

**FEBRUARY 27, 2023 MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE TEXAS
MASTER NATURALIST HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER**

Meeting Location: Riverside Nature Center

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Attending in Person: Jeff Schwarz, Kim Ort, Carla Stang, Ron Scoggins, Patti Guin, Deb Youngblood, Mark Hults, David Drake, Jane Jamison, David Matthews, Vern Crawford, and non-Board member Katy Kappel

Absent: Dot Maginot

President Jeff Schwarz called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m., and introductions were made by everyone present.

Immediate Past President Carla Stang announced that she would be willing to conduct a class to instruct all Board members in the use of One Drive. President Schwarz indicated he would get with Carla to schedule a date for the instructional class.

Approval of Minutes – Patti Guin

Secretary Patti Guin submitted the minutes from the January 23, 2023 Board meeting. On motion of Kim Ort, seconded by Vern Crawford, the minutes were unanimously approved.

REPORTS

Treasurer – Ron Scoggins

Ron Scoggins reviewed the checking account register for the month of January and the 2022 financial report. The checking account register revealed an ending balance of \$22,819.66. Since this was President Schwarz's first meeting on the Board, he asked Ron to familiarize him with several items pertaining to the financial reports. Ron then went over the reports in-depth, which included an explanation and breakdown of restricted and non-restricted donations.

On motion of Vern Crawford, seconded by Mark Hults, the Treasurer's report was unanimously approved.

Immediate Past President – Carla Stang

Carla Stang stated that her report was basically the same as she reported at the January meeting in that once she has compiled all revision recommendations she has received in connection with the Chapter Operating Handbook, she will submit a revised draft to the Board for review. Once completed and approved, she will forward the revised version to the State for final approval. She estimated that the timeline for this process would be approximately four to six months.

Vice President – Kim Ort

Vice President Ort submitted a written report identifying all confirmed speakers through the month of June. She stated it was her goal to go back to the basics of training, and in addition to the speaker topics she already has lined up, she mentioned scheduling programs on dragonflies and exotics in Texas.

New Class Committee – David Matthews and Jane Jamison

No written report was submitted; however, Class Director David Matthews orally reported that they had received 21 student applications. New Class Representative Jane Jamison added that they were currently soliciting people to serve as Zoom monitors and student mentors, and that a skit would be performed at the February Chapter meeting to help motivate people to sign up to become a mentor. Carla Stang inquired if any newspaper advertising had been done to solicit new class members, in which Jane Jamison replied that to date no newspaper advertising had been done. Carla then went on to suggest additional ways that have been utilized in the past to encourage people to sign up.

Membership – Dot Maginot

Since Dot was on vacation, she provided the Board with a written report. Kim Ort mentioned that she was holding checks she had picked up from the post office and she intended to turn them over to Dot upon her return. Treasurer Scoggins advised her to go ahead and deposit all checks she currently had in her possession and he would provide her with a deposit slip. Jane announced that she would be filling in for Dot to distribute pins at the February Chapter meeting.

Communications – Mark Hults

Mark Hults reported that the website sessions, page views and session durations have continued to increase over the last four months. His written report indicated that in the last 30 days, beginning 1/19/2023, we had 1,365 sessions (42% increase); 3,659 page views (43% increase), and the average session duration was 3 minutes and 43 seconds (12% increase). He also announced that the program director for Riverside Nature Center commented to him that since they started publicizing their events with TMNHCC, attendance has increased, and most attendees have been Master Naturalists. Mark further reported that the calendar was still not updated and that First Call (Texas A&M support) is still working on the problem. Jane Jamison asked about locking down the YouTube channel for programs geared solely for the new class students. Mark stated that you cannot lock the programs down and that the public would also be able to see them. After a brief discussion, it was decided by the Board that this matter should be investigated further.

Volunteer Service Projects – David Drake

David Drake reported that Mark Hults had approached him about a new project. He then turned the floor over to Mark to present the project to the Board. Mark stated that the name of the project is the Bandera County River Authority & Groundwater District Rain Spotter Program. He indicated that their objective was to create a county-wide database of landowners to record rainfall

amounts in a rain gauge. According to Mark, this would allow the county to utilize volunteers to record data rather than using county workers. The data is then used to analyze precipitation, surface water fluctuations, etc. throughout the county. Mark proposed that the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists participate in this program, and he requested a resolution be drafted stating that (1) we supported the program, (2) we would solicit volunteer participation from our Chapter, and (3) that Master Naturalists would receive volunteer credit for their participation in the program. There was some discussion about the overlap with CoCoRaHS reporting and cross-county volunteering. President Schwarz indicated he would contact Michelle Haggarty with the State Chapter and discuss the matter with her. It was pointed out that it was up to the Volunteer Projects Director to choose what projects the Chapter would support and that a vote of the Board is not necessary.

David briefly went over several existing projects and made the following recommendations:

Kerrville Urban Trail – Recommended closing this project.

Muleshoe Farm Field Research – Recommended keeping project open.

Muleshoe Farm Nature Access – Discuss with project owner before making recommendation.

LBJ Municipal Park Pollinator Garden – Further research needed before making recommendation.

Kerr Courthouse Pollinator Garden – Recommended keeping project open.

Advanced Training – Deb Youngblood

AT Director Deb Youngblood submitted a written report which sets forth all AT opportunities to date. The report also indicated that the total number of AT hours completed by January 31, 2023 was 258.25 hours. She orally stated that she had been dealing with some website, word press, and AT forum issues.

Chapter State Representative – Vern Crawford

Vern had no official report at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Carla Stang announced that she would be participating in a Zoom call on February 28, 2023 related to the INaturalist City Nature Challenge Bioblitz which is scheduled to take place April 28 through May 1, 2023, and she encouraged everyone to participate in the Challenge. President Schwarz asked Carla to make the announcement at the February 27, 2023 Chapter meeting, in an attempt to get more people involved in the project.

2. President Schwarz then introduced Katy Kappel, who was present to gain the support and involvement of TMNHCC in connection with a community-wide effort to designate Kerrville as a Bird City. Following discussion, it was decided that this project would be readdressed once it became more formalized.

Due to time constraints, President Schwarz tabled the remaining New Business items.

There being no further business, on motion of Carla Stang, seconded by Vern Crawford, the meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Minutes taken and submitted by:

Patti Guin, Secretary