

June 27, 2022 Minutes for Meeting of Board of Hill Country Chapter, Texas Master Naturalists

Place: Riverside Nature Center & Zoom

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Present In Person: Carla Stang, Frank Garcia, Ron Scoggins, Elsa Roberts, Dot Maginot

Present on Zoom: Diane Gierisch

Not Present (all w/prior notice): Alice King, Tom Burke, Ramon Baez, David Matthews, Vern Crawford

Carla called the meeting to order at 2:30.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Diane asked if we needed to amend the May meeting minutes since Carra Milikien had resigned as Class Director and David has replaced her. Carla stated that since we had a unanimous email vote of approval to appoint David as New Class Director (2023), and it is new business for this meeting there was no need to amend. On motion by Ron, seconded by Frank, the minutes of the May 23 Board meeting were unanimously approved.

APPROVE TREASURER REPORTS:

Note to Chapter membership – financial reports available to active members in good standing on request. If you would like to see financial reports, please send an email to treasurer@hillcountrymn.org.

Treasurer – Ron Scoggins

Ron reviewed monthly transactions on the General Checking statement. He noted that it was a busy month for entries. Most of these entries are routine. However, he pointed a few for further explanation:

- \$300 payment to Hartford insurance for Directors & Officers insurance
- \$719: Other piece of the insurance costs to US Life Insurance for general liability
- \$400 credit - Donation (unrestricted)
- \$1,453 Spring plant sale deposit
- \$1000 scholarship donation on behalf of Fritz Snyder
- New class expense: \$455: t-shirts for the new class and New Class Committee; offset by a credit for \$455 as cost of sales. New class financials will be discussed at the July Board meeting. **Preliminary discussion at the end of this document.
- The only project that spent money this month was the pollinator garden at the Court House.
- Financial Report by month: Profit \$1,577.10.

On motion Frank and seconded by Carla, the Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.

PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Carra Milikien (2022 New Class Director) resigned effective 6/2/2022. She had been previously approved to be 2023 New Class Director. David Matthews agreed to be the 2023 New Class Director. Unanimously approved through email Board voting.
 - a. Welcome to David Matthews, New Class Director. David lives in Leaky and will probably attend meetings via Zoom. He is a former educator. He knows the Bambergers (Bamberger Ranch) and was involved in their "Nature for Nerds" program, which he helped establish. He is very involved in nature education. In the 2023 class, he would like to expand the class to include labs. Michelle

Haggerty has given us conceptual approval to do this. David, Carra, and Carla will meet closer to the end of the year to review the 2023 curriculum with Michelle.

2. Elsa Roberts (Past President) has resigned from the Board, effective June 28, 2022 due to personal reasons.
 - a. Carla spoke with Michelle who gave her a couple of options to handle Elsa's resignation: (i) Invite a prior President to come in and finish the rest of the year or (ii) leave the position empty. No final resolution has been decided as of this board meeting.
 - b. Elsa was collecting information to update the Chapter Operating Handbook (COH). We will put this project on hold for now and revisit later. Per Michelle, they are still working on the State's COH so asked us not to get too far ahead. The State's COH should be finalized in the fall, and we can go from there.
3. New Website Assistant: Mark Hults has volunteered to assist with updating the website. He has coding background. Carla will be giving him updates for the website and he will be working with Mackenzie Brown, the current webmaster.
 - a. There is a new tab on the website called "Newsletters and Oral History Project". There are a lot of documents in this section now.
 - b. The Board Meeting minutes are also posted and are located under "About Us/Chapter Documents".
 - c. Mark will also be assisting Frank with the AV equipment at the Chapter meetings.
4. TMN Annual Conference Award submissions: The Annual Conference is in Houston in October. They are looking for photo, art, media submissions for their contest. Other topics for the contest would be field, project based, historical/anniversary. Up to 30 minutes in length.

REPORTS:

Vice President – Frank Garcia

Chapter Meetings: Frank is suggesting that we not include Advanced Training with some of our Chapter Meetings and instead, in those months without AT, fill the time slot with a "Town Hall" format. Members could discuss their issues during this time and the chapter could receive feedback. Topics could include Projects in Kerrville for one meeting, Projects in Fredericksburg for another meeting, etc.

Ron suggested possibly having these 1 or 2 times per year when all we do is talk about projects.

Carla, Frank, and Diane will put together a survey in July to send to membership to determine if we need to move locations, what would bring them to meetings, etc..

