

Lost Pines Master Naturalist Board Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2017 – 5:30pm – Bluebonnet Electric Coop. Headquarters

Attendees were: Marcia Karr, Paula Weisskopf, Audrey Ambrose, Kaye Sapikas, Michal Hubbard, Larry Gfeller, Julia Akin, Marsha Elrod, Allen Guisinger, and guests: Frank May and Kim Iberg

The meeting was called to order by President Marcia Karr at 5:39 PM.

New Business:

1. Resolution Honoring Texas Master Naturalists

- Frank May reported that on May 22, the Bastrop County Commissioners Court will present a resolution honoring LPTMN for our many activities benefiting Bastrop and Caldwell counties. The proclamation should be passed by the Commissioners.
- The proclamation will make June 3rd 2017 LPTMN day in Bastrop county, corresponding with National Trails Day.
- The meeting will be held at 804 Pecan St. This will be announced at the chapter meeting and members are encouraged to attend.
- At 6 PM on May 10th there is also a city meeting on trails discussion their vision for new trails, so we could show up for that as well (this is the city, not the county).
- It is possible that they may also make LP Nature Trail part of the county trail system.

2. Silent Auction Committee

- Kim Iberg reported that the committee has decided to dissolve the silent auction in its current form. More work was going into it than benefits accrued and we ask members to both donate and buy which was starting to get negative feedback.
- The board agreed with the committee's decision.

3. Mobile Nature Center

- Kim Iberg also reported on the mobile nature center project. She handed out a complete summary document which is attached to these minutes.
- The team includes: Kim (lead), Cari Croft, Diane Luchild, Erin Belenky, Janice Gauthier, Kathy Cox, and Nancy Rabensburg.
- The mobile center could be used for a wide range of outreach activities. We could reach a larger audience, grow our membership and expose people, who are not aware of TMN to many regional outdoor opportunities.
- A 6x16 trailer would be ideal. A new trailer would cost \$4-8,000 for the shell of a cargo trailer, so funding is a challenge to address.
- Kim wanted to test the feelings of the Board on whether or not to continue to pursue this idea. The board strongly supports the project and appreciates the enthusiasm of the committee members. Kim will work on a possible budget and funding proposals for presentation at the next board meeting.

- In addition to a proposed budget, the Board also noted the need to address storage and transport details, and any other critical logistics. Kim's goal is to complete a recommendation by June 21st, so it should be ready for the next board meeting in July.

4. Holiday Party

- Since we are not having an auction, there is a question of format for a holiday party. Marcia will reach out to the food and fun committee to see if they will put together a party committee to make recommendations on how to proceed.

5. Outreach Event: Patriotic Fest Bastrop

- Marcia Karr reported that there is an event on July 1 at the Bastrop Patriotic Fest where we could have a booth. The board did not feel that having a booth at this event would be productive.

6. PPLT Volunteer Opportunities

- Melanie has reached out with some volunteer opportunities with PPLT. One is a bird count project with PPLT.
- Marcia noted that Melanie probably needs a point person to coordinate LPTMN with PPLT. Larry noted that Bruce Siebert and Bill Brooks are on their Board and could be the contact persons.
- Melanie had also mentioned the need for stewards assigned for each property.
- The Board seemed to agree that we need a better communication channel with PPLT and it should include a LPTMN member who would volunteer.
- The Board was concerned about trying to do too much (stewards for example) for PPLT when it is really their responsibility to find their own volunteers. For now, Paula volunteered to handle the contacts with PPLT.

7. Financial Report

- Marsha Elrod presented a complete financial report – attached to the minutes.
- We have 78 paid members. There are about 22 who are active but have not paid. Marsha will reach out to them with a reminder that they need to pay their dues.
- The board was very appreciative of the excellent financial reports. The board agreed to vote to approve financial reports at each meeting. Two members left this meeting early, so we did not have a quorum to vote. That vote will be held either by e mail or at the next board meeting.
UPDATE: Email vote attached to these minutes.

8. Chapter Operating Handbook

- Julia Akin reported that we need to update our Chapter's Operating Handbook.
- There is a template from the state to follow, but we have lots of flexibility in customizing our Handbook to meet our chapter procedures. It should include things like our training program curriculum, attendance

requirements, mentoring, how to make up classes, how to get on MeetUp, check request procedures, etc.

- Julia will get this out to members to write their portion and will lead this project.

Ongoing business:

1. 2017 Planning Retreat

- Julia Akin presented details on the location at Canyon of the Eagles.
- We all need to call and make our reservations for Aug 17 and 18th. Call 512- 334 2070.

2. 2017 Annual Meeting Participation

- Marcia Karr indicated that we can move most of this discussion to July, but the presenter deadline is June 1, so if anyone wants to present it needs to be communicated by that time. It will be on the agenda at the chapter meeting this month.

3. Sharing Chapter Documents Online

- In earlier discussions the Board felt it would be useful to have a way for the board and committees to share documents on-line.
- Kaye Sapikas headed this project and she has set up a special GMAIL account for LPTMN. LostPinesTXMN@gmail.com. She has set up this account to be used by the Board and committees as needed.
- The Board was very appreciative and supportive of this excellent tool and thanked Kaye for the excellent work.

4. Training Class Update

- Michal Hubbard reported that we still have all 16 students in the class, so no drop outs yet (we lost one before class started). All is going smoothly.
- Michal also noted that we spent lots of marketing efforts and got only 16 students. Should we consider going to every other year?
- She also mentioned the idea of a “scat and tracks” workshop for AT and for public.
- We will include 2018 class discussions at the next board meeting.

