



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, May 3, 2017, 10:00 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.
AgriLife Extension Building—Angleton, Texas

President: Kristine Rivers called the meeting to order, presented the agenda at 10:00 a.m., and requested additions or corrections. There were none.

Attendance:

Elected Members of Board	Present	Appointed Members of Board	Present
Kristine Rivers (President)	X	Peggy Romfh (Membership)	X
Jill Carroll (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)	
John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension)	X	Pam West (Chapter Host)	X
		Ruby Lewis (Outreach)	X
Guests		Jimmy Salinas (Speakers Bureau)	
		Richard Schaffhausen (Publicity)	X
		Judy Green (Intern Representative)	X
		Ed Barrios (State Representative)	
		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
April Board Meeting & General Meeting	Peggy Romfh	Dave Brandes	Minutes approved by voice vote

Action Register Review was led by Kristine Rivers [see COT Board Action Register items at end of minutes]. There were no completed and removed items.

Treasurer's Report—Don Sabathier presented the April, 2017, financial information, below. He noted that with the exception of one person, most members he had contacted regarding outstanding dues had not responded. After a brief discussion as to how to handle the issue, Peggy Romfh suggested that members who had not entered hours in 2016 and had not paid dues for this year should be moved to inactive status in VMS. **1 April – 30 April, 2017, COT Treasurer Report**

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	\$ 8,395.48
Revenue Summary	\$ 115.00
Interest	\$ 0.79
Expense Summary	(\$ 514.99)
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 7,996.28



Texas Water Specialist Certification—Larry Ruhr notified the board that he had finished plans for the kick-off of the program, will notify members at the general meeting, and intends to host the first guided discussion after the June general meeting.

Lunch Arrangements for May Meeting—Pam West asked to revisit the plans for next week’s intern graduation (to have cake and ice cream only) because Caroline May-Monie had already informed interns that lunch was provided after the May general meeting and intern presentations. Board members discussed the pros and cons of lunch versus no lunch and Pam offered to explore having soup and sandwiches. A few members offered to bring non-sweet items to augment the usual offerings from the snack committee.

Boat Trip to North Deer Island Rookery—Kristine Rivers presented information on a half-day trip she is organizing for May 21 and asked for and received permission to present it to the membership at the next general meeting. Dave Brandes noted that for-profit trip opportunities had been presented in the past, and Larry stated that participants can apply for AT, if applicable, after-the-fact.

BOARD REPORTS

Programs—Jill Carroll announced the speakers for June (John O’Connell speaking on Echinoderms) and July (Kari Howard of Houston Audubon speaking on the TERN program) and that Nature Notes presenters were lined up for the rest of the year. She is also recontacting some suggested speakers to query their availability. Kristine suggested that Jill emphasize to speakers that presentations should run from one to one and a half hours as a couple of recent presentations had been very short.

Past President—Dave Brandes asked Neal if he wanted help with the website and noted that there is currently no other person who knows the site, and there is no back-up to Neal. Neal indicated that he would be happy to train someone and suggested that we migrate to WordPress, which the state provides to chapters, including training, but that we keep the current off-site storage as is. Neal will investigate who the helper/back-up webmaster should be.

Membership—Pete and Peggy Romfh presented the following impact data and VT and AT information:

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
1 January – 30 April 2017	7,268	22,301	29,569

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours
1 January – 30 April 2017	7,180	763.3



Membership (continued)

The following certification, recertification, and awards will be presented at the May 10, general meeting:

Initial Certification	Recertification (Sea Turtle Pin)	250 Hours Milestone (Bronze Dragonfly Pin)	1000 Hours Milestone (Gold Dragonfly Pin)
Jackie Hicks ('16) Bill Ahlstrom ('17) ¹ George Valadez ('17)	Howard Allen Jackie Hicks Anna King Larry Kirby Vicki Kirby	Mel McKey Neal McLain Tom Morris Mike Mullins Dick Schaffhausen Lorna Witt	Julia Geissler Larry Kirby Jo Myers Ken Sluis Oron Atkins

