

TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 6, 2025, 9:05 AM – 11:15 AM (HYBRID)
at Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Angleton TX

9:05 AM Call to Order

Kathy Pittman

Kathy Pittman welcomed Amanda Smith and those in attendance and participating online. Amanda is talking with Don to learn more about the treasurer position.

Elected Members of Board	Present	Appointed Members of Board/Committees	Present
Kathy Pittman (President)	X	Mickey Dufilho (Immediate Past President)	X
Jimmy Salinas (Vice-President/Programs)	X	Oron Atkins (Volunteer Service Dir.)	X
Kathy Purvis (Secretary)	X	John Boettiger (Membership Dir.)	X
Don Sabathier (Treasurer)	X	Donna Rich (2024 Class Rep.)	X
		Betty Skweres (2025 Class Rep.)	X
Chapter Advisor(s)		Barbara Whaley (New Class Dir.)	X
John O'Connell (AgriLIFE Extension)	X	Ruby Lewis (Outreach Dir.)	X
Jordan Kieffer (TPWD: Sea Center Texas)	X	Larry Peterson (Communications Dir.)	V
Guests/Other		Kristine Rivers (Advanced Training Dir.)	V
Luanne Salinas	X	David Skweres (State Rep.)	X
Amanda Smith	X	Rose Wagner (Chapter Host)	X
		Patty Brinkmeyer (Newsletter)	X
X - present, V - virtual & A - absent		Quorum	Yes

(see Attendance Record attached as Item 1)

- Agenda Additions/Corrections - None presented.
- Approve Previous Board Minutes - The draft copy of the minutes of the June 4, 2025, Board meeting was sent via e-mail to Board members for advance review.
- **Minutes Approval – No corrections.**

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded	Vote
Approve the May Board minutes	B. Skweres	R. Wagner	Minutes approved as presented.

Fall Field Day Update

Kristine Rivers

K. Rivers reported the day will begin at 8:00 am and include five (5) stations, as well as optional enrichment activities (a critter hunt and bird banding).

Bat Project Update

Mickey Dufilho

M. Dufilho has finished the landowner reports after working 70 hours in three (3) weeks. She saluted Larry Peterson on his hard work with the preliminary data for the reports. They are following TPWD protocol for bat identification. Mickey proposed that the bat team members be recognized at the September general meeting.



Nomination Committee

Kathy Pittman

The committee will meet after the Board meeting today. K. Pittman stated Donna Rich has agreed to serve as Board Secretary for 2026.

Communications Director Position

All

Larry Peterson would like to step down as Director and continue to serve as the Webmaster for the Chapter. Kathy proposed that Patty Brinkmeyer be appointed as the new director, to be effective immediately. M. Dufilho made a motion that P. Brinkmeyer be appointed as Communications Director, which was seconded by K. Purvis and affirmed by unanimous Board vote. Patty will continue to serve as Newsletter Editor and will coordinate with Larry to take on the tasks of Communications Director. Thank you to Larry for a job well done! we appreciate you!

Action Register Review/Updates

Kathy Pittman

- Plaques – The files were sent to Larry to be posted on the website. We are waiting on the designer and printing. There will be some expense for frames and printing.
- 25th Anniversary Celebration - K. Pittman proposed we do different things to recognize our Chapter anniversary throughout the year. Some of the ideas discussed included planting a tree, highlighting the original class, check into getting a proclamation and consider honorary memberships for commissioners. John O'Connell volunteered to pursue the proclamation. A planning committee would be helpful.
- Review/update of the partners webpage has been completed.
- VPAR (Volunteer Agreement Request) partnership agreements are all current for active partners. O. Atkins will scan the VPARs and send them to L. Peterson for posting on the website.
- VPAL (Volunteer Partnership Agreement Listing) reviews/updates need to be finished. O. Atkins noted there is still some work to be done in this area. We need to create VPALs as they are needed and send to Larry for posting on the website.

