



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, July 7, 2021, 9:10 a.m. – 12:00 pm. at
 Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Angleton TX

President: Mickey Dufilho called the meeting to order, presented the agenda and asked for additions or corrections.

Attendance—

Elected Members of Board	Present	Appointed Members of Board/Committees	Present
Mickey Dufilho (President)	✓	Bill Ahlstrom (Immediate Past President)	✓
Kathy Pittman (Vice-President/Programs)	✓	John Boettiger (Membership Dir.)	
Lisa Myers (Secretary)		Mary Schwartz (New Class Dir.)	✓
Don Sabathier (Treasurer)	✓	Larry Peterson (Communications Dir.)	✓
		Ruby Lewis (Outreach Dir.)	✓
		Bob Whitmarsh (Advanced Training Dir.)	✓
Chapter Advisor(s)		Oron Atkins (Volunteer Service Dir.)	✓
John O'Connell (AgriLIFE Extension)	✓	Connie Stolte (State Rep.)	✓
Paul Cason (TPWD: Sea Center Texas)	✓	Rose Wagner (Chapter Host)	✓
Guests/Other			
Kristine Rivers (Speakers Bureau, non-board pos.)	✓		
Neal McLain	✓		
		Quorum	Yes

Approve Previous Board Minutes—The June Board and General Meeting minutes were sent to the Board for review, and the corrections suggested by Board Members were made. The minutes were approved.

Minutes Approval—

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded	Vote
Approve the June Board and General Meeting minutes	Larry Peterson	Don Sabathier	Minutes approved by unanimous voice vote of Board members present

Motions—

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded	Vote
The COT Chapter will sponsor the 2021 State Meeting at the \$300 level	Don Sabathier	Kathy Pittman	Motion passed by unanimous voice vote of Board officers
The COT Chapter will cover the cost of one in-person registration fee (up to \$350) and one virtual registration fee (up to \$100) for the 2021 State Meeting	Don Sabathier	Oron Atkins	Motion passed by unanimous voice vote of Board members present
Publication of the COT newsletter will move to quarterly versus monthly	Kathy Pittman	Don Sabathier	Motion passed by unanimous voice vote of Board members present
Beginning in November 2021, hold daytime Chapter General Meetings in even months and nighttime meetings	Kathy Pittman	Don Sabathier	Motion passed by majority voice vote of Board members present with one member voting against.

(starting at 6:30 p.m. in odd months			
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Action Register Review—Mickey Dufilho led the review. [see COT Board Action Register at end of minutes.]

Completed Action Items	Who	Comments
Discuss the option of when/how to have periodic evening/ weekend General Meetings to accommodate those who work during weekdays	Board	[see Motion, above].

BOARD REPORTS and OTHER TOPICS

President's Report—On behalf of Mickey Dufilho, who could not attend the presidents' meeting, Bill Ahlstrom reported the following:

- **Presidents Meeting**—

- **TMN License Plate:** Now available to order on-line
- **2021 Annual Meeting:** October 21-24; hybrid event with both live and virtual formats; cost not yet set
 - **The board discussed sponsorship of the meeting and scholarships to attend.**
Mickey may not be able to attend; Connie cannot attend. The board will consider using those registration funds for other board or chapter members Don Sabathier proposed, and Kathy Pittman seconded a motion to give State a \$300 for sponsorship of the State Meeting [see Motions]
 - Kristine Rivers asked whether the chapter should submit a project to the **Project Fair**. Mickey will ask State for guidelines and details. Possible projects/activities for consideration:
 - Various boardwalk construction projects
 - Apple snail mitigation
 - Beach cleanup/Clean Sweep
 - Library programs
 - Kid camps
 - **Scholarships** for those who cannot afford to attend: Don Sabathier proposed, and Oron Atkins seconded a motion to cover up to \$350 in registration fees for one member to attend in person and up to \$100 in registration fees for one member to attend virtually [see Motions]; Mickey will announce this at the General Meeting and ask that interested members email her to be included in a drawing
- **Intern Training and Schedules:** The State Office wants schedules from all chapters; emails were sent out, but Mary Schwartz is still not receiving them despite reporting the problem; Mickey will contact the State Office to resolve. Rules concerning certification have been changed; interns now have 12 months from the start of training to submit required hours.

Board member representing 2020 class (to replace Daveyon Edwards)—No one has volunteered.

New VMS Guidelines for Citizen Science Projects—Dave Brandes emailed the new guidelines to members. Oron indicated that we may need to build new VMS codes to cover the categories.

COT Newsletter—Mickey asked whether members are reading the monthly newsletter. It entails much work, and not many are reading it. Paul Cason and John O’Connell noted that other organizations are discussing this issue; some do not publish monthly. Kathy Pittman proposed, and Don Sabathier seconded a motion to change publication of the COT newsletter to quarterly [see *Motion*].

