

TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, January 2, 2019, 9:03 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.
AgriLIFE Extension Building, Angleton, Texas

President: Kristine Rivers called the meeting to order, presented the agenda and asked for additions or corrections. She indicated that Peggy Romfh had suggested that board-member job titles in the agenda be corrected to reflect those listed in the Chapter Operating Handbook (COH).

Attendance—

Elected Members of Board	Present	Appointed/Other Members of Board	Present
Kristine Rivers (President)	X	Dave Brandes (Immediate Past President)	X
Bill Ahlstrom (Vice-President/Programs)	X	John Boettiger (Membership Dir.)	X
Lisa Myers (Secretary)	X	John O'Connell (Interim New Class Dir.)	N/A
Don Sabathier (Treasurer)	X	Neal McLain (Communications Dir.)	X
		Ruby Lewis (Outreach Dir.)	X
		Bob Whitmarsh (Advanced Training Dir.)	X
Chapter Advisor(s)		Oron Atkins (Volunteer Service Dir.)	X
John O'Connell (AgriLIFE Extension)	X	Pam West (Chapter Host)	X
		Rose Wagner (Class of 2018 Rep.)	X
Guests		Connie Stolte (State Rep.)	X
Chris Kneupper	X	Ed Peebles (Speakers Bureau Coord.)	X
		Larry Peterson (Publicity Coord.)	X
Quorum	Yes		

Welcome to New Board Members—Kristine welcomed and introduced each new member of the board and noted that she was still seeking a candidate for New Class Director.

Approve Previous Board Minutes—Secretary Lisa Myers stated that the December 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	Vote
Approve the December General Meeting and Board Meeting Minutes	Oron Atkins	Don Sabathier	Minutes approved by unanimous voice vote of Board members present

Motions—

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded	Vote
None			

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
COT should hold an annual, Bonus AT Event, if possible; solidify theme/ topic(s) and time-frame to develop/ organize by August Board Meeting	Bonus AT Day committee	Given the success of the January 20, 2018 Bonus AT Day, the Board would like to promote an annual event—perhaps on a smaller scale; Plans are in place for the January 26, 2019 event
Begin development of an annual budget; review, adjust and implement in 2019	Don Sabathier with input from Board	For planning and accountability; Don will continue to update as needed

Treasurer’s Report—Don Sabathier presented the December 2018 financial information, below.

1 December – 31 December 2018, COT Treasurer Report

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	\$ 8,022.20
Revenue Summary	\$ 1,064.12
Expense Summary	(\$ 288.57)
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 8,797.75

Don said that the ConocoPhillips check to match a member’s volunteer work had been received and deposited in December; expenses for the month included the cost of new-member (intern) name tags. He added that he is still experiencing issues with TDECU’s on-line system. Don will begin collecting 2019 member dues today.

Project Funding—Kristine proposed that the board consider allocating a maximum of \$500 or \$1,000 annually (or as the chapter is able) to fund one project selected from proposals that would be submitted by COT members. Examples of project categories were suggested by Kristine and other board members and included: trail enhancement; citizen science; restoration.

A brief discussion ensued, during which various issues and suggestions were stated, some of which were:

- Can we afford it?
- What ending balance should be maintained each month?
- Is it compatible with member expectations of how dues are spent?
- Amount awarded annually could be dynamic—based on available funds
- Promote the projects in the community, e.g., signage, press
- Written guidelines and a proposal form would be needed in addition to post-project evaluation

Kristine indicated that she will propose the idea to members at the general meeting next week. A committee was formed to explore the idea; it includes: Kristine, John O’Connell, Bob Whitmarsh, and Bill Ahlstrom.

Big Tree Registry—Chris Kneupper asked that the board support the reestablishment of a Brazoria County Big Trees Registry for the purpose of fostering interest in native trees and to gather interesting and potentially-important data—especially in the case of champion trees. According to

his research, the last time any entity published a listing of various species' largest known Brazoria County specimen was 1999, and the information provided was incomplete.

Chris suggested a “low-key” effort that would involve soliciting potential big tree and/or rare tree candidates from the public via the COT website, and newspaper and magazine articles. Volunteers from COT would be dispatched to measure trees using the theodolite app or other app and following Texas Forest Service guidelines.

Oron asked Chris to submit an application for this citizen science project so that he can designate it for volunteer hours (applicable for surveying time).

Chris requested and Kristine approved an expenditure of \$50 to purchase a surveyor tape and a circumference tape for project use.