5. Jr. Master Naturalist Update

- Kim Iberg reported on the 8 students they have this year, which is a great group of children and we are able to give them lots of attention. Attendance has been good.
- Field trips have been a challenge because one of each child’s parents has to attend.
- On Friday May 19th there will be a campout at 6 pm at Bastrop SP. Members are invited to attend. The kids are really excited. They will be having hamburgers and an interpretive hike.
- Kim says they are feeling good about the program but the committee is thinking about perhaps going down from 16 events to fewer meetings in order to relieve some pressure on the committee.

- We could consider expanding to other schools and/or move up to junior high age kids.
- We would like to have our graduating 5th graders stay on as mentors.

6. Project updates:

- *Yegua Knobbs Outdoor Adventure* – Larry Gfeller
 - Larry says it is all looking good for the event, with AT for archeology, mapping, star gazing, birding, native plants, etc. and the environmental project is approved.
- *Photo Contest* – Larry Gfeller
 - Larry says we are on schedule, but McKinney Roughs would not allow free entry for contestants. Bruce is working on a compromise with them.
 - Precision Camera is handling all the details and may have a photo drone there if MR approves.
 - Larry is optimistic about focusing mainly on the photo contest and not trying to include too much in this event.
- *20th Anniversary Project* – Julia Akin
 - Julia reported that she has not received materials from HQ yet.
 - They will be meeting this coming weekend to discuss plans.
 - There will be two segments - Video interviews and gathering photos.
 - The goal is to get it in by year end.
 - Julia is looking for up to five people with a good historical perspective on our chapter (for video interviews).
- *Bridge Maniacs and LPNT* – Audrey Ambrose
 - Audrey reported that the Bridge Maniacs have been very busy and have a full schedule.
 - The board discussed the huge demands on Audrey's time and expressed concerns on her part. She was encouraged to say "no" when appropriate.
- *Zedler Park South Trail* – Allen Guisinger
 - Allen reported that the loop trail (erased by mowing by the city) had been re-marked yesterday and that the signs had been funded and would be ready in about two weeks.
 - The Bridge Maniacs are scheduled to complete the nature trail and install signs on June 7th.
- *Bluebird Trails* – Allen Guisinger
 - Allen reported that there has been no further work done to develop box maintenance and monitoring but it is still a worthwhile project that should be pursued as time allows.
 - There has been successful nesting and fledgling in our boxes installed at LSP.
- *Private Water Testing* – Marsha Elrod
 - Nothing new to report
- *Wildlife Rehabilitation List* – Marcia Karr
 - Marcia said that the list has not been finalized and the project is ongoing.
- *Interpretive Hikes* – Marcia Karr
 - Marcia reported that Ben Kanten has also agreed to take over the Lake Bastrop South Shore hike scheduling.

- She also noted that TPWD will require interpretive training in order to be approved hike leaders. She also recommended to Kim that someone from her trailer team attend this training as well. Kristen Williams will provide the training and it will be announced on MeetUp and at the chapter meeting.

7. Approve Minutes

- Two members left this meeting early, so we did not have a quorum to vote. That vote will be held either by e mail or at the next board meeting. *UPDATE: Email vote enclosed with these minutes.*

The meeting was adjourned by President Marcia Karr at 8:21 pm.

Next Meeting: July 6, 2017 at 5:30pm at Bluebonnet Electric Coop. Headquarters (Allen will provide dinner at that meeting.)

Record of Special E mail meeting to vote on approval of March minutes and the May financial report. A majority of the board members responded in favor of both motions. There were no votes against. So, the Minutes of the March meeting and the Financial report of the May meeting are approved. Votes are recorded in the president's e mail records.

From: Marcia Karr [mailto:marcia.karr@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, May 08, 2017 9:27 AM
To: Allen Guisinger <aguising@aol.com>; AUDREY AMBROSE <kc1jc2@flash.net>; Julia Akin <jefakin17@gmail.com>; Kathryn Hedges <Kathryn_hedges@hotmail.com>; Kaye Sapikas <kmarie.sapikas@gmail.com>; Larry Gfeller <larrydgyfeller@yahoo.com>; Marsha Elrod <melrod1@earthlink.net>; Michal Hubbard <michal_firecap@yahoo.com>; Paula Weisskopf <pjweisskopf@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: E mail motions

Dear LPTMN Board,

Since two of you had to leave the meeting early and Kathryn was not present, we did not have a quorum at last week's board meeting when it came time to vote on approval of the minutes or approval of the financial statements. The minutes and financials are attached. Any questions regarding the financial reports should be directed to Marsha Elrod.

To save time and close the loop, Allen Guisinger has made two motions via e mail:

Please "respond to all" to record your vote on these two motions:

MOTION #1 to Approve Minutes: A motion is made by Allen Guisinger to approve the March Board meeting minutes including the record of the special e mail motion of March 19, 2017 to approve the purchase of a new wheeled weedeater at a cost not to exceed \$650. This motion is seconded by Marsha Elrod.

MOTION #2 to Approve the Financial Report. A motion is made by Allen Guisinger to approve the financial report submitted by Treasurer, Marsha Elrod. This motion is seconded by Audrey Ambrose.

"Respond to ALL"

I vote on MOTION #1 Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Abstain _____

I vote on MOTION #2 Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Abstain _____

Thank you very much,

Marcia Karr, President

Texas Master Naturalist -- Lost Pines Chapter