are balanced with the many optional topics available. 2019 course evaluations and speaker-topic critiques, both subjective and objective data, are being used. The Board of Directors topic will be revamped (based on survey score) to introduce Board members/responsibilities to the students. She indicated that curriculum review and development might be an ongoing Board of Directors function, rather than asking the new Class Director to begin this again.

**Strategic Initiatives:**

1. Lisa reiterated the need for a weekend or evening class in order to attract more prospective applicants.
2. Nancy suggested that a book give back program be initiated in order to utilize books not needed by past class members for future class members.
3. Carla wants to examine the statistics of classes that didn't complete certification.

**Resource Development:**

1. Elsa informed the board that the current liability insurance policy is a 3-year policy. They will notify us 45 days prior to renewal and inform us of any changes/costs. The board will discuss it at that time.
2. Paula has contacted Elsa wanting to organize a subcommittee to qualify prospects for grant writers. Katy wants the board to define what their needs are and agreed to be a point of contact.
3. Paula wants to add a directory of skills to the web site. Carla suggested it would be more effective to do a case by case basis call to action by sending an email when we have a specific need. Elsa asked Tom to reach out to Paula on how to accomplish this. In cases where the chapter is working in collaboration with another entity the board discussed reaching out to the entity for their response on working together. If the effort doesn't attract interest, let it go.
4. Carla has agreed to contact Sharon Hixson and be the board volunteer for the Fall Plant Sale.
5. Elsa reported that Lenore will provide an area of the newsletter for board members to submit info. Sheryl intends to utilize that area to send new class members to the web site for a "scavenger hunt".

The next board meeting will be February 24, 2020 at 2:30 at the RNC. The decisions were reviewed and the meeting adjourned at 4:08.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeralyn Hathorn  
Secretary