

**May 22, 2023 MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE TEXAS MASTER
NATURALIST HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER**

Meeting Location: Riverside Nature Center

Time: 2:01 p.m.

Attending in Person: Jeff Schwarz, Carla Stang, Ron Scoggins, Patti Guin, Mark Hults, Deb Youngblood, David Drake, and Jane Jamison. Also in attendance was Lisa Marler with Great Texas Wildlife Trails

Attending by Zoom: Dot Maginot

Absent: Kim Ort, David Matthews, and Vern Crawford

President Jeff Schwarz called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – Patti Guin

Secretary Patti Guin submitted the minutes from the April 24, 2023 Board meeting. On motion of Deb Youngblood, seconded by Mark Hults, the minutes were unanimously approved.

REPORTS

Treasurer – Ron Scoggins

Ron Scoggins gave a report on the general checking account register for the month of April, which revealed an ending balance of \$27,264.49. Jane Jamison asked about the Hartford liability insurance policy expenditure, and Ron explained that the policy was to protect officers and directors of the organization from being personally held liable for accidents or events that might occur during their service on the Board. Patti Guin asked for clarification in connection with native plant purchases for the Kerrville pollinator garden and the Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park pollinator garden. It was explained that the LBJ Municipal Park is a project that has been funded by the Hill Country Chapter, and if they needed additional project funding in the future, all they needed to do is present a request to the Board for approval.

A question was raised about the funding of the plant sale and how much the Hill Country Chapter made off the recent spring plant sale. Ron explained that that the proceeds of the plant sale were divided between three organizations – TMN Hill Country Chapter, Riverside Nature Center, and Kerrville Native Plant Society. He revealed that our Chapter netted \$1,219.16 from the sale. A question was also raised about whether members could donate plants to the sale. Carla Stang pointed out that Kim Ort was the Board representative on the plant sale committee and that she would be the person to bring this up at their next committee meeting.

There being no additional questions pertaining to the Treasurer's report, Carla Stang made a motion that the report be approved, Jane Jamison seconded the motion, and the report was unanimously approved.

Vice President – Kim Ort

Kim Ort did not submit a written report this month and was absent from the meeting.

Immediate Past President – Carla Stang

In connection with the Operating Handbook, Carla indicated that she has been compiling all revision/addition suggestions made by members. She is currently reviewing these suggestions and plans to touch base with everyone who has made a submission prior to submitting the final draft to the State.

New Class Committee – Jane Jamison

Jane Jamison stated that the class schedule has been finalized with revisions, it was out on the website, and she was seeking Board approval. She indicated that class hours totaled 62 and there were 14 hours of optional advanced training. Since several of the Board members had not had a chance to review the newly revised schedule, Carla Stang made a motion that Jane email the new schedule to the Board members for approval, and everyone send in their vote by June 1. Patti Guin seconded the motion. A discussion ensued following the vote and President Schwarz asked that the voting deadline be changed to June 4. Carla Stang then restated her motion with the date change to June 4. Patti Guin seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Jane then announced that the mentor meeting was scheduled for June 19, 2023. If mentors were unable to attend in person, Jane stated they could attend by Zoom. Additionally, a request was made from the Board that in the future mentors be copied on all correspondence to the new students.

Membership – Dot Maginot

Dot went over her written report. Highlights of the report indicated that there are currently 204 active members in the membership directory, as we had two members transfer from inactive to active. She further reported that the number of members with VMS entries in 2023 is 185, and that there was a total of 16 recertifications in the month of April bringing the total number of recertifications for the year to 49.

Communications – Mark Hults

Mark reported on all Communication activities over the last 30 days as of 5/19/2023, which included the following: *The Texas Star* newsletter was published on May 16, 2023; a news tab was added to the website to allow for general information and volunteer opportunities; website statistics for the last 30 days – 1,342 sessions (decrease of 6%), 6,092 page views (increase of 50%), and an 8% increase in the average duration of website sessions (1 min and 39 sec). In comparing new versus returning members visiting the website, he reported that 82% were new and 18% returning. Mark included a new statistic in his report (device breakdown). He reported that 71% accessed the site from desktop computers, 5% tablets, and 24% mobile. He reported that the top page views included the AT calendar, Pollinator Garden Assistance, Advanced Training

Events and Reporting, News, VMS, *The Texas Star*, PGARP Consultation or Recognition Application, and Upcoming Events. He further stated that 18 changes were made to the website in April and a detailed log of the changes was provided. Mark announced that we currently have 315 subscribers to our YouTube channel, and that seven people joined during the month of March. He also reported that there are 40 videos posted to the channel. Regarding Facebook, Mark reported that 13 new posts were made since his last report, and we currently have 2.7K followers (an increase of 2.6K) and 2.4 likes. His written report regarding attendance at the April Chapter meeting indicated the following live feed statistics: Business meeting – 72 people and Advanced Training – 54 people. His report on print media revealed that the May monthly meeting announcement was distributed.

Volunteer Service Projects – David Drake

David Drake announced that he had approved a new project proposal by the name of Great Texas Wildlife Trails – Adopt a Loop. David then introduced Lisa Marler, Project Coordinator, who explained the project in detail and passed out handouts. The Board indicated its desire to proceed with the project, and Ms. Marler will begin the process of coordinating the formulation of the project for our Chapter.

Advanced Training – Deb Youngblood

Deb Youngblood reported that so far in 2023, 230 events have been logged totaling 488.5 hours. She further reported that total events and hours continue to be behind last year's numbers; however, the quality of the events is exceptional. She indicated that she has attended some of this year's advanced training sessions and found them to be very worthwhile.

Chapter State Representative – Vern Crawford

Vern was not in attendance and did not provide a written report.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Following a lengthy discussion regarding approving projects outside chapter boundaries, it was decided that Volunteer Projects Coordinator David Drake will draft an email to President Schwarz setting forth the guidelines and criteria for the approval process and President Schwarz will then get with Michelle Haggerty to discuss.
2. President Schwarz reminded everyone of the special June meeting recognizing Tom Collins for 10,000 hours of volunteer service and thought it would be nice to have refreshments at the meeting. He then made a motion that the Board approve a sum not to exceed \$300 to cover the cost of refreshments. Mark Hults seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, on motion of Jane Jamison, seconded by Carla Stang, the meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Minutes taken and submitted by: **Patti Guin, Secretary**