



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, February 7, 2018, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
AgriLife Extension Building—Angleton, Texas

President: Kristine Rivers called the meeting to order, presented the agenda at 9:00 a.m., and requested additions or corrections.

Attendance—

Elected Members of Board	Present	Appointed Members of Board	Present
Kristine Rivers (President)	X	Peggy Romfh (Membership)	X
Bill Ahlstrom (Vice-President/Programs)	X	Pete Romfh (Membership)	X
Lisa Myers (Secretary)	X	Neal McLain (Publications)	X
Don Sabathier (Treasurer)	X	Oron Atkins (Volunteer Services)	X
		Larry Ruhr (Advanced Training)	X
Board Advisors		Carolyn May-Monie (Training)	X
John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension)	X	Pam West (Chapter Host)	X
		Ruby Lewis (Outreach)	
Guests		Jimmy Salinas (Speakers Bureau)	X
		Richard Schaffhausen (Publicity)	X
		Bob Whitmarsh (Intern Representative)	X
		Connie Stolte (State Representative)	X
		Dave Brandes (Past-President)	X
		Quorum	Yes

Secretary—Lisa Myers stated that the minutes had been sent to the Board for review, and the corrections suggested by Board members were made. The minutes were approved.

Minutes Approval—

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded by	Vote
Approve the January General Meeting and Board Meeting Minutes	Peggy Romfh	Pete Romfh	Minutes approved by voice vote of Board members present

Motions—

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded by	Vote
COT should hold an annual, Bonus AT Event, if possible. (Larry Ruhr, Jimmy Salinas, and Bill Ahlstrom will form a preliminary steering committee)	Larry Ruhr	Pete Romfh	Decision approved by voice vote of Board Members present

Action Register Review was led by Kristine Rivers [see *COT Board Action Register items at end of minutes*].

Treasurer’s Report—Don Sabathier presented the January 2018, financial information, below. He indicated that the 2017 books were closed and the review completed.

1 January – 31 January 2018, COT Treasurer Report

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	\$ 6,312.89
Revenue Summary	\$ 1,592.97
Interest	\$ 0.66
Expense Summary	(\$ 1,086.10)
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 6,820.42

Chapter Host—Pam West notified the Board that she had purchased and had engraved a crystal wine glass to present at the General Meeting to Ed Barrios in appreciation for his 12 years of service on the Board.

AT Bonus Day Report—Larry Ruhr provided a summary of the event (previously emailed to the membership) and thanked the Board for supporting the event and organizers and presenters for contributing to the day’s success. He noted that 93 people attended, including 61 from COT, and 10 TMN chapters were represented. One attendee expressed interest in COT’s next intern training class and several attendees emailed thanked COT for its hospitality.

Later in the meeting, the Board briefly reviewed suggestions for improving future COT-sponsored AT events. The following were deemed beneficial: Having a timekeeper, frequent breaks, having speakers on the stage and using the overhead projector. Concerns included: Maintaining a comfortable temperature in a crowded room; more room in the display area; having a shorter day; possibly include a field trip; handling an even larger number of attendees (alternate venues were suggested) and the cost/logistics of moving to another site for AT and even General Meetings.

Kristine mentioned that the overhead projector worked well and would like to use it and the stage for General Meetings. Also, one chapter expressed an interest in working more closely COT in the future.

New VPAL Forms—Oron Atkins completed VPALs for the Cradle of Texas Conservancy and the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science and he will complete VMS codes for each [see *Action Item*].

New Chapter Advisor—Kristine Rivers reminded the Board that the Chapter has been without a second advisor for over a year. Advisors must be either AgriLIFE or Texas Parks and Wildlife employees and must have permission from their direct report. After consulting with Past President Dave Brandes and TMN Assistant Coordinator Mary Pearl Meuth, Kristine said she approached David Heinicke of Brazos Bend State Park to gauge his interest. Connie Stolte recommended reaching out to Texas Sea Center, in order to maintain COT’s relationship with them, and indicated that David Abrego might be an interim advisor. Texas Parks and Wildlife would also have to approve of such an appointment.

BOARD REPORTS

Programs—Bill Ahlstrom announced the following General Meeting and Nature Notes speakers:

- **February**—Stephen Curtis, “The American Eel”; Nature Notes: Candace Novak, “Frog Calls”
- **March**—James Glover, “Intracoastal Water Way—The Early Years”; Nature Notes open
- **April**—(tentative) Dr. Gilbert Rowe or an associate speaking on massive sargassum invasions
- **Future**—(possibly) Dan Reilly providing an update on why some hurricanes are so deadly

Secretary—Lisa Myers reminded Board Members to send their reports at least a day in advance to her and the president so that information can be recorded accurately and the reports can be attached to the minutes.

