



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, June 7, 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
		Carolyn May-Monie (Training)	X
Board Advisors		Pam West (Chapter Host)	X
John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension)	X	Ruby Lewis (Outreach)	
		Jimmy Salinas (Speakers Bureau)	X
Guests		Richard Schaffhausen (Publicity)	
		Bill Ahlstrom (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
May Board Meeting & General Meeting	Dave Brandes	Don Sabathier	Minutes approved by voice vote



Action Register Review was led by Kristine Rivers [see *COT Board Action Register items at end of minutes*]. The following are completed and removed items:

Completed Action Items	Who?	Comments
501(c)(3) Filing (non-profit)	Ed Barrios, Don Sabathier	Don received notice via mail to AgriLife of sub-category 509(a)(2) approval; Don filed the 2016 990(n) requested by the IRS; ITIN (tax ID) and a tax-exempt code filed for and received ¹ .
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	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 alerted members with no emergency contact; Peggy will send updated information to Kristine, Ruby and John
Investigate specifications and pricing for a new COT computer	Dave Brandes	The current laptop used at meetings is old, slow and inadequate for some purposes; Dave found new hard drive cost prohibitive but update of software (about \$44) was approved; John offered a "surplus" laptop for COT meeting use and will reserve it; it will be the primary computer with the updated "old" computer as back-up

Treasurer's Report—Don Sabathier presented the May, 2017, financial information, below.

1 May – 31 May, 2017, COT Treasurer Report

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	\$ 7,996.28
Revenue Summary	\$ 161.00
Interest	\$ 0.81
Expense Summary	(\$ 224.65)
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 7,933.44

¹ The original notices from the IRS will be kept in COT chapter files and were distributed to Board members.



American Eel Monitoring—Oron Atkins briefly explained this program that needs volunteers to deploy “eel mops” to catch juvenile eels in approximately 16 locations. Jill Carroll offered to invite the program contact to speak at the October general meeting.

TMN State Meeting Presentation Proposal—Jimmy Salinas provided a brief overview of the presentation titled, “It’s a Wild, Wild Life on the Texas Mid-Coast” proposed by a committee of several COT members and recently submitted to the State. Kristine noted that the COT chapter had never presented at the annual meeting. She further suggested that presenters’ registration fees be covered if the proposal is accepted, and Dave Brandes indicated that there was precedent to cover registration fees for the Chapter President and State Representative, but in the past, some “scholarship” funds had been offered to members as well. Larry Ruhr asked that the presentation, if and when developed, be adapted to use for chapter AT.

BOARD REPORTS

Programs—Jill Carroll informed members of the following, General Meeting speakers:

- **June** (John O’Connell speaking on Echinoderms and Lisa Myers presenting Nature Notes on opossums)
- **July** (Kari Howard of Houston Audubon speaking on the TERN program and Jimmy Salinas presenting Nature Notes on oil spills)
- **August** (Dan Reilly of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—NOAA—speaking on hurricanes and Tommy Morris presenting Nature Notes on birds of prey)
- **September** (Scott Jones of the Galveston Bay Foundation speaking on oyster bed issues in Christmas and Drum Bays and Judy Green possibly presenting Nature Notes on wolf dogs).

Jill asked if the board was interested in a tour and/or presentation that had been offered by the public relations firm representing Republic Services landfill company. There was some discussion as to the PR firm’s bias, and it was suggested that Jill further vet them or contact another organization—perhaps state or county Environmental Services or the Texas Committee on Environmental Quality—to present on the topic of landfills at a future General Meeting.

Secretary—Lisa Myers reminded those board members who had agreed to be interviewed for the TMN 20th Anniversary Project to stay after the meeting.

Treasurer—Don Sabathier advised that the 990(n) for 2016 requested by the IRS had been filed [see completed action item, above].

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

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
1 January – 31 May 2017	7,813	24,268	32,081

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours
1 January – 31 May 2017	9,083	869



Membership (continued)

The following certification, recertification, and awards will be presented at the June 14, general meeting:

Initial Certification	Recertification (Sea Turtle Pin)	4000 Hours Milestone (Polished Gold Dragonfly with Ruby Pin)
Michael Lasseter ('17) Edward Peebles ('17)	Dave Brandes Susan Safley Marlies Greenwood Carole Wenny Pam West	Peggy Romfh

Don said that there are still a few people who have not renewed their membership or responded to queries regarding their status. One is currently volunteering. Don noted that one member was experiencing a personal issue and Kristine was going to call another.

Training—Carolyn May-Monie reported the results of a survey of 2017 interns and noted that some changes in the training program would be made based on intern suggestions. She further indicated that she intends to rewrite the training description. Carolyn asked board guidance on one 2016 intern, who has four more hours to complete training but has not responded to multiple attempts to contact her concerning her status. Peggy Romfh stated that she would mark the person as inactive. Kristine stated that recruitment efforts should be started earlier than in the past, and Carolyn suggested open registration and inviting potential interns to attend General Meetings in the interim. After some discussion and suggestions, it was decided that applications would be accepted “year-round” along with the registration fee, which will be non-refundable. The board also agreed to a class-size limit of 15 interns.

