

RGV Chapter Texas Master Naturalist
2024 September Board Meeting
Sep 3, 2024

Attendance:

Officers

Robin Gelston - President
Betsy Hosick - Treasurer
Evelyn Alpert – Secretary
Dan Martin – 2 VP

Directors and Committees

Joni Gillis - Membership
Marilyn Lorenz – Outreach
Barb Peterson – New Class Co-director
Amy Daley – New Class Co-director
Teresa Du Bois - AT
David Batot - Volunteer Service Projects

At large

Joyce Baer Halpern - Winter Texan
Thomas Butcher – Brownsville
Jose Palmos – Central Cameron County

Others

Alicia Cavazos
Dave Gordon

Agenda

1. Call to order –The meeting was called to order at 5:43pm by Robin Gelston
2. Approval of Prior Board Meetings Minutes – No quorum was present, but since both July and August minutes were sent via email to the leadership team for comment/approval and no comments were received. Robin indicated that she would publish the minutes to the website as approved.
3. Reports

Treasurer – Betsy reported a savings balance of ~ 23K and checking of ~ \$12K, \$1500 is earmarked for the trainees who participated in the Coop grant walks. She reported that she has not yet seen the Palo Alto grant funds, but believes it is pending approval by BISD. Betsy also noted that there will be a revision to the balances at end of September as the balances are only updated every 3 months. Also, Betsy would request that Committees submit to her what budgets they will need for next year as she wishes to publish the proposed budget in October.

Also noted was that if there are any changes to the board, a committee will need to be formed to get new board members. Current board members were requested to let Robin know if they wish to continue serving.

Betsy also informed the team that our accountant has been unable to produce the financials due to illness in her family. She asked if anyone knew anyone with QuickBooks experience to let Betsy know so they could help. Betsy does not want to produce the financials because she believes there should be separation of duties between the accountant and the treasurer.

Membership – Joni reported that current membership at end of August is 166 members, 148 active, 13 in training. Of those in training one will certify at the next meeting, 2 are only missing AT hours, 6 have no volunteer time, and 5 have very little volunteer time.

Joni received an email from State VMS Administration that chapter VMS admin will no longer be able to add trainees to the database and trainees will have to create their own logins and passwords. An email will go to a general email set up in VMS with a notification of who has signed up to be a trainee. She has suggested that general emails be set up for each officer and director of our chapter, such as new.class.director@group.io . . .

Joni reported the following new certification and milestones are:

certifying: Stephanie Mendoza

100 hours: Marby Sweeney

250 hrs: Yvette Cano

500 hrs: Michelle Gardner

1000 hrs; Sharon Helsley NcGinley

4000 hrs: Chuck Cornell - who will we honor when the presidential certificate and pin arrive.

Communication – No report

New Class Training – Barb Peterson and Amy Daley reported 27 people expressing interest in the new class. She and Amy have met, and 9 people have agreed to serve on the committee, which will be meeting in early October. They have ordered the books for the new class.

Outreach

Marilyn reported that in August we were well represented at Big Padre's birthday at the SPI birding Center. Sep 21 will be STEC market day, and we will have a table there. On October 5 the SPI birding center will have a big day and will need sitters and donors. Robin noted that on September 14 the pollinator group will have a Milkweed 101 meeting and there is also the Chapter Field Trip to Estero Llano Grande State Park in Weslaco.

Advance Training – Teresa Du Bois has been posting on Facebook and the website quite a few opportunities of many different varieties. Also noted that Oct 5 is National Public Lands Day and will be an opportunity at the nursery at Palo Alto.

Volunteer Service Project – Bat monitoring review of data continues with 2 or 3 online meetings this month. The Laguna Vista Nature Trails meets on Wednesday mornings and Alicia pointed out that on Tuesdays a work group goes to the Sheephead lots.

Old/Pending Business

Robin indicated that Donna Otto and Eileen Mattei are working on the advisory award for Tony, and that she had not completed the outreach materials yet. Also that we are trying to move forward with the thank you gifts for speakers. It was also advised that there are still slots

available for the annual meeting. Betsy asked that we remind people that the \$500 reimbursement for the cost of attending is available for anyone who commits to an article for the Chachalaca.

New Business

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Alpert