

December 19, 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, Jane Jamison, Alice King, David Matthews, Dot Maginot, Tom Burke, Kim Ort, Jeff Schwartz

Present on Zoom: Mark Hults, Diane Gierisch, Patti Guin

Not Present: Vern Crawford (with notice).

Carla called the meeting to order at 2:30.

Summary of Action Items:

1. Carla to verify the dates for the 2023 State TMN conference. State website shows Oct 12-15 2023. If this is correct, the meeting dates previously sent out are good to go and room/meeting locations can be scheduled.
2. Frank to email Alice with his count of attendees at the November Chapter meeting and Alice to correct her Chapter meeting minutes.
3. Ron to review records to identify member who donated \$500 for "Jim Stanley Bench" so that this individual could be contacted for input on intent of donation, including location of bench once purchased.
4. David and Jane to get clarification as to whether AgriLife and TPWD speakers were allowed to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred to present to New Class if the class takes place outside of normal working hours. Michelle previously stated that AgriLife staff (not TPWD) can be reimbursed for gas/mileage for speaking engagements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Introductions all around of board members as new board officers are present.
2. There was a discussion of the need to adjust the date for the October 2023 Board meeting so that it would not conflict with the State meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Frank noted that his count of attendance at the November Chapter meeting was different than the count Alice included in the draft minutes for the officer election. Alice to correct minutes on receipt of Frank's report.

On motion by Frank, seconded by Dot, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the November Board and Chapter meeting, subject to the correction of the attendee count.

APPROVAL OF 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@hillcountrytmn.org.

Treasurer – Ron Scoggins

1. Ron presented the November checking report, noting items in detail for benefit of new Board members.
2. There was a discussion of the \$1,202 reimbursement to Nyta Brown for expenses at Old Tunnel State Park and the related Exxon grant;
3. There was a discussion of the purpose of the "designated funds" accounts;

4. There was a discussion of a donation of \$500 for “Jim Stanley Bench” and how it should be spent; Carla asked Ron to review his records and let her know who had donated the \$500 so that she could contact them for input on how the donation should be spent.
 5. Ron presented the income and expense statement and provided detailed information about the entries for the benefit of the new Board members.
 6. Ron provided the results of the fundraising efforts at the Volunteer Appreciation Party (raffle of binoculars and silent auction).
- On motion by Tom, seconded by Frank, the Board unanimously approved the Treasurer’s report.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REVIEW

1. Frank presented the results of the annual financial review conducted by himself, Jane, and Alice in November, noting no concerns.
- On motion by Dot, seconded by Tom, the Board unanimously approved the financial review.

REPORTS:

Vice President – Frank Garcia

1. Frank reported by the had lined up speakers for the January, February, and March Chapter meetings and could stay involved for 2023 as the technical support person for the meeting AV.

Director of Volunteer Service Projects – Tom Burke

1. Tom reported that no new projects were opened in November. Tom reported that with Kristie Denbow’s help he would complete the annual project audit, which reflects number of hours and volunteers have worked the various projects. He will also validate current project leads once all volunteer time had been entered in February.

New Class Director – David Mathews

1. David and Jane reviewed the proposed budget for the 2023 Class.
 - a. There was a discussion about speaker reimbursements and honorariums, especially with regard to whether AgriLife and TPWD speakers were permitted to apply for and receive reimbursements for expenses incurred in presenting to New Class and whether they could/would work on a weekend;
 - b. There was a discussion about prior years’ budgets/expenditures records not reflecting in-kind contributions, with David confirming that the budget for 2023 was not just a carry-forward of prior years’ expenditures but was based on their expectation of what it would actually cost to put on the class for 2023;
 - c. There was a discussion about whether New Class tuition should be raised. David noted that other Chapters charged about \$200 and that there could be some savings based on use of e-textbooks; there was no motion for an increase in tuition;
 - d. The Board revisited the topic of whether the Chapter should make contributions to the nature centers used as routine locations for New Classes to visit. Various members noting that the Chapter’s membership contributed significant volunteer hours at each venue; there was no motion that the budget be modified to include contributions to the venues.

On motion by Alice, seconded by Frank, the Board unanimously approved the proposed budget.

Membership – Dot Maginot

1. Dot reported that 104 individuals had expressed interest in the 2023 Class; that there were 2 transfer out requests; that the membership count was at 228 with 205 active members; that 9 of the 2023 Class had not yet received their initial certification; and that 146 individuals had re-certified in 2022.

Advanced Training – Diane Gierisch

1. Diane reviewed the AT report noting, among other things, that the November, December reported hours could increase as members reported their training hours.
2. Diane notified the board that she will be transferring her membership to another chapter and therefore not able to continue serving as the AT Director. Deb Youngblood has expressed willingness to serve in that capacity in the interim.

Communications – Mark Hults

1. Mark reviewed the Communications report, noting, among other things that issues with WordPress that had prevented him from capturing statistics on Website visits had been repaired.

OLD BUSINESS

1. There was a discussion about whether the language of the CMOP regarding credit for non-interactive online training had actually been modified or if it had always allowed for this on an exception basis. It seems the language allowing for non-interactive training on an exception basis was not new, meaning that there might not be a need to devise a new policy to handle requests for approval of this type of training. However, Diane and Deb will make recommendations to the Board on how they would like to address this process, which Michelle said is up to each chapter to make those determinations.

NEW BUSINESS

Carla noted the following in her report:

1. The Board Retreat – she would be working on this with Jeff
2. Feedback on the Volunteer Appreciation Party. Many thanks to the board for their efforts to support the event and all of the related activities that occurred that day.

The Board then recognized Carla's service as President with a card and bouquet/vase.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Minutes taken by Alice King with modifications by Carla Stang.