

**Lost Pines Master Naturalist Board Meeting Minutes**  
*July 6, 2017 – 5:30pm – Bluebonnet Electric Coop. Headquarters*

***The meeting was called to order at 5:39 PM.***

Attendees were Marcia Karr, Allen Guisinger, Kathryn Hedges, Audrey Ambrose, Kaye Sapikas, Michal Hubbard, Julia Akin, Marsha Elrod, Paula Weisskopf and guest: Kim Iberg

***Motion to approve minutes: Kathryn Hedges moved to approve the minutes of the May board meeting. The motion was seconded by Audrey Ambrose and approved unanimously.***

**New Business:**

1. Mobile Nature Center – Kim Iberg:

- Kim Iberg presented a progress report on the consideration of purchasing a Mobile Education Center.
- She had contacted a vendor that specializes in custom food and service trucks and trailers, “Mobile Kitchen Depot”.
- There was discussion of whether or not retail sales would be included.
- Kim had done an excellent job of defining the potential design details. No cost figures were available at this time. She noted that it could be built to special environmental standards (LEED). It could be towed by any half ton truck. The Board was enthusiastic about the possibility of building this trailer.
- There was discussion about how it might be funded. Kathryn Hedges mentioned the community grants from LCRA and said she would pursue that direction. Allen mentioned the possibility of a donation from Buc-ees since they have large facilities in both Luling and Bastrop.
- It was agreed that Kim would present the concept for input from the Chapter at the July meeting.

2. Junior Master Naturalist Program – Kathryn Hedges:

- Kathryn presented a detailed review of the Junior Master Naturalist program. She presented a PowerPoint presentation with photos and details on the various classes and the names of team members and presenters. The financials were also presented.
- There had been 12 students with 8 graduates.
- The cost will be lower in the next program segment because there will be ten rather than sixteen classes. There will be four meetings plus field trip in both spring and fall of next year. They will also be going to the Texas Memorial Museum for one of the field trips.
- Kathryn said they would welcome other chapter presenters for programs. They would like to find an expert on fossils, for example. They will focus on primarily outdoor programs.

- The Board expressed great appreciation for the efforts of the team in implementing this very successful program. Some funding ideas were discussed including a possible donation from the area where the school is located.
3. Final 2017 Training Class Recap – Michal Hubbard:
    - Michal gave a short review of the training class which graduated 13 with 8 certified at graduation. She noted how active this class has been in volunteering already. The Yequa Knobbs Outdoor Adventure Weekend was a big help in getting certification hours for the students. She and the Board noted the successful graduation event.
    - There is a review meeting at the Roadhouse on July 27<sup>th</sup>. There will be some recap discussion at the retreat on the training program.
    - The Board expressed appreciation to Michal and the training team for such a successful program.
  4. Interest Survey Updates – Marcia Karr:
    - Marcia noted that we had about a 50% response to last year's survey and that the responses were very useful in many respects.
    - She will send out the survey again this month, so the responses will be available at our retreat.
    - She reviewed the form with the Board in detail and noted some modifications for this year's survey.
  5. Bat Viewing Trip – Marcia Karr:
    - Marcia reviewed the idea for a chapter social/AT event related to bats. There are two options. One is a boat tour in Austin and the other is a private tour at Bracken Cave in Comal County.
    - For this to happen, it needs a leader to organize the program for the chapter. At this point no one has volunteered to lead development of the program. This idea may be presented to the chapter to assess interest.
  6. Lifetime Memberships for Key Members – Audrey Ambrose:
    - Audrey presented the idea of offering a special award of a life membership to certain members who have made exceptional contributions to our chapter. She mentioned one name as an example of someone that could be deserving of this award (name not included in these minutes due to confidentiality).
    - Marcia noted that we would need a good way to track life memberships in our system.
    - Despite the discussion held, no decision was made at this time. There will be continuing consideration of this idea. If we do it, it would be at the end of the year.
  7. Chamber of Commerce Memberships – Group Discussion:

- The Board decided to NOT pursue a vote to purchase chamber memberships, due to the lack of perceived benefit to the chapter.

### **Ongoing business:**

1. Treasurer's Report – Marsha Elrod:
  - Marsha asked a question about defining Cost Center Managers for expense approval . She said she gets some costs that do not fall under the formal center managers. The Board agreed that she could check with committee members, but ultimately, the Treasurer has approval authority.
  - Later in the meeting, Marsha presented the complete financial report (attached to the minutes). She went through all the detail with the Board.
  - She also spent some time showing how she reviewed the annual budget and made it more realistic in terms of actual income and expense. It shows a deficit of a little less than \$3,000 projected for this year in her revised budget.
  - No vote was taken to approve the financials since a quorum was not present (two members had to leave early).
2. 2017 BOD Planning Retreat – Julia Akin/Marcia Karr:
  - Everything seems to be in order for the retreat. We are confirmed for the observatory presentation.
  - Marcia noted that the last retreat involved a great deal of planning and goal setting, so this year we will spend our time reviewing those goals and assessing what works, what does not work, and what is still on our plate for the future.
  - It should be a more open meeting where we can consider any and all issues impacting our chapter.
3. Chapter Operating Handbook Updates – Julia Akin:
  - Julia presented the status of our Chapter Operating Handbook. She noted that, although State provides a template, we are allowed to do whatever we want with our handbook. It is an important document to define procedures and policies for our chapter.
  - She proposed that each responsible party provide input to customize each section. Julia will reach out for input from responsible parties and consolidate changes to the handbook.
  - Her goal for a first draft is by the end of July.
  - There was some discussion about the travel time policy. It was agreed that we need to review the policy which currently allows a maximum of two hours. Opinions differed at this time.
4. Project updates:
  - Yequa Knobbs Outdoor Adventure Weekend – Marcia Karr:
    - Marcia commented on the value of the Yequa Knobbs weekend and particularly how it fit with the training class. It could be held earlier,

March for example, when it is cooler. A closer venue might also be better.

- Marcia reminded the Board that Larry is still doing the photography contest in October, but that event will be limited to just a photo contest.
  - Marcia expressed thanks to everyone who made the Yequa Knobbs so successful.
  - Audrey noted that it would be important to get all the AT listed on Meetup in advance of the event (in addition to the e mail notifications). Because some who did not sign up for the camp-out might still want to come for the AT.]
- 20th Anniversary Project – Julia Akin:
    - Julia reported the plan to have 4 or 5 video interviews for the project. 3 individual. Carol Brown, Louise Ridlon, Allen Guisinger – and the Bridge Maniacs (Jim and Nick). The 5<sup>th</sup> possible would be segment on the nature trail.
    - She is working with each person to get a more relevant idea of the questions to ask. The template from state is too dry and may not be relevant to the specific members.
  - Bridge Maniacs and LPNT – Audrey Ambrose:
    - Audrey reported that the Bridge Maniacs have only one more work day before breaking for the summer. They have had a very good year.
    - She said that the two-wheeled weed eaters have proven their worth many times.
    - She noted that the LP Nature trail is being cared for better by the Kayak company removing trash.
  - 2017 Annual Meeting Projects/Participation – Marcia Karr:
    - The annual meeting is in Corpus Christi, Oct 20-22. We do not yet know how many will participate.
    - We are not aware of any presentations by our chapter.
    - There was discussion of whether or not to provide a scholarship to one individual. It was decided to not vote on any scholarship at this time.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM.**

***Next Meeting: September 7, 2017 at 5:30pm at Bluebonnet Electric Coop. Headquarters***