Board Reports

President's Report

Kathy Pittman

- Workdays at DFNC - The 3rd Saturday and preceding Thursdays thru October are being considered. O. Atkins suggested the DFNC would be a great location for our Fall Field Day. K. Rivers will add that to her list.
- VMS system updates - The system will be tested this summer and there may be some downtime in September. It would be wise to enter all volunteer time as soon as possible. Records of those members who have been inactive 10 or more years will be archived.
- Annual meeting - The annual meeting will be held October 16 - 19 in College Station. P. Brinkmeyer submitted the July newsletter into the media contest. The deadline for photo and other contests was moved to September 1.
 - No one has requested the annual meeting scholarship as of this date. K. Pittman will send another e-mail and will let Melanie know.
 - We have been asked to donate items for the silent auction at the annual meeting, i.e., items that represent our regions such as handcrafted items, themed baskets, etc. Funds from the silent auction will be applied to expenses.



- Judges are needed for the Project Fair Contest. Anyone interested should contact Michelle Haggerty.

Other Items

- K. Pittman asked for discussion as to whether we should move to Zoom as our meeting platform for the Chapter and intern meeting. We would need someone who could edit the recording. The "Pro" version would be less than \$200/year at the non-profit rate. Discussion indicated Melanie would not need to buy a subscription.

M. Dufilho made the motion that the Chapter purchase Zoom "Pro", which was seconded by R. Wagner. The Board vote was unanimous that we move forward and begin this in September.

- K. Pittman raised discussion about rotating Chapter sponsorship of Board members for the State meeting - President, State Representative, Vice President and AT Director. She suggested the AT Director attend the Annual meeting this year in lieu of herself, along with the State Representative, both with expenses covered by the Chapter.

COH Guidelines

1.3.8 Reimbursement for State Meeting Expenses - Some or all of the costs to attend the state meeting are approved under the following guidelines:

- The Chapter will sponsor two Board members (Present and State Representative or designated alternates) to attend the State TMN meeting
- The Board members will be reimbursed for registration, lodging at the event venue(s), and mileage
- Mileage is reimbursed at the current IRS business rate
- Pre-approval of mileage reimbursement is recommended

3.32 Chapter state representative

- Attend the TMN annual meeting or delegate an alternate

Board members embraced the idea and noted the new practice falls within COH Guidelines.

Vice President /Programs

Jimmy Salinas

- August- Arlon Motsch, Macrophotography (wildlife, primarily insects)
- September - Karen Saucedo, Project Coyote
- October - Fall Field Day
- November - Open
- December - Mary Schwartz, Vultures

Secretary

Kathy Purvis

No report

Treasurer

Don Sabathier

D. Sabathier reported a \$9.50 Amazon debit to the new card on July 12, which is he is working on. The



card has been cancelled. He gave a summary report for June and July as follows (refer to attached Item 2 for the Full Income Statement):

COT TREASURER REPORT

June 2025

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$ 15,237.08
Revenue Summary	0.25
Expense Summary	<u>300.00</u>
ENDING BALANCE	\$14,937.33

COT TREASURER REPORT

July 2025

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$14937.33
Revenue Summary	476.11
Expense Summary	<u>1,649.29</u>
ENDING BALANCE	\$13,783.95

The Board discussed use of the extra funds available (\$3,000.00):

- Purchase new presentation backdrops
- Purchase a table for pond life exhibiting (we approved this in either 2023 or 2024)
- Offer some amount to pay for food and upkeep of the reptiles
- A *one-time increase* to next year's ECO fund project
- Re-do the trail signage at Camp Mohawk
- More permanent plant markers for pollinator gardens at Mohawk, Resoft and wildscape at Delores Fenwick
- Jay at Camp Mohawk wants to start a "rewilding" project this winter at Camp Mohawk. We could help with seed purchases for the wildflower meadow he envisions.
- Bat monitoring needs - purchase the software that we need?
- Anything at GCBO or Quintana sanctuary that we can help with?
- If the project continues, provide more plants for the San Luis dune planting

