

CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK



Rio Brazos Chapter Texas Master Naturalist Program

2011

CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK

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OPERATING HANDBOOK

Rio Brazos Chapter

Texas Master Naturalist Program

A: DUES

1. Establishment of Dues. The Board of Directors may, with approval of a majority of members present at a duly called and convened general membership meeting, set and change the amount of an initiation fee, if any, and the annual dues, if any, payable to the Chapter. The Board of Directors must notify all voting members 60 days prior to the general meeting that subject of increased dues will be brought before the convened general membership for action. The Board of Directors under special circumstances may waive individual membership fees, on a case-by-case basis, if set by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
2. Dues Schedule. Dues shall be payable in advance of the first day of January in each fiscal year. If dues are not paid by March 31 in each fiscal year, then all privileges afforded a certified member are rescinded until dues are paid.
3. Dues Structure. Membership dues will be 25\$/yr beginning January and running through December, except when there is more than one member from the same family the dues will be 35\$/family for the same period. All new members dues will 25\$/member, and be included in their initial training fees.

B: BACKGROUND CHECKS:

1. All new members will have a background check performed as part of their initial membership package. The fees for such background check will also be included in the initial membership fees.
2. All members as of January 1, 2011 will be subject to a voluntary background check. Any member that plans to do volunteer work as a Rio Brazos Master Naturalist in any capacity with children will be required to have a background check on record with the chapter President before performing as a Rio Brazos Texas Master Naturalist. The fee for the initial background check for these members will be paid by the chapter.
3. Fees for all subsequent background checks will be paid by the chapter.
4. All officers of the chapter must have a background check on file with the current president before taking office.

C: BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

1. The board of directors will be made up of the duly elected officers and;
 - a. The President of the previous term, as long as the conditions of Active member are met.
 - b. The chairpersons of the current committees
 - c. The State appointed advisory personnel.

D: DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

1. The board of directors will meet at least quarterly. The board of directors may be called into session by the President on an as needed basis.
2. The board will carry on the day to day business of the chapter as set forth in this document and the Chapter By Laws.
3. Past President
 - a. Assist the President.
 - b. Chair the Nominating Committee.
 - c. Provide continuity from prior Board of Directors
 - d. Assume the responsibility as the State Representative for the chapter if that position is not otherwise filled.
 - e. In the absence of a past-president, the president will reassign necessary responsibilities.
4. Advises, recommend and inform the chapter on appropriate business.
5. Review the chapter's financial status and participate as a member of the annual audit committee.
6. Assist the State Program Advisory Committee in implementing and enforcing program regulations and policies.
7. Facilitate opportunities for Master Naturalist volunteers to exercise initiative and judgment within proper measure of autonomy when coordinating chapter events and activities.
8. Participate in event planning and attend events when possible or when identified as necessary through the planning process.

E: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. President.
 - a. Preside at all meetings of the Chapter.
 - b. Serve as Chair of the Board of Directors.
 - c. Appoint, subject to the Board's approval, committees and committee chairs
 - d. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
 - e. Sign all Board-approved documents that may be legally binding on the chapter
 - f. Co-sign checks with another officer in the absence of the Treasurer.
 - g. Present an annual report at the last annual meeting of the chapter
 - h. Become Immediate Past President upon completion of term as President.
 - i. Work with the membership chair to fulfill and submit the chapter's annual report to the state office annually.
 - j. Vote when there is a tie.

 2. Vice President.
 - a. Assist the President and act for the President in his or her absence.
 - b. Chair the Program Committee.

 3. Secretary.
 - a. Conduct all necessary chapter correspondence.
 - b. Record, publish and preserve the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors, General Membership meetings or special meetings;
 - c. Furnish the minutes to all Board members and make them available to other Chapter members when requested
 - d. Keep a record of attendance at each meeting and whether a quorum is present.
 - e. Maintain a hard copy file of all minutes and correspondence.
 - f. Bring to each meeting the minute book, a copy of the bylaws, rules and policies, a list of all committees and a copy of the parliamentary authority adopted by the Chapter;
 - g. Publish notice of membership meetings and field trips.

 4. Treasurer.
 - a. Maintain budget and accounting records.
 - b. Receive all dues and monies for the association and maintain them in a separate chapter bank account.
 - c. Keep an account of all income, expenses, disbursements and other financial matters.
 - d. Keep a list of all donated or purchased inventory, equipment or other property. Update list, monthly or as needed.
 - e. Pay all bills upon receipt of a written statement or receipt. Treasurer or President and one other officer shall sign all checks, drafts or other instruments for payment of money or notes of the Chapter.
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- f. Make a monthly report to the membership
- g. Develop an annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors.
- h. Present the financial records for audit on or before the last day of the fiscal year.
- i. Submit all annual financial records and audits as required by law

a)

F: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee will be made-up of the Elected Officers of the Chapter.
2. The executive committee will meet on an as needed basis. Items that may be handled by the executive committee in a closed door meeting may include;
 - a. Any and all matters that have been enumerated in the “Texas Master Naturalist Chapter Management Guidelines” dealing with any member’s compliance with the guidelines as set out in that document.
 - b. Other items.

