



**TMN-COT BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday, March 7, 2018, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 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—**

<b>Elected Members of Board</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Appointed Members of Board</b>	<b>Present</b>
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)	
		Larry Ruhr (Advanced Training)	X
<b>Board Advisors</b>		Carolyn May-Monie (Training)	X
John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension)	X	Pam West (Chapter Host)	X
		Ruby Lewis (Outreach)	X
<b>Guests</b>		Jimmy Salinas (Speakers Bureau)	
		Richard Schaffhausen (Publicity)	X
		Bob Whitmarsh (Intern Representative)	X
		Connie Stolte (State Representative)	
		Dave Brandes (Past-President)	X
		<b>Quorum</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**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—**

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Motion to Approve</b>	<b>Motion Seconded by</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Approve the February General Meeting and Board Meeting Minutes	Peggy Romfh	Larry Ruhr	Minutes approved by voice vote of Board members present

**Motions—**

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Motion to Approve</b>	<b>Motion Seconded by</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Reimburse Monthly General Meeting speakers' travel mileage, if required, at the current IRS business rate	Don Sabathier	Bill Ahlstrom	Decision approved by voice vote of Board Members present
Begin development of an annual budget, and review, adjust and implement in 2019	Dave Brandes	Bob Whitmarsh	Decision approved by voice vote of Board Members present

Provide lunch to new COT interns, training team and invited Board Members on Day 1 of training; cost to be determined	Peggy Romfh	Bob Whitmarsh	Decision approved by voice vote of Board Members present
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**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 February 2018, financial information, below.

**1 February – 28 February 2018, COT Treasurer Report**

<b><u>Beginning Balance</u></b>	\$ 6,820.42
Revenue Summary	\$ 231.97
Interest	\$ 0.63
Expense Summary	(\$ 36.99)
<b><u>Ending Balance</u></b>	\$ 7,016.03

Don announced that COT had received \$1000 from ConocoPhillips as a matching contribution for a member’s volunteer hours. He indicated that it is likely other members would qualify for similar contributions from various companies, if applied for. Peggy Romfh added that such contributions, if numerous enough, could fund a project, e.g., a tabletop stream demo, and/or allow a reduction in dues.

**Speaker Costs**—Kristine established that the Board was not setting a precedent by reimbursing April speaker Michael Eason’s hotel and mileage costs. In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that speakers be reimbursed, when necessary, at the prevailing IRS mileage rate (currently 54.5 cents) [see *Motion*]. It was noted that the justification for the last dues increase was to pay for speaker-related mileage costs (and member background checks) and we had not done so to date. It was further suggested that COT determine not-to-exceed cost of hotel stays on a case-by-case basis. We also need to ask prospective speakers whether such outreach is part of their job (and therefore not reimbursable by COT).

This discussion led to the question of having a formal, COT annual budget [see *Motion*] and to discussion of Intern Training Class costs, the registration fee charged, and what was and was not included in the fee [see *Motion*]. Given that the 2018 class will now end in December, the Board agreed that 2019 member dues would *not* be included in the registration fee.

**Chapter Advisor**—John O’Connell noted that the Texas Sea Grant (TSG) State Office captures figures for habitat restoration and said that many of COT’s activities do count for habitat restoration, according to TSG. Peggy noted that she and Pete are not currently capturing NEW habitat development separately. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed that maintenance of existing habitat (e.g., replacement and extension of Bobcat Woods Trail) does count as restoration.

**Past President**—Dave Brandes advised the Board that some members have complained that Chapter Meetings run too long and that most of the information presented is on the Calendar. Pete suggested that paper copies of VT and AT opportunities be made available at Chapter Meetings.

Kristine noted that she would prepare a monthly slide of AT opportunities (the same as she does for VT opportunities) to facilitate the dissemination of information, particularly for those who prefer not to access the on-line Calendar.

## BOARD REPORTS

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

- **March**—James Glover, “Intracoastal Water Way—The Early Years”; Nature Notes: Pete Romfh, “Tidal Rivers’ Measurements”
- **April**—Michael Eason, “Wildflowers of Texas”; Nature Notes: Kristine Rivers, “Woodpeckers” (Eason will offer for sale at \$28 some advance copies of his new book)
- **Future Possibilities/Suggestions**—Dr. Gilbert Rowe or an associate speaking on massive sargassum invasions; Dan Reilly providing an update on why some hurricanes are so deadly; presentations on: Geology; Palentology; Astrology (maybe Judy James); Pete Romfh might do a Nature Notes on “-ologies”

**Secretary**—Lisa Myers indicated that she plans to appeal for Migration Celebration volunteers at the General Meeting. Historically, most of the event’s volunteers are affiliated with COT.

**Membership**—Pete and Peggy Romfh presented the following impact data, VT and AT information, and award recipients for the March General Meeting. They will also be recognizing Brian Frazier and Mike Mullenweg for earning Certificates of Completion for the Wildlife and Fisheries Specialist training.