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

- **Bobcat Woods Trail Boardwalk**—On-going but waiting for refuge personnel and equipment operators; check calendar; contact Oron Atkins oronatkins@comcast.net
- **Grass Mowing at SBNWR**—Mondays through Thursdays; contact Roland Davis roland_davis@fws.gov (no TMN calendar entry)
- **Sea Turtle Patrol**—On-going through early July; see Sea Turtle Patrol Calendar (AT required)
- **TCWP at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory Work Day**—June 17, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Contact Chris Kneupper kneupper@bazorianet.com
- **Louisiana Eyed Silkmoth Project**—To end of summer; contact Jennifer Wilson jennifer_wilson@fws.gov (no TMN calendar entry)
- **Texas Stream Team Training**—June 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (AT—registration required)
- **Bird Camp at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory**—June 9 is last day
- **Nature Camp at Camp Mohawk County Park**—June 12 through 15, mornings; Ed Barrios helping and has turned over to Mike Mullenweg, who will be the contact
- **Nature Camp at Quintana Beach County Park**—June 19 through 22; Ed Barrios helping and has turned over to Mike Mullenweg, who will be the contact
- **Brazoria County Library System (BCLS) Summer Reading Club**—Multiple dates and times in June and July at various libraries; contact Ruby Lewis.

Oron questioned the two-hour total limit for AT listed on the calendar for Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue meetings. Carolyn stated that most meetings have considerable training content; she offered to give Larry the meeting schedule so that he could determine hours to allocate. Oron said he would edit the calendar.



Advanced Training—Larry Ruhr acknowledged that computer problems had kept him from adding three to four AT items to the calendar, but he will do so as soon as possible. All other items are on the calendar.

Chapter Host—Pam West will have a cake at the general meeting to celebrate Peggy’s milestone of 4000 volunteer hours.

Publications—Neal McLain provided the following information regarding publications:

Newsletter

The June issue, according to Lisa, will be published on Monday, June 12, via the Google group, with a review copy to the board on June 11. All submissions must be received by Lisa by 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 10

Website

- Board of Directors Page and Personnel Contacts Page: Removed Judy Green as 2016 class rep; added Bill Ahlstrom as 2017 class rep
- AT Page: Up-to-date through September
- Header: Suggested the following header or similar for the website to facilitate on-line donations. Don would need to first set up an account with PayPal and provide the HTML code to Neal [see new Action Item, below]. It was suggested that COT’s 501(c)(3) status and tax-deductibility of donations be prominently indicated in the header



Calendar

- Commended Larry Ruhr and Oron Atkins for an excellent job maintaining the TMN on-line calendar

Media Library

- The item blocking the bookcase has been removed and offered thanks to John O’Connell. Master Gardeners had added books to the stack and Neal presented a new sign for the library, now named “AgriLife Volunteer Media Library,” dedicated to the memory of Carl E. Dodson, Jr. and Charles M. Clements.

Speakers Bureau—Jimmy Salinas noted several speaking engagements since the bureau’s inception in March:

- Lake Jackson Citizens Police, Rich Tillman provided an overview of the TMN program
- Freeport Intermediate Career Day, Jimmy Salinas presented environmental opportunities
- Grady Rasco Middle School, Kristine Rivers spoke on nature tourism
- League City Parks Board, Kristine Rivers spoke on nature tourism
- Girl Scouts of America Lake Jackson Council, Ruby Lewis presented on wildlife

Future engagement opportunity:

- Texas Recreation and Parks Society (TRAPS) on any topic.

Jimmy has also been gathering information on trunk development, although there is no specific need now. Numerous other speaker volunteers and topics have been offered by TMN members.



CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER
AGRILIFE EXTENSION BLDG.
21017 CR 171, Angleton, TX 77515-8903
<http://tmn-cot.org>

Chapter Adviser—John O’Connell plans to recognize at the general meeting those who volunteered for the Water Fairs and Captain Shishka Bob events.

President: Kristine Rivers suggested, based on past precedent, whether members wished to cancel the July Board Meeting and members agreed unless a directors and officers liability insurance speaker is scheduled.

Oron Atkins requested that the start time of monthly board meetings be changed to 9 a.m., and members agreed.

Kristine asked members 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
Look into the Directors and Officers (D&O) Liability Policy, 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, Don Sabathier	July	Pending	Now that COT has non-profit status, we have solicited quotes and should hear results from brokers during the week of June 11; Don will email information to board
Organize a four-hour member event consisting of several AT-eligible sessions	Larry Ruhr Jill Carroll	~Sept. for event	Pending	COT has had similar events in the past for general education and to provide an opportunity for AT hours; planning is underway
New Action Items Added at June Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Complete/ Pending	Comments
Explore what general liability coverage we do and do not have; arrange for a guest speaker to explain exposure to the board	John O'Connell	July or Aug.	Pending	To explore whether we need general liability coverage and in what amount
After D&O quotes are received by board members; have the broker speak at a future board meeting to explain the options	Don Sabathier	July or Aug.	Pending	To answer any questions the board may have.
Post to web COT's new, 501(c)(3) status and that donations are tax deductible	Neal McLain	ASAP	Pending	Activate the "donate" button after set up of PayPal
Set up a PayPal account	Don Sabathier	July or Aug.	Pending	To be used via the website to accept tax-deductible donations now that COT has non-profit status



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	X							
Carroll, Jill	X	X	X		X	X							
Sabathier, Don	X	X		X	X	X							
Myers, Lisa	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Advisor(s)													
O'Connell, John	X	X	X		X	X							
Appointed Board Members													
Atkins, Oron	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Barrios, Ed	X		X	X									
Brandes, Dave	X	X		X	X	X							
Lewis, Ruby	X	X		X	X								
May-Monie, Carolyn	X					X							
McLain, Neal	X	X	X		X	X							
Romfh, Peggy	X	X	X		X	X							
Romfh, Pete	X	X	X		X	X							
Ruhr, Larry	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Salinas, Jimmy						X							
Schaffhausen, Dick		X		X	X								
West, Pam	X		X	X	X	X							
Training Class Representative(s)													
Ahlstrom, Bill (2017)						X							
Green, Judy (2016)	X	X		X	X								
Guest(s)													
Jerry Eppner	X												
Jimmy Salinas			X										