Projects – Tom Burke. No new projects; nothing to report.

New Class Training – Carla Stang for David Matthews:

- The New Class Committee (NCC) had their first meeting on June 22.
- We are still exploring how to combine Schreiner University with the new TMN class. Karolyn Andrews said it is easier to schedule classrooms in the evening than daytime. The cost is \$55 per session. Possible ideas would be to have a percentage of Schreiner students and a percentage of the public take the class. There are many details that still need to be worked out.
- We will not conduct 2 classes in 2023.

- We are currently looking at Fall 2023 for the next training class. This will allow David Matthews to learn and incorporate more labs into the curriculum, find class speakers and explore venues for field trips.
- David to bring plan to board for official vote.

Membership – Dot Maginot

- Still fielding questions from the public on next class. She will explain that we are trying to give the best program possible but no commitment to dates.
- No activity with transfers in/out of the Hill Country Chapter
- 228 active members in the chapter
- 77 pins on hand to distribute

Advanced Training – Diane Gierisch

- 81.5 hours of AT credit given in June.
- Sandy Leyendecker can help with pulling out more specific data if we need it. Diane is trying to find meaningful information from the VMS reports.

OLD BUSINESS/FOLLOW UP

1. **Website & One Drive Updates:** See President Announcements for completed website updates. The Board meeting minutes are on the website and are also on the One Drive. The Treasurer reports are also on the One Drive.
2. **Chapter Operating Handbook update:** See notes above under President Announcement/Elsa resignation
3. **Oral History video Project update:** Catherine Gauldin is working on updating the Chapter's Oral History.
4. **YouTube:** There is a link on the home page of our website for the YouTube channel. Carla would like a link on Facebook that takes you directly to specific videos, rather than the Hill Country YouTube home page. Membership could also direct prospective members to the YouTube page.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Chapter Donation to state to support Annual Conference:** There are five different levels of donations: \$150, \$300, \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000. The donation goes to the state office to offset the cost of the conference fee. Frank said he would match whatever the Chapter donates out of his personal finances. *Motion:* The chapter will donate \$500 of which Frank Garcia will donate \$250 for the State Annual Conference. *Motion Amendment:* The chapter will donate \$1,000. Frank will make a \$500 donation earmarked for adding to the chapter's sponsor donation to the state. The Chapter's donation is \$500 for a total of \$1,000 for the State Annual Conference. Carla motioned; Frank seconded. Unanimously approved.
2. **Set date for September Volunteer Appreciation Event:** Frank will contact Camp Capers to look for availability every Saturday in September and the first Saturday in October.
3. **Apache Tree Project:** Dot submitted the grant request to the Apache Corporation for 80 trees. The deadline for the grant request is mid-August so we won't hear anything back until then. Once the grant has been approved, the Apache Corporation will advise us which trees we will be getting, how many, and which nursery to pick them up. The current plan is to offer two trees to each new student in the 2022 class and one tree to each Mentor. Any remaining trees will be offered to the Board members first and membership second.
4. **Other:** Debit Card Limit Increase: Ron is getting locked out of the debit card whenever we reach our \$1,000 limit. He has asked for Board approval to increase the limit to \$3,000. Carla motioned to increase the limit to \$3,000. Elsa seconded. Unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Minutes taken by Dot Maginot, with modifications by Carla Stang, and final modifications by Alice King.

****Preliminary Discussion on Financials for New Class Committee held because some members won't be present in July and others weren't present for June (especially David, the New Class Director)****

This was not part of official business meeting. It will be on the July 2022 Agenda to discuss.

Topic: The need to have clarity regarding new class financials (i.e. "budget plan") and making sure the Board approves a financial spending plan prior to the new class committee executing class plans. Historically, income for classes mainly from course fees and costs come close to a wash. In other words, costs to put the course on don't exceed income received from course fees.

Issues/Questions to ponder:

- What types of things can the funds for the class be used on? (e.g. only course related items or New Class Director's discretion)
- Are there things or people that designated class funds shouldn't be used for?
- If there are funds remaining in the class "budget plan", can the funds be used at the New Class Director's discretion?
- Should there be an expectation that the New Class Director would seek Board approval for approval on non-curriculum items?
- The other issue is there were a lot of donations made by the New Class Committee this year for some smallish and some more expensive items. Going forward, the New Class Committee should keep in mind that the class spending plan should not count on having money (or items) donated.