G: COMMITTEES

1. It is the intent of the board of directors that as much as possible the day to day business of the chapter will be carried out in the committees. With that in mind the President in conjunction with the Board of Directors will identify any committee necessary to conduct the business of the chapter.
2. The president, with board approval will appoint the chairperson of all committees.
3. The chairperson will solicit, appoint and approve members at their discretion.
4. The committees and their duties are listed as follows:

Training Committee

1. Coordinates training of Master Naturalists for the Chapter’s training program.
2. Plans, implements and evaluates the chapter training curriculum and develops training calendar.
3. With the Treasurer develops the class budget and recommends the class tuition to the board.
4. Acquires and prepares class manuals
5. Selects all presenters and makes arrangements for their class/presentation including materials, handouts and audio-visual equipment needed for the class/presentation.
6. Arranges for speaker gifts, travel and lodging needs, and confirmation and thank you letters.
7. Arranges for publicity – Newspaper, flyers, Internet.
8. Arranges for location and room seating and equipment for all classes.
9. Manages the on-going class through graduation.
10. Approves and notifies chapter membership regarding Advanced Training.
11. Uses the State Master Naturalist™ Program Chapter Management Guidelines section on Advanced Training Requirements and Chapter guidelines (see Chapter Policy and Procedures Advanced Training section) to review Advanced Training for approval

Membership Committee

1. Maintains a roster of the Chapter's member names including in-training members plus addresses, phone numbers and Internet/email addresses.
2. Maintains a record of volunteer and advanced training hours and class training attendance.
3. Notifies the Board of members meeting certification and threshold hour achievements.
4. Orders and maintains the member certification and recognition awards (e.g. shirts, name tags, certificates, business cards, pins).
5. Ensures members have a current signed liability form on file.
6. Maintains a record of high level interests and specific expertise of members.
7. Maintains the historical records of the chapter including but not limited to: Training classes, projects, recognitions, events, elections, meetings, and Chapter Newsletter archives.

Volunteer Service Projects Committee

1. Approves and notifies chapter membership regarding Volunteer Service opportunities and projects.
2. Uses the State Master Naturalist Program, Chapter Management Guidelines section on Volunteer Service Requirements.

Program Committee

1. Develops and maintains chapter calendar of activities.
2. Schedules chapter programs and field trips for membership meetings.
3. Notifies membership of field trip requirements (i.e. water, safety, maps, logistics, etc.)
4. Ensures speakers or trip leader is recognized appropriately.

Outreach Committee

1. Responsible for the chapter outreach activities
2. Staffs outreach booths
3. Creates and maintains chapter brochure
4. Acquires and maintains a chapter display board
5. Builds and supports a chapter web page
6. Assists the Training Committee in promoting the chapter
7. Responsible for collecting chapter and state news, producing and distribution of the Chapter Newsletter
8. Assist Training Committee with class host activities – drinks, snacks, catered lunches, and making handouts
9. Coordinate General Membership meeting host activities – drinks, snacks, party activities
10. Work with Membership Committee to coordinate member retention efforts.

H: AD HOC COMMITTEES. Ad Hoc committees are formed for a particular and specific short term purpose.

1. **Audit Committee.** Responsible for conducting the annual audit of the financial records of the chapter. Members will include the vice-president, secretary and advisor (at least one).
2. **Nomination Committee.** Responsible for selecting the annual ballot of officers and board members. Will also serve when an officer vacancy occurs that requires filling. The committee will present a slate of candidates at the annual meeting.
3. **Other Ad Hoc Committees.** Can be formed by the Board as needed to address specific tasks or purposes.

I: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Active members are those individuals who pay their chapter dues for the current year in accordance with the requirements set out in Section A. Lack of contact with the chapter through attendance at one or more meetings or chapter activities during the preceding year or lack of written notice to the chapter that they wish to remain an active member will indicate that they do not wish to remain active members.

J: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF THE CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK (COH)

1. **Adoption.** Initial adoption and ratification of the COH is by a majority vote of those present at a general meeting following written distribution of the proposed COH to the general membership ten days before the meeting with notice that the ratification vote will be held at the general meeting. Written distribution may be via conventional mail, email or other equivalent means.
2. **Amendment.** Changes and amendments may be made by the board of directors at a regular board meeting with a two-thirds vote of the board members in attendance. The general membership must be notified in written form of the proposed changes or amendments ten days before the meeting and be given an opportunity at the board meeting to voice any concerns about the changes or amendments. Written form may be via conventional mail, email or other equivalent means.