

Hays Master Naturalist Board Meeting
2/4/10 7:00 pm
Camp Jacob Watershed Education Center
Wimberley, Texas

Attending: President Dixie Camp, Secretary Becky Northcut, Advanced Training Chair Betty Finley, Newsletter Chair Art Arizpe; Training Committee Chair Jean McMeans, Outreach Committee Chair Susan Nenny; Treasurer Larry Calvert, Membership Chair Beth Ramey; Kasey Mock , extension agent

Not attending: Vice President Tom Hausler, TPWD Sponsor Lee Ann Linam, Past President Dale Shively, Project Chair Walt Krudop, Past President Dale Shively,

Dixie opened the meeting at 7:08p.m. and introduced our new Extension Agent Kasey Mock.

Minutes and Agenda

There was an issue re where to insert the corrections in that had been requested on 1/10/10 (re hours criteria). Becky didn't find it in the Operating Handbook. Betty suggested it was in 10/9/2008 Awards section, Operating Handbook. Another discussion began regarding the original issue, but it was agreed to leave it till Beth's portion of the meeting.

Jean asked to take out the agenda item re: the evaluation of Gala/Graduation, as that had already been done.

Dixie asked if there was a move to approve minutes as revised. Jean moved, Susan seconded. Minutes approved with changes noted.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Larry asked if anyone had any other questions on his report, since he had not heard any comments regarding the changes to 2010 budget. Becky brought up Tom's concern re facilities cost. Larry asked if we should leave in \$250. The consensus was to leave it.

Larry said someone had sent him a question about the chapter's non-profit status. He said we are good for another year.

Susan made a motion to approve the budget. Betty seconded. Budget was approved.

Secretary

The Secretary asked if there was an answer re the recent email discussion of the board regarding Earth Day at Aquarena. The consensus of the board was that the Secretary should ask Leah Laszewski if she knew whether volunteers were being sought for Earth Day, and also that for now, the Secretary would send out the Earth Day notice to the membership simply as an FYI.

Dixie asked Becky whether or not she had asked for any clearance regarding the Nature Center Valentine flowers email that had gone out the day before. Becky answered that she was under the impression Nature Center emails had been OK'd because they were partners with HCMN.

Extension Agent

Kasey said there was a volunteer project available at the Extension Office. The Oak Wilt treatment tanks needed cleaning, as previous volunteer had quit. A monthly volunteer is needed to clean the 40 pump-up garden sprayers, flush tanks, check pressure, and fix harnesses if they are damaged. The job involves very little exposure to chemicals, and should involve about five hours a month, possibly less if they did it all at once.

It was agreed the Secretary would send a notice to the membership. Beth said she would send Becky the correct number for the project.

Kasey said he had signed and mailed all acceptance and rejection notices for the new class and that there were still people coming to office to try and get in class.

He also said he will be serving on one of the subcommittees for the Cypress Creek Watershed Project. He had met with Karen Ford to discuss serving on the Education Subcommittee.

He announced that a rainwater revival festival is scheduled for May 8 in Dripping Springs. On May 27 there will be a water workshop in the Extension office. A grounds maintenance conference had been held the week before last with 135 people attending. Daphne Richards had spoken about xeriscaping and Eric Beckers from the Forest Service talked about drought and oak wilt.

Membership

Beth said that the decision not to count training year hours as certification year would be complicated because the database counts it. Discussion followed re course of action. Beth said she would contact Michelle.

Advanced Training

Betty has approved 21 trainings since last meeting. Regarding previous questions about whether Eco Fest offering would count as training, Betty asked Michelle specifically about organic gardening, green building and bees. Michelle said organic gardening was not advanced training but would check the other two. Betty approved one about bees but hasn't approved another. She was still waiting on Michelle, but asked if does board had an opinion. The consensus was that beekeeping is probably not advanced training, but if it were about bees, especially native bees, it would probably count.

Kasey said that the annual report he has to do involves estimation regarding bees, honey and grape cultivation.

Training

Jean says training preparations are almost finished. Binders are put together; mentors and mentees have been put in contact with each other. Some new trainees came to chapter meeting on 1/28. So far, everything is going great, and the committee is doing very well. The class will start on 2/16.

Regarding the continuing topic of a new location for the gala, Jean suggested that the VFW in Wimberley might be an option. The fee is high but it's big enough. She said someone had suggested Price Senior Center in San Marcos but it's uncertain whether it's big enough.

Kasey suggested the Hill Country Events Center at Hunter Road and Centerpoint.