Section 7 (Chapter Donations) of the CMOP (Chapter Management and Operations Protocols)

7. Chapter Donations

- 7.1 TMN Program Recommendation - The state's recommendation is that chapters donate members' time and expertise to natural resource conservation, education, and management efforts versus donating money to outside organizations. The TMN Program and chapters are to be natural resource service organizations first and foremost versus donors of monetary funds to or for other organizations. For donations to a chapter, see Chapter Bylaws, Article IX, D.
- 7.2 Donation Guidelines - If a chapter insists on donations to other organizations, then it is critical that this be on a very limited basis and that the chapter's focus of donations must be aligned with the TMN Program mission. Chapters wishing to donate to an outside organization need to consider the guidelines that follow, to ensure the organization is in keeping with the TMN mission, goals, and principles. Exceptions would be donations to the state TMN Program or program sponsoring agencies TPWD and AgriLife Extension. All other organizations



(including chapter partners) should be vetted with these points in mind:

- It should be a non-profit organization.
- The organization has identified a need that aligns with the TMN mission and has stated clearly what the monies would be used for.
- The organization can ensure that none of its funds are used in any way for lobbying, political interests, or campaigning.
- The organization can describe how the chapter's Master Naturalist organizational name (and logo) will be advertised as a result of the donation. [Reference TMN Brand Guide at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/chapter-documents/>]
- Donations not directly meeting the TMN mission goals must be denied.

The Board agreed funds will be used to purchase a table for pond life exhibits and for the Chapter's 25th anniversary project. We will also undertake a "clean-out" and reorganization of our storage area. The pond life table purchase will be added to the Action Register.

Membership - June and July

John Boettiger

J. Boettiger mentioned there have been some challenges with codes.

Initial Certification:	Betty Skweres	David Skweres		
Recertifications:	Marty Cornell	Cynthia Grandjean	Melanie Hollenshead	Tom Morris
	Kathleen Purvis	Jerry Eppner	Kate Harris	Chris Kneupper
	Pam Peltier	Kyle Purvis	George Valadez	
Milestones	Barbara Whaley (1000)			

Congratulations to Barbara on achieving the 1,000 Hours Milestone!

VMS Data

		June	July	Year to Date
Hours*	VT	1,329	694	8,629
	AT	<u>109</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>1,401</u>
	Total	1,438	757	10,030
Impact data*	Adults	340	2	2,846
	Youth	<u>113</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8,044</u>
	Total	287	2	10,890

**Will not be considered final until mid-September 2025*

Training Update

Barbara Whaley

B. Whaley gave an update on the training class beginning September 6, which has six (6) individuals signed up, with two (2) more expected to sign up. Discussion also noted the Board's action on Barbara's July 14 e-mail request to allow Susan Barnes, a Summer, 2024 intern to resume training. Barbara cited Section 11 of the Chapter Operating Handbook and Section 4 of the Chapter Management and Operations Protocols (CMOP) with her request. The Board voted its agreement without opposition by e-mail upon the motion made by J. Salinas, seconded by both B. Skweres and D. Rich.



In continuing discussion, Barbara noted the last day of training will be November 22. The dates are posted on the State website. Barbara will place articles in the Alvin and Lake Jackson newspapers and will send out the training calendar. She needs a date for the class graduation and would like to hold the ceremony during the December general meeting. She also announced that M. Hollenshead will be coming back and has offered to lead the Spring 2026 class training.

Volunteer Service

Oron Atkins

O. Atkins opened by recognizing those who built the deck to the mobile home: Robin Townsend, George Valadez and himself. They will essentially be converting the trailer for living quarters.

