

Hays Master Naturalist Board Meeting
January 6, 2010 7:00 pm
Camp Jacob Watershed Education Center
Wimberley, Texas

Attending: President Dixie Camp, Vice President Tom Hausler, Secretary Becky Northcut, Advanced Training Chair Betty Finley, Newsletter Chair Art Arizpe, TPWD Sponsor Lee Ann Linam, Volunteer Project Chair Walt Krudop, Training Committee Chair Jean McMeans, Past President Dale Shively, Outreach Committee Chair Susan Nenney.

Not attending: Treasurer Larry Calvert, Membership Chair Beth Ramey

Dixie called the meeting to order at 7:05.

Jean requested that an item be added to the agenda re. Pre- and post-testing.

Regarding the minutes from the last meeting, three corrections were requested:

- In the President's Report section, a correction was requested to clarify that the possible changes in frequency referred to chapter meetings only.
- The minutes didn't reflect a vote on the Treasurer Report. Walt asked if the board had voted. Members agreed the board had not formally voted. There was an agreement to change the minutes to state that the board agreed by acclamation to accept the Treasurer's Report.
- Mary Arizpe's last name was misspelled.

Beth has reported clarification to awards criteria for calculation of years of service. The training year is not counted. Years are for certified members master naturalist.

Walt asked where that information was kept. Dixie checked the Operating Handbook and members agreed on the following clarifications, which the Secretary would send to Herb for correction to Handbook:

- Insert "The training period does not count as a year of certified service."
- Delete "who are accepted" (re trainees) in training section.

Officer Reports

President

Dixie said the Annual Report needs to be finalized. Information about the following items is still needed:

- Information from Delbert.
- Clarification for Acres and Trail section. This year's number seemed small. Walt explained can only count new trail portion.
- Indirect outreach. Susan will estimate hours from booths, state meeting.
- Jean asked if information sent by Jamie would count? What about astronomy? Dixie said Karen Archer and Jamie did indirect and direct training re Master Naturalist for Flow Conference

- Partnership and Donors will include Jacob's well for meeting space, Episcopal Church in Dripping springs for training space. Susan suggested CARD (Citizens Alliance for Responsible Development) for presentation space and copies. Dixie said Gorge Preservation Society gave HCMN a discount
- Benefactors.
- Memorial Fund.

Jean asked about the check that came from Community Center. Dixie clarified it was the deposit check from the Gala.

Dixie reminded the board that the report deadline is January 15, 2010.

Vice President

Updating information on presenters, Tom said Nyta from Old Tunnel Wildlife area would present at Episcopal Church on January 28 at 6:30. She has offered to give a special tour for chapter on a Wednesday, Tuesday or Thursday night. He said there was a possibility of having a picnic supper at the site.

Tom said Billy Kniffen has cancelled for February but has offered to set up a Saturday class for rainwater collection. There are quite a few inquiries still out. Only month confirmed is June, when presenter will be Mark Klim. Tom is hoping to get a bird specialist for April or May.

Susan asked if anyone has asked Tom Watson to present re Onion Creek. He has a presentation ready.

Art asked whether there was presentation about volunteer service. Susan volunteered to host.

Tom said the year should be set up within 90 days. Tom will be out of town for next board meeting on the 4th, so won't have an update.

Treasurer

Larry was not present. Dixie asked if there were any questions re December Budget Report? No one had any. Dixie asked if there was any input on the draft of 2010 Budget that Larry sent. Tom said there is no money for facilities. The chapter didn't not pay for facilities last year, that the chapter doesn't go if we have to pay for facilities. Tom suggests budgeting \$150 just in case.

Jean clarified that on the budget for the training committee, Larry pulled out \$350 for Background Check and put under Membership. Walt asked for clarification re Larry's note about reviewing impact of budget on cash reserve of \$3000.

Secretary

Becky said she would try getting the Action Items agreed on during meetings and sent out directly afterward.

She also made an announcement re the upcoming tour at Jacob's well that weekend if any Board members would like to attend.

Past President

Dale brings up strategizing about getting more members active and keeping them active after training, opening for general discussion: should we spend more time on that during the next year? How do we get more people involved?

Art asked what about a regular chapter project? Susan said that has been discussed as well as making the project list more condensed /active so people can get together. Dale said the focus for chapter should be more high-level projects that draw more members.

Committee Reports

Volunteer

Walt continued the discussion about projects. He said that five projects during the past year that had over 100 volunteer and 17 that had 0 hours credited to them. He said that he thought there was one singular aspect of successful projects: A leader who loves that work and may contribute lots of hours. Examples: Tom Watson and Onion Creek, Geists and water project, Marion at Jacob's Well. (Suggestion made to update to Jeff Vasgaard for Jacob Well).

For small projects where someone found small projects and met criteria, Walt said project numbers haven't gotten on the list quickly enough to get on the list as an approved project. Beth needs to have number to charge that to. Ideally, a training class has one or two projects and chapter has one or two. Leaders are needed. Walt has had feedback from people that just want to do the work but don't want to have the structure or bureaucracy of having to be leader. People resist structure.

Susan said possible to get rid of projects that have no hours, which has been done. In addition to looking at hours, need see how many volunteers are involved. Dale said the chapter should really promote a couple of projects. Focus on PR and get people together. Dixie said PR could be done via newsletter.

Walt said we might be focusing on the wrong thing. The reality is people stay a couple years and move on. If that is reality, design program to address people in way that acknowledges they are going to move on. Should we focus on what to give to better prepare them for leaving us? Susan said it is smarter and cheaper to keep people a year longer than find new ones.

Betty said chapter needs to be careful about dropping valuable smaller projects that people are very committed to. Susan said maybe we should change criteria to include a definite leader and minimum hours.

Walt asked if there should be four main projects, asked Tom if that could be done at the February meeting. Suggestions:

- Jacob's Well
- Onion Creek
- Leann: Biological Assessment Team. (B.A.T.)
- San Marcos Nature Center
- Onion Creek
- Austin Water Quality
- Blanco Water
- Canyon Gorge

Dixie said maybe we could use the 6:30 early arrival time at chapter meetings for project reports.

Membership

Membership Chair not present.

Advanced Training

Betty – approved nine trainings Walt said next month, should plan for chapter members to do a training.

Training

Jean asked for a motion to approve curriculum expenditure. Susan made the motion, Walt seconded. Motion was approved.

Jean said it seemed everyone agreed it was good idea to have the graduation and gala together. The next gala/graduation has been set for November 19, 2010. Still don't know where.

Jean brought up the pre- and post-test agenda item, asked ca we drop it for this training class, it's not required. There was not a formal vote.

She said the class is more than filled, with 37 applications. The first meeting February 16, 2010

Newsletter

Art will work with Tom Hauser to write column for next newsletter, then there will be something by Jackie Mattice on Wimberley Valley Educator Project. Then Becky next, then senior members.

Outreach

Susan wants to expand committee to get more members, build a yearlong calendar. She will write notice for newsletter.

Dale told board that Jean has found items in the extension service file cabinets. Lance has them.

Dixie had some last items. She told board that Donna Browning of City of Austin wants nominations for groups for environmental awards. Should we nominate ourselves because do work for city of Austin? Susan asked if we should nominate Tom Watson.

Dr. Richard Earle has contacted Dixie, re the Texas State University Department of Geography Common Experience program for 2010. Wanted to know if Master Naturalist will participate this year. She plans to attend January 14 meeting.

The Chapter has been sent a letter of agreement from LCRA /PEC for grant money for watershed models. Dixie will sign for it.

Meeting was adjourned.