

TMN – COT

Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

**Attendees:** Carl Dodson, Ed Johnson, Jerry Krampota, John Battle, Pam West, Sandy Henderson, Jerry Eppner, Dave Brandes, Laura Brandes, Carolyn Schlein, Neal McLain, Justina Dent, Connie Stolte, TPWD Advisor

Carl Dodson called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

**President's Report:**

**Brazoria County Parks Project**

The Camp Mohawk County Park project planned for a full Saturday in May needs a chairman to begin the planning and organization. Carl Dodson will begin contacting people in order to obtain a chairman.

**Board of Directors Job Procedures**

There were no suggested changes to the Board of Directors Job Procedures. Intern class training attendance was brought up and discussed and confirmed that the training director, Laura Brandes, monitors and maintains the training hours and attendance of interns.

It was agreed that the signed liability forms are obtained from members by Sandy Henderson as she receives member annual dues.

It was agreed that the Advanced Training Director and the Volunteer Director should submit their lists of information to webmaster Neal McLain.

**Board of Directors meeting**

Whether to hold board meetings at Sea Center Texas once per quarter was discussed further, with two main interests expressed: (1) to hold all meetings in one place; (2) to hold one meeting per quarter at Sea Center. After some discussion Jerry Eppner made a motion to meet the third month of each quarter at Sea Center Texas. It was seconded by Dave Brandes, and the motion was passed by the board. Those upcoming 2010 Sea Center meeting dates will be June 9<sup>th</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **ConocoPhillips status**

The ConocoPhillips program status (Linville Environmental Education Program) was reviewed. Carl communicated that the company has been informed that they would need to organize an active volunteer support group in order for TMN to properly assist their program.

### **Donations vs Personal Property**

Laura submitted that there are items at DEEP of unknown or questionable ownership. It was discussed that if TMN-COT money is used to purchase items then the items belong to TMN and TMN is responsible for them. If individuals use personal funds money to purchase items for use then the items belong to the purchaser. Jerry suggested that items that are obsolete and broken should be thrown away. Laura suggested that a possible inventory be made of items that could be available for use in other TMN teaching programs such as by Carl Dodson, Justina Dent, Laura Brandes, Ruby Lewis, or possibly others.

Neal McLain reported that he had given the entire set of instructions and backup disk for the Discovery Center Kiosk to Tom Schneider who placed them in the Discovery Center storage room.

### **Civility / Ethics**

Carl introduced a civility and ethics discussion by stating that some members have already quit and others are considering leaving the organization due to what some consider to be improper communications, bad manners, lack of respect and such. Such things are hurting the organization and needs to be halted. Carl read a letter he had written stating these concerns and suggesting a guideline for action needed and gave board members a copy. The letter included a three step procedure for resolving conflicts. Following this, the code of ethics and conduct section from the policies and procedures was read aloud to the board. It was reminded that a board resolution was necessary to add to Policies and Procedures and to distribute this to the membership.

After further discussion Sandy Henderson made a motion to add only the three points from Carl Dodson's letter as "conflict resolution" under Standards of Conduct, item number four:

1. If you have a difference of opinion with another member, a different way to handle a problem or a new idea, handle it privately. E-mail is fine if addressed to the individual and not the entire chapter. Phone calls work well or sitting down over a cup of coffee. Many problems can be settled when the two parties are looking each other in the eye.
2. If the problem can't be solved then get a third party involved. Sometimes an uninvolved person can see solutions the involved parties can't see. May I suggest the President.
3. If a solution cannot be reached then the problem will be placed before the Board of Directors and a solution will be determined.

Carolyn Schlein seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The group noted that this action by the board should then be presented to the membership for a vote and should also be published in the newsletter.

### **Vice President's Report:**

Carolyn has scheduled for August the topic Wetlands by Dr. Andre Landry. For May she has enlisted Judi James with the topics Night Skies and Distant Galaxies. The presentation will be at the Brazosport Planetarium. Each member will be responsible for the planetarium's \$3.00 fee. There is limited seating of 72. Barron Rector has been contacted but has not yet responded to a request to speak about the Fate of Rainfall. The November guest speaker will be provided by NOAA and the subject will be Texas Gulf Coast Weather. Carolyn will continue to pursue potential programs in geology and seashells. January and February programs are not yet scheduled.

A possible Spring Fling was discussed. One site possibility was the GCBO facility. Possibilities as to when to hold it were maybe after a Wednesday member meeting or on a weekend. A crawfish boil idea was raised and dismissed. A shrimp boil seemed a good idea to most. It was agreed that a Saturday or Sunday would be the best day of the week to hold the event. A price per person would have to be determined. It was decided that we need a date, time and charge. Carolyn is to check the availability of the date of April 25<sup>th</sup>, last weekend in April, at Camp Mohawk. Members may bring a spouse or guest. The determined cost per person must be paid in advance.

### **Treasurer Report:**

It was agreed for very minor changes be made, the \$50 donation and change the video camera budget item from \$500 to \$750. Dave Brandes made the motion that the Report be accepted with these changes. Carolyn Schlein seconded the motion and the motion passed.

### **Training Director:**

Laura noted that there are eleven chapters in the state curriculum and she has the required curriculum divided into two classes of four hours each that interns must complete.

Carl Dodson complimented the procedure of getting interns involved right away in volunteering during training and how this is working well for the chapter. This has resulted in more immediate intern involvement with the chapter members and activities.

Laura explained how a special intern training time sheet is kept for interns until they accomplish their 20 hours class time and 20 hours field time, obtaining their required 40 hours and certification, and then their time is forwarded to Jerry Eppner from that point and forward. It was noted that interns can accumulate Advanced Training hours other than their required hours during their training, which they get credit for whenever their hours go in to Jerry.

Computer and Projector procedures – The Training Director is keeping the equipment due to frequent training needs. They take it, or make arrangements to get it to, other people who need it from time to time. Those other users have the responsibility to get the equipment back to the Training Director after their use of it. Laura will be sure to remind other users of their responsibility to return it. A spare bulb was discussed and the decision made to not buy a spare in advance. It was noted that not chapter equipment but AgriLIFE equipment is used for the member meetings.

### **Membership Director:**

Jerry Eppner noted no 2010 recertifications yet. Everything is set up for 2010. He reminded everyone as he previously has that a few late 2009 hours were added to 2010 rather than lose those hours. Steve Upperman's transfer to the Galveston Bay Chapter is complete.

### **Outreach Chairman:**

#### **Young At Heart**

The chapter participation in the presentation was discussed and it was recommended to not participate again.

#### **Nature day at Sea Center Texas**

A new intern was enrolled. Participants note a very busy day. In the future printed materials are needed there for an outreach display. It was also suggested that some type of nature sticker, stamp, bag or some such items be obtained by the chapter to give to the children. Pricing for stickers needs to be determined to assist in making a decision. There are empty trunks available to transport such items to appropriate activities. Jerry noted that Mark Klym, TPWD, is a good source for pamphlets.

#### **Heritage Day Celebration, March 6<sup>th</sup>**

David and Laura Brandes are transporting a canopy, tables and chairs. Leaves, crayons and paper have been prepared for leaf rubbing. Early volunteers meet at the site by 8:30 and the plan is to be set up by 9:00.

### **Advanced Training Chairman:**

It was affirmed that the Policies and Procedures provide that advanced training that is approved by a COT chapter Partner Organization is pre-approved for COT members. It was also determined that these partner advanced training opportunities should also be reviewed by the Advanced Training Chairman.

All outside advanced training needs to be pre-approved by the AT Chairman prior to the training in question.

The General Meeting advanced training is all approved since it is arranged as such in advance.

Training opportunities that are submitted for pre-approval will be acted upon and approvals will be posted on the chapter web site and communicated to the chapter members.

### **Whatever:**

#### **Partnership Agreements**

There was discussion regarding the relationship between the Mid-Coast Refuges and the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges and the relationship between the Friends and the Cradle of Texas chapter of TMN. The discussion was pertinent to the need for a partnership agreement between Friends and TMN-COT.

#### **Dow Woods Project**

Dow Woods Project time keeping procedures were reviewed. Time spent on Dow Woods goes on the TMN time sheet and on the USFWS time sheet.

There is a separate time sheet for the Dow Woods Project Grant that is necessary for matching funds documentation.

#### **Trash Bash**

Pam West reported that last year's trash bash was mainly around the Demi John area and mostly related to Hurricane Ike cleanup. This year there will be bins at the 2004 Bastrop Bayou bridge. The cleanup is intended to go up to the Three Bridges area. Participants can pre-register Friday prior to the event at Marlin Marina. A presentation about the project will be made at the General Meeting.

#### **Publicity Recognition for TMN-COT**

The need for continued publicity for the chapter was discussed. The chapter should continue to try to utilize the newspaper and other publications with articles and photos. Also the chapter needs to try to identify and communicate any other means that can be utilized for publicity.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.**