

RGV Chapter Texas Master Naturalist  
2024 October Board Meeting  
October 1, 2024

**Attendance:**

**Officers**

Robin Gelston - President  
Evelyn Alpert – Secretary

**Directors and Committees**

Joni Gillis - Membership  
Teresa Du Bois - AT  
David Batot - Volunteer Service Projects  
Robert Cepeda – New Class Representative

**At large**

Joyce Baer Halpern - Winter Texan  
Jose Palmos – Cameron County

**Others**

Karen Weaver  
Diana Cepeda  
Ernesto Garcia- Ortega

**Advisory**

Javier de Leon - TPWD

**Agenda**

1. Call to order –The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Robin Gelston
2. Approval of Prior Board Meetings Minutes – No quorum was present, but since September minutes were sent via email 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 was not present but submitted a written report advising a savings balance of ~24K and checking of ~ \$12K. She also confirmed receipt of the \$500 grant money from Palo Alto National Park service. Betsy also reported that she had paid one tuition reimbursement for participation in the Cara Cara trails. She noted she had not received all the other student information but recommended the reimbursement of the others who helped at Laguna Vista walking trails, Laguna Atascosa, Resaca de la Palma, Hugh Ramsey and Palo Alto battlefield.

Betsy also confirmed that Jody Nelsen has agreed to be the accountant, and they will work together to get caught up in October. She also noted the need for budget numbers from many of the groups and asked that they be submitted as soon as possible.

**Membership** – Joni reported that current membership at the end of September is 165 members, 148 active, 12 in training. Of those in training two will certify at the next meeting (Tess DeSerisy, Lindsey Czopek) and 2 are only missing AT hours. David Gordon will reach 100 hours at the next meeting as well.

**Communication** – Robin reported that there had been some difficulty updating the website but thought it would be done in the next month or so.

**New Class Training** – No report

**Outreach** – Robin reported that there had been a good turnout for the STEC market days. Upcoming events include the Big Sit Oct 5, TMN Tuesday Oct 15, Archeological Fair at Brownsville Market square also Oct 5, and National Public Lands Day at Palo Alto on Oct 5, and the Rookery Island cleanups on Oct 12 and Run for Sea Turtles also the weekend of Oct 12.

**Advance Training** – Teresa Du Bois reported that she continues to update opportunities, and that our volunteers will begin maintaining the bird feeders at Hugh Ramsey Arroyo Colorado side. Also on Oct 10, Outdoor and funding gardening spaces at STEC.

**Volunteer Service Project** – David was not present for the report, but Joni advised that she thinks they can start trying to identify the bats now that they have completed some online training. Karen advised that additional volunteers are needed for the Palo Alto school project.

### **Old/Pending Business**

Robin indicated that she has the new business card and suggests that members take some and pass them out, especially at Outreach events. She also noted that the Rack card and Trifold need updating and asked for suggestions. Robert Cepeda said he would make some recommendations and also there was a suggestion the Chery Brummet be approached for some pictures. Tami advised that she had included the gifts for speakers in her budget for next year, and Robin suggested we start giving them out now. A suggestion was made to use gift cards from our State and National parks.

Robin noted that we usually contribute \$100 to the Silent Auction for the Annual Meeting. She will put out a call to the members.

Board members for 2025 are still needed for President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Parliamentarian, and Communications director. Suggestions should be sent to Robin.

There was a discussion around the request from the Hugh Ramsey group for a donation to help with feral cats. As this does not fall under our mission, Robin had suggested they do a presentation to the members at the next meeting and solicit donations, but Javier de Leon suggested that even that might not be in accordance with our mission, so the proposed presentation was going to be reviewed first.

### **New Business**

Javier de Leon suggested that Ernesto Ortega be asked to fill the advisory position vacated by Tony Reisinger, the board agreed, and Ernesto agreed.

**Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 6:35PM.

Respectfully submitted - Evelyn Alpert