General Meeting Time—Mickey asked whether we want to move some meetings to the evening to accommodate those who work during the day. The Coastal Prairie Chapter holds meetings at night and opens the training portion to the public. A discussion ensued in which various options were considered. Kathy Pittman proposed, and Don Sabathier seconded a motion to hold daytime meetings in even months and nighttime meetings (starting at 6:30 p.m.) in odd months beginning with the November meeting. A committee was formed to work out logistics [see *Action Register*].

Hybrid General Meetings—The Board discussed the logistics of having members attend virtually as well as in person. John O’Connell and Larry Peterson will perform a test with July’s speaker prior to July 14.

Intern Training —Mary Schwartz stated that virtual training classes worked well and will be continued, as will field trips on weekends. She will solicit a co-director at the July General Meeting. Rose Wagner expressed interest and Mary will discuss the position with her. Don Sabathier feels that we do not advertise the chapter and training well enough. Ruby suggested that members carry COT tri-folds in their cars and distribute as they see fit. She has placed the brochure at the refuges and other locations. John O’Connell will print more brochures as needed. It was also suggested to urge members to share Facebook posts from the Chapter and State pages.

General Meeting Programs—Vice President Kathy Pittman provided the following status on upcoming, general-meeting speakers:

- **July—Morgan Ayers**, Natural Resources Specialist, Texas Sea Grant, Corpus Christi, on “Watershed Management and Conservation”; Nature Note TBD
- **August—Bill Rodney**, Coast Ecologist, TPWD, on oyster bed restoration in Galveston Bay; Nature Note TBD
- **September—Deborah January-Bevers**, President of Collaborative Grants, Houston Wilderness, on “Use of Native ‘Super Trees’ to Mitigate Pollution, Noise, and Provide Habitat Around Industrial Sites and Other Areas”; Nature Note, **Dick Schaffhausen**

Kathy added that she has received only a few suggestions for future speakers. The board offered the following:

- Information from the Mosquito District
- Oil Spills (John O’Connell has already provided a contact name)

- Chronic Wasting Disease
- Bacteria Levels in the Gulf/Beachwatch (Bryan Frazier may have a contact)
- Red Tide (John O'Connell has a contact)
- Marine Stranding Network
- Flower Gardens (Kelly Drinnen)

Treasurer's Report—Don Sabathier presented the June 2021 financial information, below. He indicated that he will update the 2021 budget to reflect an increase from \$2k to \$2.5k for the COT 20th Anniversary Event and scholarships to be offered for the State Meeting.

1-30 June 2021, COT Treasurer Report

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	\$ 12,169.00
Revenue Summary	\$ 274.12
Expense Summary	\$ 0.00
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 12,443.12

Membership—Mickey Dufilho presented Data Manager Dave Brandes' June impact and recertification data for inclusion in the minutes.

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
YTD Totals—June 30	2651	4978	7629

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours
YTD Totals—June 30	6101	1231

* June only: 595 VT and 103 AT Hours

2021 Recertifications
Bill Ahlstrom Sheree Muzny Kristine Rivers

Training Director—Mary Schwartz again mentioned that she had not yet secured a co-director. She added that she had still not received name badges for the last intern class from the supplier and will seek a new supplier.

Volunteer Service Director—Oron Atkins reported on and/or updated the following opportunities:

- **TCWP at GCBO Workday**—July 15, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper
- **GCBO Nursery Garden Workday**—Every Thursday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper
- **Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project**—self-directed and as scheduled by Jimmy and Luanne Salinas

- **Beach Sweep Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project**—July 15, 8 a.m. at Quintana Fishing Pier; contact Jimmy and Luanne Salinas; fewer participants lately, possibly due to vacations and heat
- **Nurdle Beach Patrol**—self-directed; contact Jace Turnell
- **Brazoria County Comprehensive Spider Survey**—self-directed; contact Melanie Hollenshead
- **Adopt-a-Loop for TMN**—self-directed; contact Deb Nance
- **Apple Snail Removal at Hudson Woods**—Contact is David Heinicke, but contact Oron first if interested; CANCELLED for July due to David’s vacation
- **Sea Turtle Patrol**—(training required and has occurred) contact Roland Davis; slow year but Oron has not checked Padre or Mexico reports
- **Pollinator Citizen Science Project 2021**—(training/testing required); self-directed; <https://txmg.org/bluebonnet/pollinator-citizen-science-project-opens-again-march-22-2021/#:~:text=The%20purpose%20of%20the%20project,USA%2C%20namely%20Texas%20and%20Oklahoma>
- **Exploration Green Nursery, Volunteer Workdays**—July 17, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (must RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/exploration-green-phase-2-planting-event-tickets-156553115583>; screening form and face mask required); contact Christie Taylor.

