**LINDHEIMER MASTER NATURALISTS**

**BOARD MEETING**

**OCTOBER 24, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jim Teeling, Kim Wright, Cheryl Trock, Darlene Varga, Val Lefebvre, Rich Bradley, Joel Dunnington, Susan James, Rich Nielson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Judy Brupbacher

**GUESTS:** Troy Luepke (advisor), Art Williams, Brian Trock, Kory Foster, Bill Suddith

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Kim had emailed the September meeting minutes to the board. There was one small correction, which was made in the minutes. Art Williams had an objection as to how the condition of the Arboretum was presented. Troy had said that the grasses had grown out of control and the area was becoming a haven for snakes. Art said that the area within the enclosure where the Grass Roots class had planted native grasses as their class project was not actually part of the Arboretum. So Art wanted it noted that it is not the Arboretum in need of attention, but actually the Grass Roots project. Darlene moved that the minutes reflect the change in the status of the Arboretum; Rich Nielson seconded. Motion passed. The minutes were approved.

**OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Treasurer---**Rich Nielson reported that this year’s class manuals are bound books, so there was no need to purchase binders for the material. Val Lefebvre had a request for monies to purchase DVD’s for Marlin Brendsel, who videos the classes. Rich Nielson said that since we did not need to purchase the binders, there is plenty in the coffers to cover this expense. Jim Teeling informed Rich Nielson that there is a woman who wants to join the new class and will attend the orientation on October 25 and pay her tuition. There has been a request for the chapter to order manuals for members to purchase. Darlene Varga said if there are members who would like to purchase a copy, they may do so at $35 each if we order a minimum of 10. Otherwise, the purchase price will be about $70 per manual. Darlenementioned that the Bamberger Ranch has opened their schedule for tours, and Sara Riggs is trying to schedule a tour for the classes of 2016 and 2017. As before, after those members have signed up, registration will open up to the general membership. The chapter paid for members last time in 2015, so Darlene asked if that was going to be the case this next time. Rich Nielson said it could be put in the 2017 budget. Rich would give Darlene a blank check to pay for members who show up for the tour. Depending on how many attend, (maximum of 40) the cost would be between $300-600.

Brian asked if the new manual will be updated and edited frequently. It is not known when the manual would be updated. The Education Committee ordered 25 copies for the class. Education has a copy. There was some discussion as to whether the chapter should have a copy for members to borrow. Troy Luepke said it would be nice for the Extension Office to have one. There was also discussion as to whether the chapter should purchase a manual for each of the three area libraries: TPML, the New Braunfels Library, and the Bulverde Library. The Communications Committee will send out a notice to those Chapter members who may want to purchase a new manual. Rich Nielson will be the contact person.

See Treasurer’s report attached.

1. **Vice President---**Joel Dunnington reported that the October meeting was graduation for the 2016 class. There were 61 in attendance (13 were guests). Joel said that Glenna Dunnington was willing to continue as Hospitality chair, but if anyone else would like to do it, she is amenable to that. Joel said that he has reserved TPML for our 2017 chapter meetings, except for June, when we will meet back at Agrilife. He has reserved the classroom for that monthly meeting. He is trying to get Flo Oxley lined up to come speak, but Val Lefebvre said that Flo has classes on Thursdays in the spring. Joel said that Texas Wild has contacted him and wants to do a presentation at one of our meetings, but as far as he knows, the House Bill 5500 has not been passed yet. This issue is a conservation program funded by energy money derived from federal lands.

See report.

