LINDHEIMER MASTER NATURALISTS

**BOARD MEETING**

**NOVEMBER 27, 2017**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joel Dunnington, Kim Wright, Art Williams, Darlene Varga, Jeanie Springer, Cheryl Trock, Rich Nielson, Debbie Kyrouac, Mike Hammack, Troy Luepke

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jim Teeling, Marie Miller

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** After Kim Wright sent the minutes out via email, only a few minor corrections were made and the corrected minutes resent to the BOD. Rich Nielson moved that the October minutes be approved; Jeanie Springer seconded. The motion passed.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

1. **Changes to LMN COH---**Joel Dunnington reported that State is still working on changes to the State COH. Cheryl Trock said that the wording in our COH needs to match the wording on the State VMS system as it pertains to deceased members.
2. **Water Course Books from TMN-**--Joel Dunnington said that he was sent pins and certificates for some members. Cheryl Trock said that no one from State ever gave any guidance for this and asked Joel to get more information for her. The Chapter has remaining books and perhaps a class could be started in January for those members interested.
3. **TMN Tablecloth and Posters-**--The State has posters that can be used for various projects. Rich Nielson said that he has stands for them.
4. **New Director at John Knox Ranch-**--Joel Dunnington reported that Chris Holmes, a former Master Naturalist, is the new director at the ranch and wants our chapter to be more involved with projects there.
5. **Reminder for VMS Hours-**--Joel Dunnington wants to remind all members that they need to submit their hours to the VMS by January 1, 2018.
6. **December Meeting-**--Joel Dunnington said that the December meeting is our Annual Elections and holiday party. It will take place at TPML on December 14th. Those bringing food for the party need to arrive at 5:15 PM. The meeting begins at 6 PM. There will be a gift exchange. Gifts should have a Master Naturalist theme.
7. **TMN Purchase Orders for Curriculum-**--Any TMN purchases need to be made with LMN checks, not personal checks.
8. **TMN Water Course Pins and Certificates-**--Joel Dunnington previously discussed this above.
9. **Janet Sweet Emails-**--Janet has asked that she be dropped from the many emails that go out to the BOD group. She only wants the minutes from the meetings.
10. **Chamber Membership-**--The BOD is not interested in joining any Chambers in the area. Art Williams still wants to personally pay for membership in the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce. He will give Rich Nielson a personal check and Rich will write a check for the membership from the LMN account.
11. **Marlin Brendsel’s Funeral-**--Joel Dunnington attended the funeral. Joel said that Elizabeth Bowerman said that in the past when LMN has lost a member, we have given a memorial. It was reported that Susan Bogle said that LMN did not give a memorial; NPSOT was the organization that gave a memorial. Coco Brennan said that there is a standard policy for deceased members, but no one remembers anything in the Chapter Handbook that addresses this. Art Williams said that a memorial was placed at Warbler Woods in memory of Ann Tubbs. Private donations funded this memorial. Joel asked the BOD if we wanted to do anything for Marlin. Cheryl Trock thought that the money should come from our treasury and it would represent the entire chapter. Individuals could send donations to Rich Nielson earmarked for the memorial. Cheryl will look at Marlin’s project history to determine where he spent most of his time. The memorial should be at that spot. Marlin did the videography for the classes, so his time was spent at Agrilife. Art Williams said that a tree just died in the Arboretum and that might be a good place for a memorial tree. Joel will send out an email to the members concerning this.
12. **VMS Reporting-**--Joel Dunnington said that he sent Marie Miller the VMS letter that came out in May explaining the best way to report hours (the Good, Better, Best comparisons) to post on the website.

**OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Treasurer---**Rich Nielson reported on October bank activity. See report. He also presented the proposed budget for 2018. Cheryl Trock asked since we have a hefty balance in the bank if there is a limit a non-profit can have in their coffers to remain under the IRS status of a non-profit. Rich said that we are okay. Our balance has increased over the past few years, so the idea of charging membership dues doesn’t really make sense in that perspective. Cheryl said that before we ask for dues, we need to have a plan in place for that extra money. Rich will look over our past records. Art Williams said that our class sizes have increased since he was President, which would account for a lot of the monetary increase.

**Budget---**Darlene Varga said that the Graduation Party budget allotment (for meat) is based on the number of students in the class. There are currently 33 in the class. Rich Nielson suggested a change to $10 per person, so the 2018 budget for the class would increase from $150 to $330. Rich asked Mike Hammack, the incoming Education co-chair, to get the sizes for the class T-shirts to him so that he could order and pay for them. Art Williams asked Darlene Varga if she needed more money for the Traveling Trunks. That budget will increase to $500. Outreach will now have $1000 budgeted for 2018. Joel Dunnington asked that Donations be increased to $200. Kim Wright moved that the 2018 Budget with changes be approved; Art Williams seconded. Motion passed.

**Audit-**--Rich Nielson will meet with Troy Luepke after January 1 to conduct an audit of our account.

1. **Vice President---**Art Williams reported that the video he has been working on is 27 minutes long, so we would need to supplement with something else at the Chapter meeting. Rich Nielson suggested doing a Facebook training session for members. Darlene Varga thought that maybe some members would like to share their past memories of LMN.