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

- Bobcat Woods Trail Boardwalk—Resumed May 1; check calendar; contact Oron Atkins oronatkins@comcast.net, who intends to push for volunteers at the general meeting
- Grass Mowing at SBNWR—contact Roland Davis roland_davis@fws.gov (will not have TMN calendar entry); SBNWR has only four maintenance employees and no regular volunteers
- Sea Turtle Patrol—on-going through July; see Sea Turtle Patrol Calendar
- Texas Coastal Watershed Program (TCWP) at GCBO (work day)—May 18; contact Mary Carol Edwards mcedwards@tamu.edu (may not happen due to Pearland workday, below; awaiting word from Chris Kneupper)
- Pearland Floating Wetlands Workday—May 18; contact Mary Carol Edwards mcedwards@tamu.edu
- Hanson Riverside County Park Trail Clearing—May 15; contact Mike Mullenweg mikem@brazoria-county.com; not known if there will be sign-up sheets
- TCWP Exploration Green Planting at Clear Lake—May 13 and May 27; contact Mary Carol Edwards mcedwards@tamu.edu
- Louisiana Eyed Silkmoth Project— From end of April to end of summer; has started with five volunteers; more are needed; contact Jennifer Wilson jennifer_wilson@fws.gov (no TMN calendar entry)
- Summer Bird Camp—June 5 through 9, one or two volunteers needed for one hour each morning before sessions start to conduct informal nature walks (but are welcome to stay and assist with additional activities); contact Sue McMillian suelaine48@msn.com.

¹ Bill Ahlstrom and George Valadez will likely achieve initial certification by next week; awaiting confirmation from Caroline May-Monie.



Advanced Training—Larry Ruhr acknowledged that the pace of new AT opportunities had slowed down and he was looking for more. A brief discussion elicited several ideas to provide additional AT options to members, including:

- Offer a Saturday or other day “class” with several AT sessions (Larry)
- Set-up walk-and-talks with experts in various disciplines (Oron)
- Invite Rich Tillman to reprise his talk on estuaries (Peggy).

Kristine asked Larry and Jill to organize a special day of AT (see “New Action Items Added at May Meeting,” below).

Outreach—Ruby Lewis stated that she has the names of several people who have recently expressed interest in the COT chapter, and she will contact them. She also provided a recap of COT involvement in Pearland’s Earth Day event and noted that a lighter display board, like that of Sea Center Texas’ would be much easier to transport. She offered to coordinate the purchase of materials and construction of the board. A second board may be added afterwards.

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded by	Vote
Purchase materials and signage to make a lightweight display board for use at outreach events	Larry Ruhr	Peggy Romfh	Decision approved by voice vote of Board members present

Ruby then reviewed the following, upcoming events:

- Captain Shishka Bob—May 11, 12, at Angleton Fairgrounds, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; VT (PO) for all work done (including kitchen help); 10 volunteers have been secured
- Quintana Park Beach Safaris for kindergarten-age children—Last training (required) on May 8, but Mike Mullenweg will do one-on-one training as required; event on May 9, 10, 16, and 17 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- DEEP at BNWR—May 16 and 18, O.M. Roberts; May 25, NISD STEM Academy (invitation only for volunteers); May 26, Bess Brannan; Johnny and Ruby recruiting via sign-up sheets
- Nature Camp at Camp Mohawk Summer Youth Camp—June 12 through 15, mornings; Ed Barrios helping and in the process of turning over to Mike Mullenweg, who will be the contact
- Nature Camp at Quintana Park—June 19 through 22; Ed Barrios helping and in the process of turning over to Mike Mullenweg, who will be the contact; Ruby Lewis will circulate sign-up sheets
- Brazoria County Library System (BCLS) Summer Reading Club—Multiple dates and times in June and July at various libraries; contact Ruby Lewis

Kristine noted that in response to COT involvement in Unity Bay Area Houston’s Pathway project, invitations were extended to all chapter members who had participated in the February 11th event to attend the Pathway Project Dedication on May 7.



Publications—Neal McLain provided the following information regarding publications:

Newsletter

- The May issue, according to Lisa, will be published on Monday, May 8, via the Google group, with a review copy to the board on May 7. All submissions must be received by Lisa by 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 6

Website

- Routine updates to the Advanced Training page as information received from Jill Carroll
- Routine updates to the Intern Training page as requested by Carolyn May-Monie

Media Library

- Due to changes in the furniture arrangement in the room housing COT’s Media Library, COT books were apparently removed from the bookcase and then replaced in random order. The bookcase has been partially blocked by a large wood-and-metal object. Neal has asked John O’Connell to assist in resolving this situation and John indicated at the meeting that he would move the object as soon as feasible

Google Group Mailing List

- In response to comments made at the April board meeting, Neal will not restore the header that he removed several months ago as part of an effort to determine the cause of a problem that certain members with comcast.com email addresses had reported.