Membership—Pete and Peggy Romfh presented final hours counts for 2017 (16,953.5 VT hours and 1,670 hours AT) and the following impact data, VT and AT information, and award recipients for the February General Meeting. They noted that AT hours for the month of January are approximately half of those for VT due to the hours logged for the AT Bonus event on January 20. She also presented a graph (to be shared at the General Meeting next week) that shows volunteer hours as categorized by hours groups. They used a field in VMS to capture the history. Peggy stated that the plaque in the AgriLIFE building entry with names of COT members achieving major milestones was out of date. Bob Whitmarsh offered to update it at G & J Trophy in Lake Jackson.

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
1 January – 31 January 2018	215	209	424

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours	# of Volunteers
1 January – 31 January 2018	772*	382	68

* Hours would have been higher, but many activities cancelled due to weather and the federal government shutdown.

Recertification 2017 (Sea Turtle Pin)	Recertification 2018 (Ocelot Pin)	500-Hour Milestone (Silver Dragonfly Pin)
Sherry Summers	Ruby Lewis**	Don Sabathier

**Ruby will be feted with a cookie cake at the February General Meeting.

Training—Carolyn May-Monie said that the next training committee meeting will be on February 26 at 10 a.m. The “Grasses” training session has been renamed “Grasses and Other Vegetation.”

Volunteer Project, Public Outreach, and Activity Request Review—Oron Atkins shared the following upcoming projects, outreach and/or status updates:

- **Exploration Green Nursery/Wetland Work Day**—To be determined, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Mary Carol Edwards; they prefer that groups commit to dates in advance and Oron will survey members concerning available dates
- **Exploration Green Tree Planting**—February 13, March 10 and 17, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Jerry Hamby jhamby4@comcast.net
- **TCWP at GCBO (Gulf Coast Bird Observatory) Work Day**—February 15, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper kneupper@brazoriainet.com
- **GCBO Spread Crushed Granite Work Day**—February 21, 8:30 a.m. to completion; contact Martin Hagne mhagne@gcbo.org
- **GCBO Native Plant Work Day**—Every Saturday until further notice, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper kneupper@brazoriainet.com
- **Bobcat Woods Trail**—Installation of new boardwalk began last November. Scope of work includes: stage materials along trail, drill ground holes for posts, attach sub-structure, install TanDeck deck boards. Many volunteers needed. See calendar for scheduled work days.

Outreach—In Ruby Lewis' absence, Oron noted upcoming volunteer opportunities, as follows:

- **DEEP at BNWR**—February 8, 15, 20, March 1, 6, and 8
- **Sea Center Texas Nature Day**—February 24, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Brazoria Heritage Day**—March 3.

Kristine mentioned that Bill Ahlstrom inquired whether Spring Fling could be extended into May, since bird migration was still strong at Quintana Bird Sanctuary the first week of May, and Lisa reminded Peggy of a suggestion last year to possibly start volunteer duty an hour earlier. Pete and Peggy have not yet heard from GCBO regarding plans for this year.

Advanced Training—Larry Ruhr noted the following and indicated that he would be sending to members these and additional opportunities via an email later today.

- **GCBO SOAR Program Orientation**—Saturday, February 10 or Sunday, February 11 at 1 p.m. at GCBO. Other opportunities coming up
- **Seaside Chat**—Dates have been set and Larry will have them next week.

Publications—Neal McLain provided the following information regarding publications:

BONUS AT DAY

- Neal expressed his enjoyment of the program and that he learned a great deal
- Thanked Larry Peterson for taking over setting up the projector and smoothly running the presentations

WEBSITE

- Added photos of January 20 Bonus AT and added link on the Scrapbook page; photos provided by Dave Brandes, Pete Romfh, Susan Conaty and Neal McLain
<https://bonusat.blogspot.com/>

- Updated Advanced Training Page to include Bonus AT*
<http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/index.html>
- * Kristine expressed her concern about posting Bonus AT presentation on the Web due to risk of plagiarism
- AT Page for 2017 remains on website until February 15
<http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/2017/index.html>

FOBWR WEBSITES

- As of the FOBWR Board Meeting on January 21, 2018, Neal is “officially” no longer responsible for any of the four FOBWR websites. However, he has updated the *Birds of Prey* website at Phil Huxford’s request. See <http://birdsofpreytexas.org/>

NEWSLETTER

- January Issue posted on schedule
- February issue publication schedule:

Wednesday, February 7	Board Meeting
Friday, February 9	Submission deadline
Sunday, February 11	Review draft posted for Board Review
Monday, February 12	Publication

Speakers Bureau—Jimmy Salinas noted that activity has been quiet, but he has several organizations he intends to contact in the near future. He contacted Mickey Dufilho, who teaches at Brazosport College, regarding ways that COT might promote the next intern training class to students and other ways to work with the college.