**SLOAP---**Art said that the last training session for the new Landowner program will be this week. The program will introduce in January.

**Earth Day and Headwaters-**--Art said that there was a soft opening at the Headwaters of the Comal, but LMN was not invited. Art asked about Earth Day and if they would waive the entry fee for that day. They said that they would if they could get sponsors to help defray the cost. If not, entrance fees would be charged. NBU had an Earth Day last year, and if Headwaters has one this next spring, we will be in competition with them for attendees.

**Volunteer Hours for Gorge Society Work-**--Art said that Ron Butts asked why his hours for helping set up for the Gorge Gala were not allowed. Ron was told that this did not meet our mission. Art thinks we need to have a policy for these issues that arise.

**Change Board Meeting Date-**--It had been suggested that we change the BOD meeting date to occur before the monthly chapter meeting so that members could hear about what transpired at the meeting. Art asked Rich Nielson about his survey results that were gathered at the last Chapter meeting. Members who responded indicated that they were not interested in hearing about the BOD meeting results at the chapter meeting.

1. **Past President---**Jim Teeling was absent. Joel Dunnington said that we need to send out the notice about the slate of officers running for election very soon. No one has volunteered to run for Secretary, so Art Williams said he would run. Kim Wright asked Art to let Joel know of his intentions so that Joel could get that email sent out to members asap.
2. **Communications-**--Marie Miller was absent; no report.
3. **Education-**--Joel Dunnington asked about the video camera which is used for the classes. It has been in Marlin’s possession. Joel will retrieve the camera from Marlin’s wife. Debbie Kyrouac said that Sara Riggs volunteered to serve as a back up videographer for the classes along with Pete Bryant. Sara said she would need training on the use of the camera. Someone asked why we keep filming the same class subjects each year. We should pick the best on each subject and use that one. The videos could be put in a drop box for students to use if they need to do a makeup class. The drop box costs about $100. There was concern that the box would not have enough storage for these films. Susan James and William Suddith know a lot about drop boxes and might be able to guide us on this. Darlene Varga suggested that students who miss a class could attend another chapter’s training class on the same subject.

Mike Hammack said that he sent out Earth Day Lessons Learned report that was compiled by the previous class after they chaired Earth Day 2017. Mike suggested that we could expand the space for the Earth Day and have food trucks, etc. See report under Recommendations. He asked if the BOD wanted the new class to also chair Earth Day as their class project. Mike wants the new class to succeed. He asked if chairing Earth Day is mandatory or does the new class have a choice in their class project. Art Williams gave a little history on how we got involved in Earth Day. He said that Paula Pebsworth, along with Ray Laxson ( a LMN member) started our involvement with ED several years ago. Then Henry and Janet Hahn took over. After that, no one wanted to chair it. So it happened that the class-in-training was given the project. Mike wants to tell the class next Tuesday what the BOD wants them to do. The BOD thinks it is a good idea for the class to do this project because it creates an opportunity for the class to bond and work on a project that offers a chance to collaborate as a unit. The ED will remain at TPML even if NBU has their own ED in New Braunfels. TPML is a good location. As far as the food booths, many organizations require a minimum food purchase to make it worth their while. Perhaps local Scout troops and other local organizations could sell hamburgers/hot dogs. Troy Luepke said that county regulations may require only pre-packaged items be sold. Mike also said he wants the ED to appeal to older youths. Art said a unifying theme used by exhibitors would be a good idea, maybe something involving the theme Hill Country and topics that pertain to our area.

Debbie Kyrouac said that the Education committee decided to remove Rangeland Management as a class topic and replace it with Urban Wildscape. Dede Wright of the NPSOT does a program on this topic, but it may not be long enough for a class. Darlene Varga said that Susan Bogle attended a showing of a video titled “Hometown Habitat”. The licensing fee is $185, but if we purchased the video, it would be ours to use. It could supplement the Wildscape class.

1. **Membership---**Cheryl Trock said that she needed more time at the Orientation for the new class to explain the VMS program. She asked that next year she be given more time. She said she needs better step by step instructions. She said that State is behind on the Criminal Background Checks. One of the new class members does not want a background check. This person may just want to learn and not volunteer for any projects. Joel Dunnington said that he will order pins for the class.
2. **Projects-**--Jeanie Springer said that there were no applications for AT or VH. She updated the main project list and sent it to Marie Miller.
3. **Outreach-**--Darlene Varga reminded the BOD that on Thursday from 9-12 at TPML, they will be assembling the many toilet paper roll binoculars for Santa’s Village.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Rich Nielson handed out copies of the survey taken at the last chapter meeting concerning social media usage. See report.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Rich Nielson handed out an article from the Herald Zeitung about the Dry Comal Trail project. See article. The National Park Service may want to be involved. This hiking and biking trail may at some point connect Landa Park all the way to the Guadalupe County line.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Kim Wright moved the meeting be adjourned; Darlene Varga seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kim Wright, Secretary

Lindheimer Master Naturalists