Upcoming VT Opportunities – August/September 2025

- **Exploration Green Workday** – every Wed., 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM – contact Christie Taylor, <https://www.explorationgreen.org/>
- **Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project** – self directed
- **Beach Sweep** – 9/02, 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Quintana Beach, 16th Street entrance – contacts Jimmy/Luanne Salinas
- **Nurdle Beach Patrol** – Jace Turnell – self-directed (<https://www.nurdlepatrol.org/app/>)
- **Brazoria County Comprehensive Spider Survey** – Melanie Hollenshead - self directed
- **Adopt a Loop for TMN** – contact Cris Tobola - self directed
- **DFNC Educational Pond and Native Garden Habitat Workdays** – 8/14 and 16, 9/18 and 20 (3rd Saturdays and preceding Thursdays), 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM – contact Kathy Pittman
- **Time to Restore Project** – self-directed, contact Kathy Pittman <https://www.usanpn.org/community/TimeToRestore>
- **Freeport Bryan Beach Cleanup (online registration)** - August 23, 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon - contact Celeste Silling
- Upcoming Construction Projects (TBA) - contact Oron Atkins.

O. Atkins stated they need to finish Harvest for the Hungry, and they have two (2) projects - boardwalk replacements at GCBO and over the slough at the Discovery Center.

Outreach

Ruby Lewis

- **GCBO Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza (XHX)** - 9/13 and 9/20, 8:00 AM - 12:00 Noon, contact Ruby Lewis or Celeste Silling
- **SCT Youth Fishing Day** - 9/13, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM, contact Jordan Kieffer

R. Lewis reported 30 events were held as part of the BCLS Summer Reading Club with 2,394 participants. The new sensory program enjoyed some success in its first summer. , O. Atkins raised discussion about the recent Kemps Ridley turtle eggs found and the extraordinary lengths it took to locate the nest. L. Peterson participated in the search and recounted the events leading to the removal of 116 Kemps Ridley eggs.

State Representative

David Skweres

K. Pittman thanked David for the information he provided for our use.

**AT Director****Kristine Rivers**

K. Rivers gave an overview of Fall Field Day and noted she will review the criteria for projects.

Chapter Host**Rose Wagner**

R. Wagner will send out requests for refreshments for the August general meeting, as well as Fall Field Day.

Class Rep. 2024
Class Rep. Spring 2025
Donna Rich
Betty Skweres

No reports.

Communications**Larry Peterson**

Our website analytic data is still not available, as previously reported. There are software issues. L. Peterson advised he did not pull the Facebook data.

Chapter Advisors
John O'Connell
Jordan Kieffer

J. Kieffer expressed gratitude to all who helped with the shark celebration, which was attended by 1,332 individuals. She reported operations for red drum and sea trout will be shut down for approximately a year as the ponds are re-done. The Special Olympics program is scheduled for Sept. 27.

New Business**All**

K. Purvis reported the Board acted without opposition by e-mail vote for the Nominating Committee as referenced in our June Board meeting. O. Atkins made a motion to approve the following members for the committee, seconded by B. Skweres and R. Wagner:

- Chairperson - Mickey Dufilho, Past President
- Member - Melanie Hollenshead
- Member - Jordan Kieffer, Advisor, TPWD
- Member - John O'Connell, Advisor, AgriLife

An introductory kayaking course is scheduled for August 21 - 22. The course will include rescue of others, as well as self, and paddling safety.

General Meeting Agenda – The next General Meeting will be at 6:00 PM on August 13. Please send any meeting agenda items to Kathy Pittman no later than SUNDAY evening prior.

The next Board meeting will be September 3 at 9:00 AM. Please send any agenda items to Kathy Pittman by Sunday evening prior.

President Kathy Pittman adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:15 AM on the motion of K. Purvis, seconded by L. Peterson.



Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Purvis

Kathy Purvis, Secretary

cc: Board Members
 Piper Sparkman, AgriLIFE Secretary (piper.sparkman@ag.tamu.edu)

Item 1. Attendance Record 2025

Attendance 2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Kathy Pittman - President	X	X	X	X	X	X		X					
Jimmy Salinas -VP	X	X	X	X	X	A		X					
Kathy Purvis - Secretary	X	X	A	X	X	X		X					
Don Sabathier - Treasurer	V	V	X	V	V	V		X					
Advisors													
John O'Connell - AgrLife	X	X	X	X	A	X		X					
Jordan Kieffer - TPWD	V	X	A	V	V	V		X					
Immediate Past President													
Mickey Dufilho	A	A	X	A	X	X		X					
Appointed Board/Committee Members													
Oron Atkins - Volunteer Ops	X	X	X	A	X	X		X					
John Boettiger- Membership	X	X	X	X	X	X		X					
Donna Rich - 2024 Intern Rep	X	X	A	A	X	X		X					
Betty Skweres - 2025 Class Rep					A	X		X					
Melanie Hollenshead - Training	A	A	A										
Barbara Whaley - Training			X	X	X	X		X					
Ruby Lewis - Outreach	A	A	A	A	X	V		X					
Larry Peterson - Communications	V	V	X	X	X	X		V					
David Skweres - State Rep					V	X		X					
Kristine Rivers – AT	X	X	X	X	V	V		V					
Rose Wagner, Chapter Host	A	A	X	X	V	A		X					
Patty Brinkmeyer	V	V	X	A	A	V		X					
Guests													
Luanne Salinas	X	X	X	X	X	A		X					
Amanda Smith								X					



Item 2. Full Income Statement

COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025										
2025										
Budget	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	Totals	Budget	Delta
Opening Balance	\$10,235.82	\$ 12,610.89	\$12,315.57	\$12,951.55	\$14,060.88	15,237.08	14,937.33			
INCOME ITEMS										
Membership Dues	3,250	1,158.90	673.55	699.64	174.85		24.95	2,731.89	518.11	
Interest Income	10.00	0.20	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.24	0.25	1.57	8.49	
Member Donations	300	23.79	23.79	23.79	1,047.76	1,000.00		2,119.13	-1,819.13	
Sponsor/Non-member Donations		10.00		1,000.00		1,000.00		2,010.00	-2,010.00	
Member Payments for New Shirts	40							0.00	0.00	
Special AT-Remote/Non Member fees	100	238.67	101.49					101.49	-1.49	
Amazon Debit Reimbursement		114.39						114.39	-114.39	
Sub Total	3,700	1,545.95	799.02	1,723.65	1,222.83	2,000.24	0.25	7,317.14	-3,617.14	
New Intern Class Receipts	5,250	\$1,051.40		150.00			450.91	1,652.31	3,597.69	
INCOME TOTALS	8,950	\$2,597.35	799.02	1,873.65	1,222.83	2,000.24	0.25	8,969.45	-19.45	
EXPENSE ITEMS										
Approved Donations	300		150.00					150.00	150.00	
Speakers Bureau								0.00	0.00	
Speaker Travel Mileage/Motel/Tolls	200							0.00	200.00	
Membership Director Expenses	50							0.00	50.00	
Office Supplies, Postage Etc.	30	7.52			5.41			12.93	17.07	
Special Annual AT Event/Fall Field Day	1,750		869.34	59.60				928.94	821.06	
Member Shirt Purchases (if any)	40							0.00	40.00	
Special Recognition	200							0.00	200.00	
Travelers D&O Ins. Premium (3 years)	1,600						1,573.00	1,573.00	27.00	
Godaddy Website maintenance	200	214.76						214.76	-14.76	
New Officer/Member Name Tags	40					19.00		19.00	21.00	
State Annual Conference Registration & Expenses	1,500							0.00	1,500.00	
State Meeting Sponsorship & Scholarships	750						300.00	300.00	450.00	
Education Outreach Support Materials	500							0.00	500.00	
EcoFund Projects	500							0.00	500.00	
Field Research Bat Project	1,000			146.07		759.05		905.12	94.88	
Chapter Host-Meeting/Party Supplies	400							0.00	400.00	
Chapter Host- Recognition Party/Cakes	175				46.99		46.99	93.98	81.02	
TDECU Returned Check for ISF				1,000.00						
TDECU Check/Amazon Debit				32.00				9.50		
Sub Total	9235	222.28	1,019.34	1,237.67	52.40	778.05	300.00	5,239.23	3,995.77	
TMN Text Book Order	1500							0.00	1,500.00	
Zeiglers-Intern T-Shirts	1200							0.00	1,200.00	
Intern Name Tags	150				33.25			33.25	116.75	
Intern Class Marketing	100					45.99		45.99	54.01	
Intern Class -Zoom Annual fees	250							0.00	250.00	
Intern Class Supplies	200				27.85			27.85	172.15	
Intern Class Scholarships	150							0.00	150.00	
Intern Registration Reimbursement			75.00					75.00	-75.00	
Sub Total	3550	0.00	75.00	0.00	61.1	45.99	0	182.09	3,367.91	
EXPENSE TOTALS	12,785.00	222.28	1,094.34	1,237.67	113.50	824.04	300	5,421.32	7,363.68	
	(3,835)									
Ending Balance		12,610.89	12,315.57	12,951.55	14,060.88	15,237.08	14,937.33	13,783.95		