Intern Representative—Bob Whitmarsh asked for clarification regarding his role on the Board and various suggestions were made including: Keeping the Class of 2017 members updated on Board activities and soliciting their suggestions and participation.

Board Advisor—John O’Connell presented the following events and updates:

- **Water Fairs** dates are set for April 18 and 19 and April 24 and 25
- **Stream Trailer** will be at Migration Celebration and he will need volunteers; training will be held in mid-March
- **AgriLIFE 4H Water Ambassadors Program** for high school students is a new program coming to the area in June. A day of activities for students will be scheduled and the TMN Galveston Chapter will possibly be involved as well
- **Christopher Hernandez Agriculture Model**—This home-schooled high school student may want to present his model to the COT Board and possibly, the members; TBD
- **Opportunity for article in *The Facts* and *The Alvin Sun***—Each AgriLIFE agent can submit an article that is guaranteed to be published; COT can offer an article if it wants
- **Captain Shish Kabob** dates are set for May 10 and 11; volunteers will be needed for kitchen help; qualification for VT needs to be determined



Cradle of Texas Board Action Register				
Open Action Item	Who?	Due Date?	Complete/Pending	Comments
Organize a multi-hour member event consisting of several AT-eligible sessions	Larry Ruhr Pam West Presentation Committee	20 Jan. 2018	Complete	Event held on 20 Jan. 2018 was attended by 93 (61 COT members and 9 other chapters represented); lunch was included; AgriLife room and conference room were reserved for sessions and food service; a detailed description, including a link to the evite, was posted on the chapter website at http://tmn-org/Advanced/AT_2018-01-20/index.html . The event was deemed highly successful by all involved and the Board hoped to hold an annual AT event
Explore what general liability coverage volunteers do and do not have; ask Michelle Haggerty for clarification	John O'Connell	Feb.	Complete	Per input from John O'Connell and discussion by the Board, no additional coverage was deemed necessary. The Board thought it advisable to hold a formal, animal-training session, which was accomplished by Ruby Lewis at the Bonus AT Event on January 20
Promote Fall Intern Training Class; plan dates for 2019 class (to secure conference room)	Neal McLain, Kristine Rivers, Dick Schaffhausen Jimmy Salinas	Ongoing	Pending	Outreach to area community colleges and other groups not previously contacted; explore whether colleges would give credit for attendance; explore whether teachers would give extra credit for class or individual sessions (if there is space) Change to fall class is permanent. Carolyn May-Monie in the process of finalizing presenter schedule Class dates need to be published as soon as possible; Dick Schaffhausen will disseminate press release
Prepare VPALs for Cradle of Texas Conservancy and Brazosport Museum of Natural Science	Oron Atkins	Feb.	Complete	Chris Kneupper will be COT contact for CTC and VMS codes have been set up; Roy Morgan will be asked to be COT contact for the museum; VMS codes will be set up
Follow-up with Kari Howard to set up TERN training for both rookery and foraging monitoring and reporting	Kristine Rivers	Feb.	Complete	Colonial Waterbird Training date is February 26, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Pearland Recreation Center; on-line registration is required. An email notice with the link was sent to all COT members; link also available on the Calendar. Coastal Prairie and Galveston TMN chapters will be invited to attend after COT members have had sufficient opportunity to register *

* Kristine noted that she had expressed concern to Cullen Ondracek, Natural Resource Manager for Pearland Parks & Recreation, about mowing the peninsula that is extremely close to the rookery as it might



disturb the nesting birds; however, he replied that the practice would continue. Others on the Board stated that this concern has been brought up to PP&R in the past, with no change; it was suggested that some sort of activism might be called for.

New Action Item(s) Added at February Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Complete/ Pending	Comments
NONE				

President: Kristine asked members how much time they need to present at the General Meeting and adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary



Attendance Date 2018	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Rivers, Kristine	X	X											
Ahlstrom, Bill	X	X											
Sabathier, Don	X	X											
Myers, Lisa	X	X											
Advisor(s)													
O'Connell, John	X	X											
Appointed Board Members													
Atkins, Oron	X	X											
Barrios, Ed		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Brandes, Dave		X											
Lewis, Ruby	X												
May-Monie, Carolyn	X	X											
McLain, Neal	X	X											
Romfh, Peggy		X											
Romfh, Pete		X											
Ruhr, Larry	X	X											
Salinas, Jimmy	X	X											
Schaffhausen, Dick	X	X											
Stolte, Connie	-	X											
West, Pam	X	X											
Training Class Representative(s)													
Whitmarsh, Bob (2017)	-	X											
Guest(s)													