Vice President

Art spoke for Tom, who was absent. He said he thought the chapter meeting presentation on bats was great and that the new members had been very impressed. There were 58 attendees.

Newsletter

Art said he had the current featured project was the Wimberley Outdoor Educators. He was still looking for March project, and had gotten a call from Steven Carter, recommended by Beth. He will find someone. Becky can do Naturalist View column for March, and then Kasey will do it in April. Art said he would send them instructions.

Outreach

Susan said she still wanted to expand committee and do a calendar. She had asked for volunteers to be on outreach committee. In past they've done floats for the Fourth of July parade and had done a successful grass information table in front of Brookshire Brothers. The problem is how do get to people who aren't coming to Earth Day or other events. And ad went out in newsletter but there has been no response.

Larry asked if they were going to develop a list for a speaker's bureau? Susan said that they have developed about four or five presentations. Becky said that the Springboard would be looking for speakers for regular presentations.

Susan is planning an Amphibian Watch workshop. Date will be Wednesday March 17 or 18. There is an issue about the training. Should individuals communicate to LeeAnn or will HCMN have a formal relationship with TPWD. It will count as 2.5 hours of training. Susan asked she could purchase some food from budget as outreach project. Jean suggested that attendees could pay \$3 to cover the food. The event will be at Susan's house. Larry will help.

President

Dixie got an invitation from Michelle for the chapter to host the silent auction at this year's state meeting in October. Members will be needed to get items, man tables, be at the event. It will be a lot of work but chapter gets to keep the proceeds. \$465 was raised last year.

Larry said he thought it would be a good thing and suggested we put the idea out in the newsletter and someone could step up and do it. Ideally if it is staffed early on, and people get involved, it might get people revved up to go to the state meeting. Susan suggested Linda Lang.

Dixie said Michelle has the necessary materials, and will do a presentation at the meeting and get attendees. The chapter will have to commit to doing it, since they have been asked. The board consensus was to go ahead with planning and to put something in the newsletter about it.

Dixie brought up the previously discussed item re volunteer issues at Emily Ann. She and Walt had met with Karen Bartell and Melinda Seib. It was resolved that there will be two different volunteer projects at Emily Ann with two different numbers. Karen will continue to handle the Butterfly/Earth Day event. Melinda will be coordinator of the Grassland Prairie plot project.

The next item was that chapter has been asked to participate in activities happening at the Dahlstrom property now that they have a conservation easement. Susan said she and Dale had talked about the project but were not sure what they needed chapter volunteers to do. Do they just want us on planning committee or to be docents? Larry said Mary Ann Witt was already on but she's not active in Master Naturalist. Dixie said it was her understanding that the organizers have always envisioned HCMN being on an advisory or planning committee, and she asked the board whether they thought it was time to do so, or should we wait and see? Jean was concerned that it's a time when HCMN volunteers are spread very thin and it would not be advisable to commit then not be able to do a good job. The board consensus was that the chapter should endorse the concept and serve as advisory capacity re: planning. Art will do a piece in the newsletter when there is more information available.

Next agenda item was a request from the Boy Scout camp for assistance from HCMN to help train their summer trainers. Susan suggested that TPWD could provide this service better and that it was in their mission. It was agreed that Dixie would call Nancy Herron and Outreach/Diversity at TPWD to help Boy Scouts.

Dixie gave an update on the Annual Report. There had been problems with submitting the statistics. She suggested that we should develop new forms on the website so the data for the Annual Report can be collected. Beth said it might be possible to modify the current online

reporting form to accept more than one type of information. Susan and Beth agreed look into this possibility.

Dixie reminded the board that the February 25 chapter meeting would focus on volunteering, featuring Jacobs Well, Onion Creek San Marcos, and possibly the Nature Center. It was not certain at that point where the meeting would be held.

She reported that the following presenters had been confirmed for meetings:

Chris Nice, March

Andrew Zinn, April

Billy Kniffin, May

Mark Klim, June or July

Kevin Tyson, August

September and October have not been confirmed.

Volunteers

Walt was not present.

Susan suggested we ask volunteers about projects what are they interested in and why at the chapter meeting. Dixie said there had been a previous survey asking those questions. Susan asked if it could be repeated.

Betty asked what they would be asked. Susan suggested questions like how far you will travel, how often, what kind of work do you prefer?

There was an extended discussion regarding the topic but no consensus was reached regarding a course of action or a need for additional efforts, other than the need for improved communication without overloading volunteers, and developing talents of volunteers who were good project leaders.

The meeting was adjourned 8:52 p.m.