1. **Past President-**--Rich Bradley had no report.
2. **Communications-**--Susan James reported that her committee had had their end of year meeting. She said that Karen Lillard will take over as Publicity chair as Nancy Fitzpatrick is resigning as chair. Beth Jameson will assist Marie Miller with the website and is willing to be the Communications chair next year. Carmen Horn (newsletter) is still waiting on material related to the original members before she sets up a chapter press release. Jennifer Hendren, who is handling the social media page, had reported that there has been increased involvement. But, more information needs to be passed her way for updates and to get more involvement from members. Marilyn McFarland is the Historian and will prepare a hard copy scrapbook. She will check with Carol Entringer about the location of the old scrapbooks. Bill Suddith has been not only his class photographer, but is also the chapter photographer. Bill will continue to serve as the chapter photographer, but the new students will be asked if one or more of them would want to take pictures of their class activities. Bill will need to add basic information for the pictures, such as names, places, and dates. Sara Riggs will remain as Out and About coordinator. Pat Gonser will continue her support with the Traveling Trunks. The trunks were at the Farmers’ Market, the McKenna Children’s Museum, and a homeschool group. An email list needs to be generated from the visitors at the booth at each event. Several thousand people at the Comal County Fair visited the booths. Troy Luepke used materials when our chapter had no one to handle the LMN side. Susan James said that she is working on Comal Independent School District outreach with Craig Hensley, using combined resources. Craig is to be the contact person and will be the editor of the teaching materials.
3. **Education-**--Val Lefebvre announced that new class orientation will be tomorrow, October 25. She asked Rich Nielson to be present to collect the tuition monies. Deb Kyrouac and Sara Riggs have prepared a good Power Point for the new class orientation. Although the new students will not be able to enter any hours on the VMS system until their names are entered by Cheryl Trock, Cheryl and Brian Trock will attend and give a brief introduction to the VMS reporting procedures. There are 19 definite students, with 2 still considering joining the class. Another person is planning to show up tomorrow with her application and tuition money. Darlene Varga reported that at the class graduation on October 20, we were several pins short, so several members relinquished their pins so that the graduating students could be presented with their pins. So those who gave up their pins need to have them replaced. We were still short 4 pins, so Jim Teeling will order 35 pins for the new class and the remaining 4 for the 2016 class. Rich Bradley said that he and Jim Teeling need to go through the box of pins to see just what we have.
4. **Membership-**--Cheryl Trock reported that our chapter had been audited by the VMS auditor Cheryl Foster and we received the results on September 23. There were a few small corrections that Cheryl Foster wanted us to make, such as adding an “S” to Naturalist. There were a few of our chapter members who have the same name as members in other chapters, so Cheryl Foster wanted us to make some sort of distinction between them. The Traveling Trunks had been placed under Chapter Business, but Cheryl Trock had already moved it to Outreach. Cheryl Foster wanted the word “Surveys” removed from the Guadalupe River Park title and to put “surveys” in the description instead. Some projects are conducted overnight, but Cheryl Foster did not want more than 14 hours reported per Opportunity. Cheryl foster also told Cheryl Trock that she and Brian Trock cannot approve their own hours, but could approve each other’s. Cheryl Foster said that there were 2 Log Book entries that didn’t have any hours reported and some Service Hours were reported under Advanced Training, but that occurred early in 2016. Cheryl Trock said that of 5676 entries that were audited, we only had a 0.2% error rate, which she considers very good. Cheryl asked if we would be audited on a regular basis; she said we will be audited again in March, but they will be looking at different aspects of the reporting process.

Cheryl Trock will be adding the inactive members and their historical hours into the VMS system. Will Cheryl Foster be checking those for accuracy? Any chapter transfers will have to be checked by the State to see if their hours transferred with them. If Cheryl Trock enters these inactive members’ hours and they are now in another chapter, VMS will alert her.

If a member is entering their hours under Chapter Business, they will need to use the drop box to be specific.

Background checks--- The 2 members who had not entered their birth dates have now done so and they have passed their checks. One of the members who said “no” to a check has now said “yes”.

Jim Teeling asked if we are being proactive and sending a note to Cheryl Foster when we add something new so that an audit wouldn’t red flag it. Cheryl Trock said we will not know ahead of time what they will be looking at.

Brian Trock said that the members who have reported no hours in 2016 will go inactive on the VMS system. He will change or update their status in February 2017.

1. **Projects---**Judy Brupbacher was absent; no report.

**COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:**

At last month’s BOD meeting, Troy Luepke said he would speak with Art Williams about his refusal to a background check. Troy had not done that, but was able to address the issue of the background check with Art at this meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Contribution to TPML---**At the last meeting, we had discussed the possibility of purchasing nature books and having our name on a bookplate in each book. Cheryl Trock reminded us that we had decided to have a committee study this topic and decide on the books to be purchased. Darlene Varga wants to be on this committee. Art Williams explained more about the signpost that the library wants. It will be a decorative post that will direct visitors to different areas. Our chapter name would be on it regardless of the amount of our donation. Art said that the idea of more books was met with less than an enthusiastic response. He said the library does not have room for an additional shelf especially designated for our books. Susan James thought that books are a better idea than the signpost. Darlene Varga said if we did donate books, we could have Craig Hensley do a Lunch and Learn about the books. A photo could be placed in the local paper. How much would we be willing to spend on the purchase of the books? We thought around $250-300. Rich Nielson said we have $500 in the “Donations” budget. Jim Teeling wants to give 3 of the new training manuals to the 3 libraries in Comal County. Joel Dunnington said the manuals would be a good resource for the public. Joel suggested that at the next 2 chapter meetings, we ask if individuals would like to donate toward this project to benefit TPML. We could use some of the funds for the books and some for the signpost. Val Lefebvre said that the LMN do a lot of volunteering for the libraries, and she wants the donation to focus on field guides and children’s nature books. The 3 training manuals will cost $105 and Val said we should not use the entire “Donations” budget. Art Williams said the books stay on the shelves for about 5 years, then are sent to the recycling center. Would we be able to retrieve our donated books before they are destroyed? Art said “Yes”. Cheryl Trock suggested we also purchase DVDs. Kim Wright suggested that these decisions need to be made in committee action; therefore, the committee shall consist of Darlene Varga, Art Williams, Susan James, and Craig Hensley. They will convene and come to the November BOD meeting with their proposal.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Rich Bradley moved that the meeting be adjourned; Susan James seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kim Wright, Secretary

Lindheimer Master Naturalists