Neal commended Pete, Oron and Larry for doing a great job in keeping the chapter calendar complete and up-to-date, as he hoped it would be when he first envisioned it.

Intern Representative—Judy did not have a report but noted that she received minimal input from the 2016 class with respect to issues or changes. Lisa suggested surveying interns for their ideas and concerns now that they had the perspective of one-year’s involvement in COT. Kristine indicated that Survey Monkey was free and Peggy suggested inviting all members to participate in small, roundtable discussions during/after the December general meeting.

Chapter Adviser—John O’Connell did not have a report; however, Peggy mentioned that the recent Water Fair was an excellent event and asked how a more portable version of some of the activities/displays could be developed for use by the Speakers Bureau and outreach.

The subject having been briefly broached earlier in the meeting when COT’s new, non-profit status was discussed, Peggy suggested that the chapter purchase a new computer for use at meetings (see “New Action Items Added at May Meeting,” below).

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded by	Vote
Investigate specifications and pricing for a new COT computer	Peggy Romfh	Jill Carroll	Decision approved by voice vote of Board members present

President: Kristine Rivers asked members to let her know how much time they need to present at the General Meeting and adjourned the Board Meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary



Cradle of Texas Board Action Register				
Open Action Item	Who?	Due Date?	Complete/ Pending	Comments
501(c)(3) Filing (non-profit) ²	Ed Barrios Don Sabathier	May	Pending	Don received notice via mail to AgriLife of sub-category 509(a)(2) approval ² . The IRS is requesting that COT file a 990(n) by May 15 for 2016; Don will investigate and file if required. We can now file for ITIN (tax ID) and a tax-exempt code
Look into the Liability Policy for D&O, share Friend's D&O liability policy with COT Board, discuss with Kim Richardson possible strategies for adding insurance for COT	Ed Barrios, Kim Richardson	June	Pending	Now that COT has non-profit status, we can proceed with soliciting quotes, including one from Chubb, which specializes in coverage for non-profits and from which Friends of BNWR received a quote
Verify what emergency contact and health information is available in VMS and work with chapter members to update information and define a specific emergency-response protocol	Peggy Romfh, Pete Romfh	June	Pending	In the event of a volunteer's medical emergency at an event, we must have immediate access to his/her special medical concerns (if any) and contacts; Kristine reminded members at April meeting to update their info in VMS; Pete and Peggy will alert members with no emergency contact
New Action Items Added at May Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Complete/ Pending	Comments
Organize a four-hour member event consisting of several AT-eligible sessions	Larry Ruhr Jill Carroll	June	Pending	COT has had similar events in the past for general education and to provide an opportunity for AT hours
Investigate specifications and pricing for a new COT computer	Dave Brandes	June	Pending	The current laptop used at meetings is old, slow and inadequate for some purposes

² Neal McLain asked Don to write up COT's new status for the newsletter; Kristine indicated that she would include in the president's message for the June newsletter. There was a brief discussion as to how dollars contributed as a result of the new status could be used. The original notice from the IRS will be kept in COT chapter files—copies were distributed to directors.



Date 2017	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Rivers, Kristine	X	X	X	X	X								
Carroll, Jill	X	X	X		X								
Sabathier, Don	X	X		X	X								
Myers, Lisa	X	X	X	X	X								
Advisor(s)													
O'Connell, John	X	X	X		X								
Appointed Board Members													
Atkins, Oron	X	X	X	X	X								
Barrios, Ed	X		X	X									
Brandes, Dave	X	X		X	X								
Lewis, Ruby	X	X		X	X								
May-Monie, Carolyn	X												
McLain, Neal	X	X	X		X								
Romfh, Peggy	X	X	X		X								
Romfh, Pete	X	X	X		X								
Ruhr, Larry	X	X	X	X	X								
Salinas, Jimmy													
Schaffhausen, Dick		X		X	X								
West, Pam	X		X	X	X								
Training Class Representative(s)													
Green, Judy (2016)	X	X		X	X								
(2017)													
(2017)													
Guest(s)													
Jerry Eppner	X												
Jimmy Salinas			X										