

Hill Country Chapter TXMN Monthly Board Meeting

4/22/21 via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 by President Elsa Roberts. In attendance were: Elsa Roberts, Deb Youngblood, Nancy Scoggins, Carla Stang, Tom Burke, Lisa Flanagan, Jeralyn Hathorn, Billy Guin, Sheryl Pender, Catherine Gauldin and Katy Kappel. Vern Crawford was absent.

Operational:

1. The minutes from the previous meeting were submitted by Secretary Jeralyn Hathorn. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Catherine, seconded by Tom and motion carried.
2. Treasurer Nancy Scoggins presented the financial reports and a motion was made by Carla to accept the reports and seconded by Tom. Motion carried.
4. Vice President Katy Kappel presented her report. Since several speakers prefer to wait until we can meet again in person, options for meeting places that fit the 100 sf per person criteria were discussed. The sf at UGRA is only 2600 and would accommodate 26 people. At this point the youth event center would be a better option in order to accommodate a larger number of people. It was suggested to survey the members to see who would be interested in in person meetings. Also consider all other factors such as RSVP, check-in protocol, continuing to have Zoom meetings in addition to in person meetings and Facebook live. Katy feels that we are not fulfilling our duty to inform the public because members can no longer invite people to the chapter meetings. Carla reminded us that we can still invite non-members to the Zoom meetings. Elsa agreed, stating that we still have the ability to reach the public although Sheryl indicated that the "in-person" aspect was a main concern of the new class. Katy suggested looking into the Point Outdoor Theater.

Director's Reports:

1. Membership Director Carla Stang presented her report and informed the board that she continues to receive interest in the TMN program. There are currently 240 active members. You are considered inactive if you haven't logged in to VMS in a year. There are still many places that have not opened up yet and most require a vendor fee. She will be providing an updated list of upcoming events.
2. New Class Director Sheryl Pender presented her reports and informed the board that against all odds the following week was week 10 of the new class training. The 25 students have been highly engaged and the new model has allowed us to better accommodate more people in different situations. The students reported on how the TMN mission has impacted them on a personal level. Eighteen volunteer project leaders participated in the Volunteer Fair. Sheryl is working on compiling a head count of the people who want to attend the graduation events on May 11th, including trainees, friends, family and board members. She is anticipating about 95 people. There will be a roundtable discussion from 9:00 a.m. to 11 a.m. and the commencement exercises will take place from 11:30 to 1:00. Due to Covid restrictions a lunch will not be served. Hill Country Alliance would like to film the round table to use for a broader audience. Jeralyn will reach out to Reid Smith and ask him to get in touch with Sheryl as a possible videographer. Sheryl asked when the chapter document "TMN HC Chapter 2021 Goals and Priorities" dated Feb 9, 2021 had been discussed. No content related to this was noted in the March 18 Board meeting minutes. Elsa commented she thought that had been done. Someone commented it had not. Elsa said she would add it to the May 2021 Board agenda.
3. Communications Director Catherine Gauldin submitted her report to the board and indicated that she wants to do more volunteer opportunity videos once the new class is over. She feels that people respond well to in-person interviews. Katy suggested a half hour call in show once the new class is over. Catherine made a plea for more pictures of "people doing things" to be used in future publications.

4. Project Director Tom Burke completed and distributed the Approved Volunteer Project List to the board. He reported that 75% of the members recorded volunteer hours in spite of Covid limitations. He's routing people to resources like the web site, Facebook and the newsletter for project ideas. The City of Boerne also has new opportunities, there are reactivated projects in Junction and Mason is now generating several hundred hours of volunteer work. The list will be revisited next year once things become more normalized. Sheryl told Tom that she liked the short list of opportunities that he provided to the new class for their notebooks. She inquired whether it could be provided as a link for everyone since it is helpful for the new members to have an easy go to resource for volunteer activities. Deb questioned whether we should get rid of the re-occurring activities calendar. Elsa and Tom agreed. Mac indicated that no one is providing info to populate that calendar and Tom feels like it would be impossible to keep current.
5. AT Director Deb Youngblood provided her report and stated that in-person events are increasing, although webinars are still popular. They're ready for the chapter meeting AT on Monday and she thinks it's going to be a spectacular event. Sheryl mentioned that some of the new students remarked on ATs with higher fees. Deb said that some of them are targeting ranchers and they remain on the calendar because they are in high demand.

Resource Development:

1. Discussion amongst the board members took place regarding the proceeds from the spring plant sale and the proposal that all 3 organizations share the proceeds equally. Historically RNC received 50% of the fall plant sale proceeds and TXMN would receive 50%. In the spring RNC would receive 50% and NPSOT would receive the remaining 50%. The total sales for the spring plant sale this year were \$6450. Due to their expenses, such as paying employees, RNC did not come out ahead. Several board members felt like it should've been addressed in advance. NPSOT is in favor of honoring the traditional split. In the future RNC would like to open the sale up to the public. Deb reported that the Master Gardeners opened their plant sale to the public and they sold out in 30 minutes but indicated that it may have been due to people trying to replace plants lost in the freeze. Because it did sell out so quickly, there was no time for education or interaction. Carla made a motion to return to the traditional way of splitting the money and Katy seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. The board members continued discussion regarding whether to have a fall training class or wait until the spring to have another class. Sheryl reminded us that the budget would play a big part in deciding what we can do. She made a motion to proceed with planning a spring class and Billy seconded the motion. Motion carried. Sheryl cautioned the board that it would be necessary to make the decision to have a fall class sooner than next year. The template for creating the basic training has been remodeled which will enable flexibility for future training programs. Elsa encouraged the board to ruminate over how we go forward after Covid shaking us out of our old ways. She also mentioned considering shortening the class from 72 hours to something closer to the mandatory 40 hours.
3. Elsa informed the board that the State Directors are telling her to push and promote the "Be the Change" agenda. Frank Garcia will work on outreach to recruit Hispanic and Black communities.
4. Discussion ensued regarding a letter received from a member offering his concerns with AT21-300 Webinar National Townhall on Creating Safe Spaces, April 27, 2021. After much discussion Billy made a motion to remove the AT from the calendar based on the Critical Race Theory attributes it introduced and being contrary to the TMN mission statement. Sheryl seconded the motion. Nancy and Deb wanted to go on record as opposing the motion. Motion carried.
5. The KAPP report from the mayor was provided. The Heritage Walking Trail will highlight the significance of oak trees and their goal is to obtain a tree ordinance, although it will take a long time to pass and put into play. There will be future opportunities for open volunteerism but it is still in the formative stage.

6. Billy made a motion for a \$150 donation to the Hill Country Youth Event Center for additional expo space. Sheryl seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Next monthly board meeting May 20, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom

Meeting adjourned 3:40.