

RGV Chapter Texas Master Naturalist
2025 March Board Meeting
March 4, 2025

Attendance:

Officers

Robin Gelston – President
Rob Gardner- First Vice President
Chad Wilmoth – Second Vice President
Betsy Hosick – Treasurer

Directors and Committees

Barb Peterson – New Class director
Karen Weaver – 2025 Membership Director
Mara Lee Moat – Communication Director
David Batot – Volunteer Service Project Director

At large

Joyce Baer Halpern - Winter Texan
Mary Grizzard – Coastal Region
Tira Wilmoth – Central Cameron Co. Area

Advisors

Sara Stewart

Other

Penny Brown – Parliamentarian

Agenda

1. Call to order –The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Robin Gelston
2. Approval of Prior Board Meetings Minutes – David Batot moved that the February minutes be approved, and Betsy Hosick seconded. Minutes were approved.
3. Reports

Treasurer – Betsy noted balance at end of February the checking balance was \$14,128.06 in checking and savings was \$23,949.33. A big rise in checking balance was due to yearly dues being paid.

Rob reported that the financial audit was completed and that everything checked out with no discrepancies. All account balances check out. There is money (\$2,600) in an account for the Coastal Naturalist Program. These are funds in Tony's name, and will be transferred over to Sara Stewart, the new Texas AgriLife Advisory. The money is in a restricted part of the TMN balances, not in Tony's name. Sara will speak with Tony and see what should be done with the funds, and the belief is that some members might want to get the Coastal Naturalist pins.

Betsy noted that we are now requiring actual receipts for expenses.

David Batot and Rob Gardner motioned and seconded to accept Sara as our Sea Grant and Tx AgriLife Advisory and the motion passed. Sara noted that she needs the lists of attendees of meetings and the volunteers. It was suggested that she take the VMS training and that she could get some of the information there. Joyce requested the ability to run some reports via VMS, and

there are some she can obtain from the logbooks. But others can be run only by those with approval privileges, and it was suggested that they be run on a regular basis to see which of our partners are receiving the most volunteer hours and which are not getting any.

Membership – Karen reported we have 142 total active members. There are 31 in the new class, there are 10 trainees from the previous class, 2 advisors and 3 associates. Milestones are 250 hours Joyce and 1000 hours Barb Peterson. She also asked about name tags, whether members wanted new ones. Robin will put out a request to the membership. She also asked about name tags for the new class. They only get them once they certify for the year. Barb will provide a list of how the class members want their names on the tags. Recertification Roadrunner pins are usually awarded only twice a year. And the board agreed to think about doing it only once a year in January because it serves as an incentive for the new class.

Betsy has contacted all the unpaid members and as of today there are 120 paid members and there are only a number in the teens that did not provide her with a disposition. The members that have not paid their dues also do not have any hours in VMS. If a member goes inactive and does not pay their dues and they wish to re-activate, they must pay their dues. There are also some honorary members that do not pay dues.

Raffles and Auction – Betsy reported that we can have a raffle and auction. She wants to start with a silent auction. The board talked about doing it at the graduation but does not want to interfere with the graduation. But she thinks we can do a silent auction with the graduation and business meeting on April 8. Robin will make an announcement to the members that we need items to auction. Betsy or Robin will take the donations of the items which should be provided by April 1. Also, there was a suggestion to approach our partners for donations as well.

Communication – Mara Lee reported that everything is going along smoothly, and she just wanted anyone with anything they wanted to report it to her. The website work was still happening. Robin stated the brochure was finalized, yet. There has been no word yet to Robin on whether our chapter emblem has been approved by the state. It was suggested to simply remove Texas Master Naturalist from the chapter logo. The board wants the gold band and Rob indicated he would like Rio Grande Valley on the gold band, however Robin indicated she did not think the chapter name could be added.

Outreach – March 10-13 is the STEC camp. STEC camp is over spring break, and they bring kids in for learning. The State virtual volunteer fair is April 8. On April 12 we have a lot going on 1. Los Fresnos Earth Day in the morning 2. STEC Earth Day 3. Spring Plant Fair in San Benito with Master Gardens and 4. Harlingen public library 1-4 PM. April 25 to April 28 is the City Nature Challenge. Chad offered to have an iNaturalist Training for the membership on March 29, at Hugh Ramsey Nature Park. April 26 is the Beach Cleanup Day from 9 to 12 at three different locations – the board decided to meet at the County Beach Access #5 location and the Beach Roundup from 1 to 4 at Isla Blanca.

New Class – is doing well we have around 9 that will graduate, about 10 that will certify, and one that hit the 100-hour mark. Upcoming Field Trips are Saturday March 8 to Quita Mazatlán and 3/15 to Cactus Creek and Delaney Tract on the LANRW. Graduation will be April 8 – and planning has begun, It will be at Estero Llano Grande State Park at Camp Thicket at Warbler Hall from 6 to 8 pm. There will be a business meeting, Awards, Silent Auction, Potluck. Set up will start at 4:30.

Advance Training – Nothing to report

Volunteer Service Project – Nothing new

March Volunteer Fair @ STEC – we have 11 partners coming, Joni and Robin will bring snacks, Barb indicated she would bring the big orange water jug.

Workday – April 26 - beach clean up

Field Trip – working with Shell Club for a field trip in April

Trifold – not approved yet.

The board meeting ended at approximately 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted.

Evelyn Alpert