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
1 February – 28 February 2018	703	1153	1856
<b>YTD Totals</b>	919	1362	2281

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours	# of Volunteers
1 February – 28 February 2018	1144	217.5	71
<b>YTD Totals</b>	2138	661.5	87

Recertification 2018 (Ocelot Pin)			250-Hour Milestone (Bronze Dragonfly Pin)
Marty Cornell	Roy Morgan	Peggy Romfh	Mike Bettorf
Phil Huxford	Lisa Myers	Pete Romfh	
Carolyn May-Monie	Kim Richardson	Larry Ruhr	

Neal McLain	Kristine Rivers	Don Sabathier	
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**Training**—Carolyn May-Monie reported that the training committee had finalized the 2018 Intern Training Schedule and presenters, noting that six presenters are COT members. She asked if the Board would be willing to fund a catered lunch for interns, committee members and one or two Board members on September 5, the Introduction Session. Several options were discussed and Pam West offered to explore options. Whether the Board will provide morning snacks on September 5 is to be determined.

**Advanced Training**—Larry Ruhr could not attend the Board Meeting but sent word that he will send Kristine a list of AT opportunities to be displayed at the Chapter Meeting.

**Outreach**—Ruby Lewis reported on successful events at Holy Comforter Pre-School in Angleton on February 6; GCBO's SOAR programs on February 21; Sea Center Texas Nature Day on February 24 (impacted 688 people); three DEEP programs; and Brazoria Heritage Day on March 3 (impacted 750 people). She added that setting up the tent at Brazoria Heritage Day was difficult, but a heavy tent is needed when there is wind.

Ruby then noted upcoming outreach and volunteer opportunities, as follows:

- **DEEP at BNWR**—March 20, 22, 27, 29, April 3 and 5 (Tom Schneider is verifying/adding dates)
- **Spring Fling Host Station at GCBO Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary**—April 7 through May 7; morning and afternoon shifts; training April 3 at 4 p.m. and April 4 at 1 p.m.; contact Peggy and Pete Romfh
- **Epiphany Lutheran Church, Pearland**—April 14
- **Camp Mohawk Nature Camp at Camp Mohawk County Park**—June 18-21
- **Quintana Beach Nature Camp at Quintana Beach County Park**—July 16-19.

**Publications**—Neal McLain provided the following information regarding publications:

#### WEBSITE

- Added photos of the February General Meeting including Ruby Lewis at 4000 hours  
<http://tmnnewsarchive.blogspot.com/2018/02/ruby-4000.html>
- Added *American Eel Field Research Reporting Form* on Forms page  
[http://tmn-cot.org/Forms/American-Eel-Monitoring-form\\_2018-02-26.pdf](http://tmn-cot.org/Forms/American-Eel-Monitoring-form_2018-02-26.pdf)
- Updated Advanced Training page for 2018 (removed Carroll, added Whitmarsh, moved Ahlstrom from class rep to VP)  
<http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/index.html>
- AT page for 2017 was removed on February 15  
<http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/2017index.html>
- Will update the Intern Training page to reflect the finalized training schedule

**FOBWR WEBSITES**

- Kristine Rivers has taken over FOBWR and MC-2018 websites  
<http://refugefriends.org/>  
<http://migrationcelebration.org/>
- Neal is still maintaining Phil Huxford's *Birds of Prey Program* one-page website and Tom Schneider's *Refuge Junior Naturalist* website.  
<http://birdsofpreytexas.org/>  
<http://www.juniornaturalist.org/>

**NEWSLETTER**

- February Issue went out on schedule
- March issue publication schedule:
 

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

**Intern Representative**—Bob Whitmarsh has been following up with last year’s class to ask for suggestions and other input.

**Board Advisor**—John O’Connell noted that Mark Twain Elementary School has been added to the Water Fairs schedule and that he will be soliciting volunteers for all Water Fair dates and the Migration Celebration Stream Trailer during the General Meeting.

Cradle of Texas Board Action Register				
Open Action Item	Who?	Due Date?	Complete/Pending	Comments
Promote Fall Intern Training Class	Neal McLain, Kristine Rivers, Dick Schaffhausen Jimmy Salinas	Ongoing	Pending	Perform 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 and AgriLIFE meeting room will be reserved as a reoccurring event for 2019 and after. Carolyn May-Monie finalized and published presenter schedule; Dick Schaffhausen will disseminate press release <b>March meeting:</b> Push for new interns at Migration Celebration; have a volunteer spokesperson in the TMN-COT booth; have a sign-up sheet and follow-up with interested persons; possibly make a big poster



COT should hold an annual, Bonus AT Event, if possible.	Larry Ruhr, Jimmy Salinas, Bill Ahlstrom	Ongoing	Pending	Given the success of the January 20 Bonus AT Day, the Board would like to promote an annual event—perhaps on a smaller scale
Investigate the use of a Brazoria County Fairgrounds building for General Meetings if/when COT outgrows AgriLIFE meeting room	John O’Connell Visit: Kristine Rivers, Bob Whitmarsh, Pam West, Lisa Myers	Ongoing	Pending	John will set up a time for a group to visit and evaluate for size, kitchen, audio/visual

NEW Action Item(s) Added at March Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Complete/Pending	Comments
Begin development of an annual budget; review, adjust and implement in 2019	Don Sabathier with input from Board	Sept.	Pending	For planning and accountability
Provide lunch to new COT interns, training team and invited Board Members on Day 1 of training; cost to be determined	Pam (research)	Dec.	Pending	As a welcome to new interns; need to determine who will provide and cost
Investigate Texas Sea Grant State Office habitat-restoration reporting requirements and how best to meet them	Peggy Romfh Pete Romfh	Ongoing	Pending	Need input from John and various others

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary



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