

**RGV Chapter Texas Master Naturalist
2024 January Board Meeting
Jan 2, 2024**

Attendance:

Officers

Robin Gelston President
Betsy Hosick Treasurer
Emma Gonzalez – 1 VP

Directors

Joni Gillis - Membership
Barbara Peet - New Class Training
David Batot - Volunteer Service Project Director
Teresa Du Bois – AT – online
Robert Gaitan – Past President - online

At large

Jose Palmos - Central Cameron County – online
Pam Bradley – Coastal Cameron County – online

Others

Barb Peterson - Mentor/Merchandise coordinator
Diane Hall – Chachalaca – editor - online
Marilyn Lorenz – Outreach Coordinator
Rick Blanton – Member – online
Volker Imschweiler – Member

1. Call to order – President – Robin called the meeting to order at 5:36pm
2. Approval of Prior Board Meetings Minutes – Dec 7 Planning meeting the minutes were approved after discussion as to whether or not they needed to be approved. The meeting was a planning meeting for the 2024 board, but since there was no Dec board meeting, and the treasurer needed the minutes to be approved, Joni Gillis made the motion to approve and David Batot seconded the motion and the minutes were approved
3. Robin noted that Marilyn Lorenz had agreed to serve as the Outreach Coordinator but that a historian and an At large Winter Texan representative that still needed to be filled. It was noted that Joyce Baer Halpern had agreed to serve in the latter position.
4. Reports

Treasurer - 2024 budget approval was approved Dec 7. December Bank statement - \$23,765 is currently in savings, \$10K are in checking. Financial Audit - Besty has provided Emma with the financial records. Robin indicated she would talk to Susan Upton and Tamie to provide some guidance as they helped her last year.

Robin noted that those who volunteered at the annual meeting need to submit for their reimbursements, and she asked what number had done so or remained to do so.

Membership – Joni Gillis noted that membership dues are due by end of March and if not, then the membership will be considered inactive. Milestones – 5 have recertified but she does not have pins for them as the process has changed and she has not been successful in getting with Agrilife Learning office to settle the ordering process. Also she is working on a directory for the new class which she is hoping to have by end of next week. Joni also announced that this will be her last year as Membership director. In 2025 she will be replaced by Rebecca Guerra who will train with her this year.

Successes of 2023 – numerous provided to Robin to discuss as Chapter meeting

Communication/Outreach – Mara/Eryn

Website update – both Mara/Eryn have extended their New Year and are not in town; will be back tomorrow.

New Class Director – Barbara Peet

2024 new class trainees –Currently there are 27 trainees with a mix of folks from SPI, Brownsville, Harlingen, Weslaco, Edinburg, Mission, Laguna Vista and others. Barbara provided the majority with the Class schedule, but as the board members online did not have a copy approval will be conducted online. The class will meet every Wednesday, from 6 to 9pm, starting January 17 at South Texas Ecotourism Center, and continued until April 3, with the class taking off on Valentine Day (2/14). Not all speakers have confirmed yet as to the date so some of the speakers maybe shifting dates. Robert Gaitan noted that the schedule is subject to change. Barbara also announced that 2024 will be her last year as Director of the new class. A volunteer is needed to train with her during 2024.

Another question was raised about members being able to join training field trips and it was noted that we discussed this in December, and decided it would be better to offer chapter field trips for the general membership. The first one is going to be a Marine Field trip sometime in March or April with Tony Reisinger.

Mentors – Barb Peterson indicated she has mentors for 20 trainees and needs a few more. Robin indicated she will advise the general membership of the need for mentors at the chapter meeting.

Advance Training Teresa noted the 4 typical AT opportunities monthly, TMNT Tuesdays, Chapter meetings, ACAS and Native plants project. She was putting opportunities on Facebook but some members don't use FB. She noted that she had been creating a general email notification of opportunities that went out to all the members. Robin suggested that she create her list and submit to Eryn who will then arrange the emailing, posting to FB, and posting to our Website. That is what was agreed. Teresa indicated that sometimes she posts opportunities to FB that may not be AT eligible but are still family fun things to do, and she will continue to do so as the feedback to these posts has been positive.

Volunteer Service Project – David and Robin will be going to each chapter project so they can get an idea of the activities and see pictures so members can decide if volunteering on a particular project is for them.

March Volunteer Fair @ STEC – Barbara stated that the dates chosen coincide with spring break and there is concern that will impact attendance and the ability of people to attend. Dan /Team will call all the partners and see if they are available and willing to attend March 12.

Follow up on Quorum discussion –

There are 5 voting board members who are officers, 7 directors, 5 at large members and 2 Advisors for a total of 19 board members. Therefore a quorum will be a majority, or 10.

Old/Pending Business

Photos and Conflict of Interest forms are still needed.

New Business none

Announcements – none

Comments/Presentations none

Adjournment, At 6:36 pm.