COT Chapter Lifetime membership Dues \$400.00
 COT 2025 Annual Dues \$25.00
 2025 Intern Class fee: \$150.00
 Members attaining 4,000, 5,000 or 10,000 VT hours are exempt from dues the next calendar year
 2025 Travel reimbursement: c67/mile

Cradle of Texas Action Item Register - working copy (UPDATED 08/06/25)

Action Item	Assigned to	Due Date	Status	Comments
VPALS need to be updated for website	Oron and Larry	1st Q 2023	Ongoing	Oron will finish reviewing, create VPALS as needed and send to Larry to post on the website. June 2025 - reviews/updates need to be finished, then created as needed.
Develop Virtual Option - Milestone Plaques	Kathy Pittman		in progress	Apr 24 - Kathy Pittman - discussed options with Brigid Norris (contact from Mickey). Once we get plaques back, we will send pictures and names to Bridgitt - she is willing to create file and update for us as needed. Chapter will print/publish as needed May 2024 - KP - I have the plaques back from the engravers and will send pictures to Bridgitt this month. June 2024 - K. Pittman sent a photo to B. Norris to assist her with designing a printable paper plaque suitable for posting online. The President's Call to Service Award (PCTSA) will continue to recognize service hours. We will continue to showcase those recipients on the website. Nov 24 - no response from B. Norris. Will reach out to next graphic arts contact Dec 2024 - B Norris continues to update. We are waiting for Chapter logo from State in SVG format Mar 2025 - Logos received in Jan and forwarded to Bridgitt. Contacted her and she will work on it. April 2025 - prelim layout completed and Larry set up test version to view online. May 2025 - layout completed and names sent to Bridgitt for final versions. She will June 2025 - names are to be updated and templates will be ready to post to the website or printed. There will be expenses for frames and printing.
Plan redo of TMN-COT brochure	Patty Brinkmeyer	June review	in progress	Dec. 2024 - no progress Mar 2025 - Kathy Purvis volunteered to review wording and suggest updates. June 2025 - Patty Brinkmeyer will do the updates.
25th Anniversary Celebration	Kathy Pittman	Jan. 2026	in progress	June 2025 - K. Pittman proposed we do different things to recognize our Chapter anniversary throughout the year. Discussion included ideas such as planting a tree, highlighting the original class, get a proclamation and consider honorary memberships for commissioners. A planning committee might be helpful.
Use of Extra Funds	Kathy Pittman	Jan. 2026	in progress	August 2025 - The Board discussed use of extra funds available and agreed to purchase a table for pond life exhibits and for the Chapter's 25th anniversary project.