

RGV Chapter Texas Master Naturalist  
2024 February Board Meeting  
Feb 6, 2024

2024 Board Meetings will be the first Tuesday of the Month – 5:30 to 7:00 pm – CC Annex  
Mar 5, April 2, May 7, Jun 4, July 2, Aug 6, Sept 3, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 2. In person and Webex.

**AGENDA:**

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Dan Martin

Attendance:

**Officers**

Dan Martin

Evelyn Alpert

**Directors**

Joni Gillis Membership

Barbara Peet New Training

Robert Gaitan Past President

Teresa Du Bois Advanced Training Director

Mara Lee Moats Communication Director

Diane Hall, Chachalaca Editor

Eryn Wingert, Website Editor

Marilyn Lorenz, Outreach Coordinator

David Batot – Volunteer Service

**At large**

Pam Bradley, Coastal Region

Thomas Butcher Brownsville and Brownsville Region

Rebecca Guera Willacy/Hidalgo Co.

**Others**

Robert Cepeda, New Class representative

Volker Imschweiler – Member

1. Call to order – Dan Martin acting on behalf of the President Robin Gelston called the meeting to order at 5:36pm
2. Approval of Prior Board Meetings Minutes – the Jan 2, 2024 meeting minutes were distributed but not approved as no quorum was present at the time.
3. Reports

**Treasurer** – Betsy was not at the meeting, however on Monday Feb 5 she emailed the Financial statements for Jan 2024. Her recap was as follows:

“Here are the January Financial statements. Our accounts look good, and while revenue is lower than what the budget shows, that is due to not having collected all dues as of yet. We normally get all dues paid by March/April and that will allow our revenue to look better.

Our checking account balance as of Jan 31 is: \$11,630.97 which does not reflect \$1,418.70 of payments that have not cleared. (you can review that on the Checking Bank Reconciliation.)”

**Membership** – Joni Gillis noted that we are losing 4 members who are moving away from the area. We now have 196 total members, 30 from the new class. 58 members have paid their dues. She also noted that 20 people are pending pins.

**Communication/Outreach** –

Eryn/Mara

Website update is proceeding; they had a lot of responses to the communication inquiry with most responding that they use the site for logging hours and reading articles.

**New Class Director** – Barbara Peet

Barbara reported that there are 30 2024 new class trainees and that the classes are going really well. The last class had over ½ in person at STEC. There was also 7 ½ hours of field trips on the Saturday past, to Sabal Palms, La Posada, and to NOAA. On the 17<sup>th</sup> there will be trips to Hugh Ramsey and Resaca de la Palma.

**Advance Training**

The iNaturalist train the trainer series was recommended.

**Volunteer Service Director** – David was not present but several projects were mentioned, including the HEB Trees for Texans and the Acoustic monitoring for Bats (more about which will be presented at the Feb chapter meeting.) David also continues to work on getting the project information updated for the website.

**March Volunteer Fair** – It was reported that we have 5 confirmations from presenters, and more are expected. Follow up will be done before next month's meeting.

**Chapter Field Trip**

Tony was not present at the time we reached this discussion, but it was noted that he is working on one for us.

**Old/Pending Business**

None

**New Business**

A question was posed as to whether enthusiasm for the acoustic bat project had picked up, and it was agreed we would find out at the February chapter meeting. We are looking for a project lead for this project.

A request was made for additional volunteers for the weekend's WOWE festival to man the table; it was noted that volunteers might have to pay the entrance fee, as only 2 wristbands per table were allowed.

Robert Gaitan noted that Harlingen is bidding for a grant for reforesting school grounds, and that they need letters of support. He will draft such a letter and bring it to next month's meeting. It was noted that school based projects have difficulty being sustained in summer or when school is out.

The issue of some residents of Harlingen receiving threatening letters regarding doing natural gardening was raised. It was decided that more information was needed, but if it turns out that these are HOA based, the new law that prevents HOAs from taking punitive measures against such gardening could be invoked. Dan Martin suggested that once we have information, if we need to take action, contacting City Commissioners would be the way to go.

**Announcements** – none

**Comments/Presentations** none

**Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM.