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**TMN-COT BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday August 7, 2013**  
**AgriLIFE® Conference Room, Angleton, Texas**

**Attendees:** Ed Barrios, Barbara Burkhardt, Marty Cornell, Jerry Eppner, Mary Helen Israel, Ed Johnson, Chris Kneupper, Jerry Krampota, Ruby Lewis, John Marshall, Neal McLain, Mike Mullins, Peggy Romfh, and Pete Romfh.

President Mike Mullins called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

Ed Barrios moved and Peggy Romfh seconded the **motion to approve the minutes of the July, 2013 board meeting**, as amended with email input. This motion **passed** with no dissent.

Mike Mullins asked for comments on the **Photo Policy and Release Guidelines**, as revised since the last board meeting. **John Marshall moved, and Barbara Burkhardt seconded a motion to accept these guidelines as revised**; the **motion passed** with no objection. An earlier draft of this document was sent to Michelle Haggerty, Texas State Coordinator for Texas Master Naturalists, for consideration in formulating a state TMN policy on publishing photographs of people. Since this photo policy is a guideline, no vote by the general membership is needed. Mike Mullins will email this photo policy to the COT members and will have copies available on the sign-in table at next week's general meeting.

The Board discussed a draft, from a committee led by Tom Morris, of a new Member Category, "Member-in-Training", which would allow an intern or pending intern to begin to accrue volunteer time (VT) after the candidate has paid intern fees, has completed all chapter entry paperwork, and has successfully completed a background check. After minor modifications and wordsmithing, **Ed Barrios moved and Barbara Burkhardt seconded the motion to present the Member-in-Training definition as revised to the general membership at the August 14<sup>th</sup> general meeting. The motion passed with one objection.** Mike Mullins will arrange to have copies of this document available, and will present it for approval by the general membership.

The board decided to amend the COT P&P wording on voting privileges (page 3 section A) to match that of Article VI, 6, of the State by-laws (as of 7/2013), which allows all members of a chapter's board of directors to vote. The current COT P&P restricts voting to only elected members of the board. Ed Barrios will forward the revised wording of the section of the COT P&P to Marty for inclusion in this section.

Several other minor changes will be proposed to the Cradle of Texas Policies and Procedures Guidelines. These changes will be drafted by Ed Barrios and presented at the September board meeting, targeting the September general meeting for approval:

- ✓ Ed Barrios noted that a minor change of wording of Section D of the COT P&P will be made to remove the "Past President" as part of the annual selection of board members, as this position is automatically determined from previous elections. .
- ✓ Barbara Burkhardt noted that Section D should clearly state that the Nominating Committee shall consist of the Past President and two other members who do not hold board positions.



**Board Meeting Minutes - August 2013 - Page 2**

- ✓ Section B item G needs to be amended to include all board members. In this section the word “historian” needs to be replaced by the word “media”. Added to this section should be wording that excludes the two members representing the most recent intern graduates from voting.
- ✓ John Marshall noted that the term “Executive Board Members” needs a written definition. Ed Barrios replied that the state by-laws define the “Executive Board” as including the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The COT P&P will be amended to duplicate the state definition.

Treasurer John Marshall provided the following report:

**CRADLE OF TEXAS 2013 TREASURES REPORT**  
**July, 2013**

	Current Month	Year to Date
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	4,564.92	5,098.07
<b>Revenue</b>		
Training Fees Paid in 2013		400.00
2013 Dues		737.00
Miscellaneous Income	24.96	73.81
Shirt Sales		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	24.96	1,210.81
<b>Expenses</b>		
Training Expenses 2013		348.57
Administrative	59.18	187.23
Miscellaneous		1,041.94
Extraordinary - Board approved		200.44
<b>Total Expenses</b>	59.18	1,778.18
<b>Net Income Gain, (Loss)</b>	<b>(34.22)</b>	<b>(567.37)</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	4,530.70	4,530.70

It was noted that the COT P&P lists among the duties of the treasurer the task of preparing an annual budget. Since the preponderance of COT expenses are those of intern training, it is the training budget that is de facto the COT budget.

**Membership** Chair Jerry Eppner reported that 46 timesheets have been turned in, and 32 members have certified or recertified. The year-to-date VT is 5,582 hours and the AT is 512 hours, yielding a total since the inception of COT of 127,473 hours of volunteer time.

**Program** Chair Peggy Romfh reviewed the pending bonus advanced training day plan for September 18<sup>th</sup> that will include two speakers. Master Gardeners will also be invited; Ed Barrios is to survey the Brazoria County TMG to determine their likely attendance.



**Board Meeting Minutes - August 2013 - Page 3**

Since the first Wednesday in January, 2014 is New Year's Day, it was decided to move both the January board and general meetings back one week, scheduling the board meeting for January 8<sup>th</sup> and the general meeting for the 15<sup>th</sup>. Neal McLain will so revise the chapter calendar.

**Outreach** Chair Ruby reported the following activity in the interim since the July board meeting:

Date	Event	Organization/Location	# COT Volunteers	Volunteer hours	Youth	Adult	Total
7/6/2013	Fishin' Fiesta	Freeport	10	84.00	670	330	1000
7/13/2013	Kidsfest	Freeport	10	56.00	1335	665	2000
7/15/2013	Kid's Kollege	Brazosport College	2	8.00	90	2	92
7/22/2013	(Reptiles)	Lake Jackson					
July	Sea and Shore Mini Coastal Expo	10 programs at 10 Libraries	30	212.50	328	201	529
8/5/2013	Reptile Programming	Freeport Memorial Childcare (Daycare)	2	4.00	66	11	77
<b>Monthly totals</b>			<b>54</b>	<b>364.5</b>	<b>2489</b>	<b>1209</b>	<b>3698</b>
<b>Year-to-Date Totals</b>			<b>169</b>	<b>858.75</b>	<b>18,944</b>	<b>4,376</b>	<b>23,320</b>

Attendance at some of the summer library programs was low compared to previous years. For next year, Ruby will meet with the librarian at each of the county libraries who is in charge of the programs for children to ensure their cooperation in promotion of each event. Ruby was pleased that 30 different COT members helped with this year's summer programs at the Brazoria County libraries.

Ruby reviewed upcoming outreach events:

- ✓ August 10<sup>th</sup>, Kids Day at the Brazos Mall, COT will participate with the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (Friends) to present reptiles and promote our organizations.
- ✓ August 12<sup>th</sup>, Mike Mullins will speak to a newly organized group (currently six 6 members) of "Earth Warriors" at Pearland High School.
- ✓ September 7<sup>th</sup>, Abner Jackson Plantation Nature Day, organized by the Lake Jackson Historical Society.



### **Board Meeting Minutes - August 2013 - Page 4**

- ✓ October 19<sup>th</sup>, Kids Day on Buffalo Bayou, in downtown Houston just downstream from Eleanor Tinsley Park, will include COT and Friends displays of reptiles and EarthQuest® birds-of-prey shows. Channel 11 TV is one of the sponsors.
- ✓ Science Night at the Library will commence with programs in September and October. Kelly Wright is tentatively scheduled to discuss bats on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- ✓ September 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza

Mike Mullins noted that the Katy Prairie Conservancy has requested help from the Master Naturalists to develop a document on restoring and maintaining sections of coastal prairie. They also are looking for help in developing lesson plans for teaching youth about our prairies. The board thought that COT member Susan Conaty would be an ideal candidate for this task (it is not clear how Susan would be recruited to do this).

Ed Barrios reported that the nine-year environmental education program at *INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA Sites Chocolate Bayou Works* and third-grade students from the *Angleton Independent School District (AISD)* has been terminated. The base reason seems to be the inability to recruit sufficient INEOS employees to support TMN volunteers. An alternative EE program is being formulated that would be held at the BEES (Brazoria Environmental Educational Station), the home base of the Brazoria County Master Gardeners Association. This program would involve teaching stations led by both BCMGA and TMN-COT volunteers. INEOS has indicated its willingness to donate equipment and their remaining stock of supplies to this new initiative, including the projecting microscope uses in the INEOS EE program.

A letter of appreciation will be sent to COT member Fred Lewis by our chapter thanking him for his many years of leadership in the INEOS EE program. Marty Cornell will draft this letter for President Mike Mullins' signature.

The Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza (XHX) will again be held at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory on the second and third Saturday mornings in September, i.e. September 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. At the August 14<sup>th</sup> general meeting, Ruby Luis will recruit volunteers for the COT reptile station at XHX.

Thomas Adams of the Texas Mid-coast NWR Complex mentioned to Mike Mullins that, in December, he will be organizing a transfer of native grasses from a section of the main unit of the San Bernard NWR to the prairie on the Eagle Nest Lake unit of the refuge. He will be requesting help from TMN volunteers for this dig and replant exercise.



**Board Meeting Minutes - August 2013 - Page 5**

**Training** Chair Ed Johnson presented a draft budget for next year's intern training sessions:

**Preliminary 2014 Intern Training Budget**

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>EACH</u>	<u>NUMBER OF INTERNS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Texas Master Naturalist Curriculum (MKT-3568C) (\$30.00 Curriculum; \$2.88 Tax; \$5.00 Shipping)	\$ 37.88	10	\$ 378.80
Gem Field Book (Forestry Suppliers, Inc #49325) (\$8.25; \$1.42 Shipping)	\$ 9.67	10	\$ 96.70
2-Inch, 3-Ring Binders (D-Ring), with clear slip-in cover 2 per Person @ \$4.67 each = \$9.34)	\$ 9.34	10	\$ 93.40
Divider Pages with slip-in tabs (Pkg of 4 sets, 8 sheets per set, Ea. Person = \$3.59 - OfficeMax)	\$ 3.59	10	\$ 35.90
Breakfast Snacks for first Intro I Class Session			\$ 12.00
Taco Soup Lunch for first Intro I Class Lunch			\$ 50.00
Ice for Water Igloo for 12 or 13 Training Classes			\$ 20.00
Coffee for 12 or 13 Training Classes			\$ 10.00
Paper Goods for 12 or 13 Training Classes (Paper Plates, Plastic Ware, Paper Towels)			\$50.00
Graduation Shirts, JERZEES, Short Sleeve	\$ 20.00	10	\$ 200.00
Graduation Magnetic Name Tags (\$6.50 Each, G & J Trophy, 102 Garland Drive, L.J., TX)	\$ 6.50	10	\$ 65.00
Youth Protection Background Check	\$ 10.00	10	\$ 100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 1,111.80</b>



**Board Meeting Minutes - August 2013 - Page 6**

This draft budget, based on ten interns, indicates a fee of \$100 would be needed from each intern to cover costs. **Marty Cornell moved and Neal McLain seconded the motion to increase the intern training fee to \$100.** The discussion that followed noted that our current stock has five state curriculum books, TMN-COT shirts, and field notebooks, thus reducing the actual cost of training next year. One view was expressed that the fee should be based on reoccurring costs. The question was called and the **motion passed unanimously.**

Further discussion resulted in a **motion by Jerry Eppner, seconded by Marty Cornell, to reimburse the cost of the state curriculum to an intern if it was returned in good condition, i.e. a de facto loan of the curriculum during training.** This **motion passed** with no objections.

**Elections:** Mike Mullins will select two non-board members to serve with the Past President on the nominating committee for chapter officers in 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Submitted by

Marty Cornell, Secretary, Texas Master Naturalists, Cradle of Texas Chapter