Advanced Training Director—Bob Whitmarsh will contact Melanie Hollenshead regarding progress on the spider survey project. For the October field day, we will need to consider shade and seating options at Cannan Bend Recreation Area; Quintana Beach County Park has an airconditioned meeting room with tables/chairs/restrooms.

Outreach Director—Ruby Lewis reported the following open houses at area refuges:

- Hudson Woods, September 11
- Cannan Bend, October 9 (grand opening of this unit)
- Bobcat Woods, November 13
- Brazoria NWR, December 26 to January 1
- Dow Woods (tentative), January.

Other Events:

- **Kids’ Kollege @ Brazosport College**—July 12-16, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., 6-8-year-olds; July 19-23, 9-12-year-olds, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- **Pomona Learn to Fish**—July 31, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; contact Mike Mullenweg
- **Brazos Mall** event—August (date TBD)
- **GCBO Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza**—September 18 and 25 (we will have two booths; need volunteers)
- **Brazoria County Bird Bash** (Northside Elementary School, Angleton)—October 9.

Chapter Host—Rose Wagner indicated that there will be no snacks at the July General Meeting. She reported that plans for the COT 20th Anniversary Event are proceeding; it will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Angleton; there will be no alcohol; there will be an “adopt-a-table” decorating contest; commemorative t-shirts will be available for pre-order.

Communications Director—Larry Peterson said that he can obtain only general analytical data on usage of the new website. He is working with the State Office to get better access and data. He can see that we get hits on the home page, calendar, newsletter, presentations and the AT page, but no



details. Facebook continues to see good growth (200%); 443 “likes” on last month’s posts. We will keep the old domain as an archive site. We need to update the website address as listed on Board Meeting and General Meeting Minutes [note from Secretary: Headers were updated months ago..].

Chapter Advisor—Paul Cason reported the following regarding Sea Center Texas

- The volunteer coordinator has resigned, and they are seeking a replacement
- Regarding VMS codes for “Docent” versus “Greeter,” volunteers should enter “Docent” if talking about mission, conservation, etc.
- Public fishing events will resume on September 4
- Spooktacular will be October 24.

Chapter Advisor—John O’Connell reported the following regarding AgriLIFE:

- Texas Sea Grant will celebrate its 50th anniversary. *Texas Shores Magazine* copies are available and highlight staff and activities
- John is currently interviewing for a new Family Community Health agent.

For the July General Meeting—

- Deb Nance will talk about Adopt-a-Loop
- Mary will solicit a training co-director
- Provide COT brochures for members to distribute
- Present scholarship opportunities for the 2021 State Meeting
- Mention the possibility of alternate-month, evening General Meetings
- Have volunteer sign-up sheets available (Ruby will not be at the meeting)
- Solicit members for the diversity/equality/inclusion committee.

Cradle of Texas Board Action Register				
Open Action Item	Who?	Due Date?	Complete/Ongoing	Comments
Ask local libraries if they are interested in showing the displays prepared for the Bonus AT Day (Feb 2019)	Ruby Lewis	October	Tabled	To share information with the public and for COT PR purposes March 2019: No update (Ruby absent) April: Ruby says BCLS would like to display them at libraries that have space. Ruby will coordinate a schedule and transport by a TMN member June: Ruby will work out details in September Sept/Oct/Nov: no update Feb 2020: No action; Ruby will follow up Apr: Not discussed; libraries are closed May: Libraries still closed Jun/Jul/Aug: Libraries opened for limited hours/access; too soon for the displays Jul 2021: Libraries are fully open but no in-person activities yet
Review and update partners webpage (Aug 2019) (see below also)	Oron Atkins	ASAP	Ongoing	Sept: Oron has updated and will provide Neal with information to post on website Oct: Oron working to finalize changes Nov: Oron said that there will likely be 6 partners: USFWS Texas Mid-



