



## **TMN-COT GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, December 9, 2020, 9:00 a.m. – 11:12 a.m.**  
**via Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service’s Microsoft Teams Meeting license**

**Bill Ahlstrom, President**, called the meeting to order.

**Attendance**—Approximately 72 members and interns joined the virtual meeting.

**Format of the Meeting**—**John O’Connell** displayed the following reminders to attendees:

- Turn off microphone and turn off video to save on bandwidth
- The meeting will be recorded
- How to ask a question using the chat box
- The chat room will be monitored; hold questions until the end of each presentation.

**Intern Presentations**—**The Class of 2020** presented the following:

- **Team B, Chocolate Bayou Observations**—Karen, Malcolm, and Rain Mosis
- **Individual, Dickey Bates Park’s Dickey Butterfly Garden**—Daveyon Edwards
- **Team C, Clarence E. Sasser Park**—Lindsay Gonzales, Angela Griffin, Larry Moore, and Eric Schaefer

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**How We Are Voting for 2021 Officers**—**Bill Ahlstrom** presented the nominating committee’s slate of officers (below) and explained the electronic voting process.

President	Mickey Dufilho	Secretary	Lisa Myers
Vice President	Kathy Pittman	Treasurer	Don Sabathier

Bill then asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There being none, Bill explained the voting procedures: A virtual, secret ballot will be emailed to each TMN-COT member eligible to vote. Each member will be able to vote once, and the window for casting a vote is December 10 through 16.

**President’s Meeting Update**—**Bill Ahlstrom** presented the following information:

- Return to Service Guidelines for December 9 through 23; another update on December 11
- AgriLIFE is assembling an advisory group to assist the agency in making future decisions based on positivity rates
- 90% of chapters this year have had their volunteer activities curtailed
- Brazoria County is considered AgriLIFE Red Level (activities severely curtailed including no face-to-face extension sponsored or hosted events; no guest speakers at others’ events; no overnight events; no travel to/from Red Level counties unless mission critical; TMN operations are not mission critical)
- Temporary AT guidelines for 2021 (all eight hours can be earned via live/recorded virtual training with *live* Q&A (exception: watching recorded 2020 annual meeting sessions through April 2021 or TMN Tuesday recorded sessions through 2021)



- No change in required 2020 or 2021 VT hours for recertification
- Pins availability update: State recommends delivery in Red Level via mail, which John Boettiger will handle.

**New Guidelines for Christmas Bird Counts**—Bill Ahlstrom provided a brief overview for earning VT hours in counties designated at AgriLIFE Red Level. He has asked the State Office for further clarification.

- Cannot travel to another county
- Family or pod members only in vehicle
- No get-togethers before or after counts
- Follow the most stringent COVID guidelines for the area
- Solo participation is preferred.

**Treasurer’s Report**—Don Sabathier presented the November financial statement and stated that he will begin collecting dues (\$25) in January (online, mail to Don, or via TDECU); he will send an email with information.

**November 1-30, 2020, COT Treasurer Report**

<b><u>Beginning Balance</u></b>	\$ 11,762.30
Revenue Summary	\$ 68.12
Expense Summary	(\$ 1,768.34) <sup>1</sup>
<b><u>Ending Balance</u></b>	\$ 10,062.08

<sup>1</sup> Replenish intern-training materials and related expenses.

**2021 EcoFund Grants Reminder**—Kristine Rivers reminded members that the deadline for submission is December 31. Information is available on the website.

**Volunteer Hours and Awards**—John Boettiger, Membership Director, provided the following data through November 30.

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
<b>YTD Totals—November 30</b>	2,418	6,524	8,942
<b>November 30-31</b>	76	97	173

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours
<b>YTD Totals—November 30</b>	10,502	1,916
<b>November 1-30</b>	685	80

2020 Recertification		250 VT Hours Milestone
Jerry Eppner	Sherry Summers	Luanne Salinas
Ed Barrios	Chris Kneupper	Kyle Purvis



**Membership Information and Award Pins—Connie Stolte**, State Representative, provided the following information:

- The TMN state program has created two pins that members can earn this year. The first is the standard recertification pin (for 40 hours volunteer time and 8 hours advanced training); the second is a special **2020 Against All Odds Pin** (for 1 hour of volunteer time and 8 hours advanced training).
- You still have time to earn one or both pins
- Hours must be completed by December 31 and entered no later than 45 days after date of service
- If you do not recertify, you can still be a member (but not a certified member) if you paid dues and entered at least one hour of VT
- The email Connie sent to members has ideas on how to complete your hours.

**Bonus Advanced Training Day—Bob Whitmarsh**, AT Director, said that January 30 has been selected for the 2021 Bonus AT Day. The focus of this free, ~5-hour virtual event is *Flora of the Texas Gulf Coast*.

**Volunteer Service Opportunities—Oron Atkins**, VT Director, noted the following opportunities that are available under the current AgriLIFE guidelines:

- **Nurdle Beach Patrol**—self directed
- **Trash Collection/Analysis Project**—self-directed; contact Jimmy or Luanne Salinas
- **Christmas Bird Counts**—Several local counts between December 14 and January 5.

**2021 New Intern Training Class—Mary Schwartz** indicated that given current State participation guidelines, we will likely not be able to hold a spring training class, as planned.

**President: Bill Ahlstrom** adjourned the General Meeting at 11:12 a.m. Time codes allocated were:

- Presentation Code “AT: I Received Training,” 1.25 hours
- Chapter Business Meetings Code “CB: Chapter Meetings and Admin,” 1 hour.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary, TMN-COT

Cc: Board Members  
Crystal Andablo, AgriLIFE Secretary, [Crystal.Andablo@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Crystal.Andablo@ag.tamu.edu)