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				Coast Refuge Complex; GCBO; arts center complex at Brazosport College; Brazoria County Library System; Brazos Bend State Park; Brazoria County Parks Department Dave expressed concern that these relationships should be reciprocal Dec: Agreements being worked on Feb2020: Agreements being worked on Apr: Agreements being worked on May: No update; Bill said Angleton Parks & Recreation Department wants to be a VPAR Apr/May/June/Jul 2021: No update
Update VPAR agreements (Aug 2019)	Oron Aktins	ASAP	Ongoing	Sept: We have 16 partners; some paperwork is missing; Peggy Romfh checking to see if there is VT logged or not; the board agreed that agreements will be auto-renew with a 30-day cancellation clause and agreement contact information will be updated every two years Oct: Oron working with Pete and Peggy; there was some discussion about putting the planetarium and museum under one VPAR Feb 2020: Oron spoke with the Center for Arts and Sciences, which is in the process of consolidating all its entities; Oron will coordinate a meeting with them to discuss our relationship May: Bill said Angleton Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) is applying to be a new partner Jun: Bill said that APRD is requesting changes to its VPAR that Bill will send to the board; Oron will follow up Jul: Bill said APRD will respond on/about August 1 Aug: No update; Larry asked whether we should pursue a partnership agreement with Flo Hannah Prairie, but this is covered as it will be managed by our VPAR with TPWD NWRs Sep: Bill has been contacted by City of Angleton attorney; he is to meet with him about Angleton Parks and Recreation Dept Apr/May/June/Jul 2021: No update
Committee to draft wording for harassment and accommodations for disability policies (May 2020) and... Committee to form action plan on diversity/equality/inclusion per State (May 2021)	Kristine Rivers		Ongoing	Jul: Kristine will recruit committee members; Mickey will help with recruitment
Hold a brief training session on entering hours in VMS via Smart Phone (Mch 2020)	?	TBD	Tabled	To facilitate the capture of more volunteer hours Apr2020: Not discussed May: No update Jun: Tabled pending in-person general meetings Aug: Bill says there are two sessions on this at State Annual Meeting
COT 20 th Anniversary Celebration Committee (Jan 2021)	Rose Wagner, Mickey Dufilho, Lisa Myers, Connie Stolte, John Boettiger	TBD	On-going	Rose will also ask members of the host committee if they also wish to participate Feb: Committee met 2/1; the committee suggested that the anniversary celebration and Hog Wild be combined on Dec.8, and Ed Barrios agreed to offer his house as the venue; however, no alcohol allowed if this is an official TMN event; caterer for appetizers TBD Mch: Meeting today



				<p>Apr/May/June: Ongoing; Rose will report at the June General Meeting</p> <p>Jul: The budget was raised from \$2k to \$2.5K to cover food costs (but not alcohol)</p>
Recruit a co-director of training, determine if it should be a board position and if there is any constraint in the Operating Handbook (Apr 2021)	Board, Connie Stolte, Mary Schwartz	ASAP	Ongoing	<p>Mary is also considering moving the training day from Wednesday, and possibly at night, and field trips on Saturday. Mary has a couple of candidates in mind for the Co-Director</p> <p>May: Connie says handbook says there is one chair and committee members; we can amend by vote of membership; we can also have a non-voting vice-chair. Tabled until June meeting</p> <p>Jun: Connie suggests having a vice-chair who is welcome to attend board meetings as adding board members requires amending the Operating Handbook. Lisa added that less than two years ago, we trimmed the size of the board</p> <p>Jul: No one has agreed to be co-director; Mary plans to continue virtual classes in the evenings and weekend field trips</p>
Set up on-line registration for those wishing to register for one of the in-person slots for the July General Meeting	John O'Connell	ASAP		<p>John will determine the number of people who can attend in person with reasonable social distancing</p> <p>We will keep the current agenda of having Nature Notes and guest speakers at the beginning of meetings</p> <p>Jul: Email with registration link sent last week; Kristine said the process was cumbersome; Mickey will send a reminder email; members who attend virtually do not have to (and should not) register via Eventbrite</p>
NEW Action Item(s) Added at July Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Comments	
Coordinate logistics of changing meeting time of odd-numbered General Meeting months to 6:30 p.m. beginning with the November 2021 meeting	Rise Wagner, Kathy Pittman, Mickey Dufilho, Bob Whitmarsh, Ruby Lewis, Kristine Rivers	Before Nov. 2021	Need to discuss refreshments, time, day, conflicts with other meetings, etc.	

President: Mickey Dufilho adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary
 As prepared from notes provided by Kathy Pittman

cc: Board Members
 Crystal Andablo, AgriLIFE Secretary Crystal.Andablo@aq.tamu.edu



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Attendance 2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Mickey Dufilho	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Kathy Pittman	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Sabathier, Don	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Myers, Lisa	X		X	X	X	X							
Advisors													
O'Connell, John	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Cason, Paul		X		X			X						
Immediate Past President													
Bill Ahlstrom	X		X	X	X	X	X						
Appointed Board Members													
Atkins, Oron	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Boettiger, John	X	X	X										
Edwards, Daveyon	X	X	X										
Lewis, Ruby	X	X	X		X	X	X						
Peterson, Larry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Schwartz, Mary	X	X	X	X		X	X						
Stolte, Connie	X		X	X	X	X	X						
Wagner, Rose	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Whitmarsh, Bob			X	X		X	X						
Rivers, Kristine (non-voting)	X		X				X						
Guests													
Crystal Andalbo				X									
Neal McLain				X			X						