BOARD REPORTS and OTHER TOPICS

Programs—Bill Ahlstrom noted the following regarding speakers for upcoming chapter meetings:

- **January**—Joy Columbus, VP Horticulture, Houston Botanical Gardens; Nature Notes—Chris Kneupper on rare Brazoria County oak trees and their acorns
- **February**—Stephen Curtis, TPWD American Eel Mop Project Coordinator, presenting an update of project findings; Nature Notes—Tom Morris on past pelagic bird trips
- **March**—not scheduled, but Bill has suggestions to follow up; Rose Wagner suggested that Bill contact Teri MacArthur, a mushroom expert.

Evening Meetings—Kristine asked board members to ponder the possibility of having an occasional, evening general meeting—perhaps off site, as we did for the July 2018 meeting held at the BASF Planetarium.

Membership—John Boettiger indicated that he had not yet been advised of his duties but stated that he would like COT to be promoted more in the community.

On behalf of John, Lisa Myers presented the following impact data, VT and AT information, and award recipients, which Pete and Peggy Romfh had provided for announcement at the January General Meeting.

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
YTD Totals—December 31	14,624	35,384	50,008 ¹

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours	# of Volunteers
YTD Totals—December 31	17,527	1,767	107 ¹

¹ 2018 hours may be turned in until February 15, so totals may increase



Initial Certification Achieved	Recertification 2018 (Ocelot Pin)	500-Hour Milestone (Silver Dragonfly Pin)	1000-Hour Milestone (Gold Dragonfly Pin)
Debbie Nance Jim Nance Mary Schwartz Regina Tippett Rose Wagner Taylor Wilkins	Julia Geisler Mary Helen Israel David Plunkett Regina Tippett (2018 Intern)	Jimmy Salinas Robert Salzer	Karen Leder

State Representative—Connie Stolte stated that a final draft of the Chapter Operating Handbook (COH—updated Chapter Policies and Procedures) was distributed to board members via email. She asked board members to submit their email vote for approval to Kristine no later than January 23 so that members can be notified at least 10 days prior to their vote at the February meeting.

Volunteer Project, Public Outreach and Activity Request Review—Oron Atkins noted the following activities:

- **Exploration Green Nursery / Wetland Work Day**—January 10, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Christie Taylor
- **TCWP at GCBO Work Day**—January 17, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper
- **GCBO Native Plant Work Days**—every Saturday until further notice, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper
- **Pearland Natural Resources Work Day**—First Thursday each month; contact Cullen Ondracek
- **BCPD Trail Day**—Third Thursday each month, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; CANCELLED FOR JANUARY; contact Mike Mullenweg

Advanced Training—Bob Whitmarsh said that he will have AT opportunities to present at the General Meeting. Bob added that he intends to also list on the Calendar activities that incur a cost.

Outreach—On behalf of Ruby Lewis, who left the meeting early, Lisa presented the following, upcoming activities:

- **DEEP at Brazoria NWR**—PENDING, BASED ON END OF GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN; January 10, 15, 24, 29, and 31, February 7 and 12; contact Tom Schneider
- **Sea Center Texas Nature Day**—February 23
- **Brazoria Heritage Day**—March 2

The Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge Open House resulted in the following impact data (there was no promotion because of possible government shutdown):

- December 22: 15 youth, 41 adults
- December 23: 9 youth, 36 adults

Chapter Host—Pam West noted that she must provide the final head count for the Bonus AT Day to the caterer seven days before the event. She verified that a tip of 20%, as given last year, was acceptable.

Kristine asked for feedback on the chapter Holiday Party, noting that it was a great deal of work for Pam and the cooks, and we should think about another option in the future—preferably off site. A brief discussion ensued, and it was noted that cost and a central location are issues to be resolved.

Publications—Neal McLain provided the following information regarding publications:

WEBSITE

Advanced Training Page

- Removed 2018 General Meeting Schedule; replaced with 2019 schedule
- Added link to 2018 schedule, which will remain until February 15 for members to use as VMS reference

Board and Personnel Contacts Pages

(see attachment for list of old and new board member names and titles)

Intern Training Page: 2018 schedule remains until 2019 schedule available

Forms Page: Neal and Connie will review

NEWSLETTER

- December issue went out on schedule
- January issue publication schedule:

Wednesday January 2	Board meeting, 9 a.m.
Thursday January 3	Submission deadline, 5 p.m.
Sunday January 6	Board review draft deadline, 12 p.m.
Monday January 7	Publication

CONTINUOUS REMINDER TO BOARD

There are “hidden” pages on the website for which no password is needed:

- <http://tmn-cot.org/Minutes/> (Board and General Meeting Minutes)
- <http://tmn-cot.org/Mugshots/> [small (150px) headshots of members/others]
- http://tmn-cot.org/COT_Special_Forms (related to tax exemption)

Publicity—Larry Peterson said that he met with Dick Schaffhausen to get information and press contacts.

Speakers Bureau—Ed Peebles noted that the new Pearland Nature Center was going to hold an opening event, and COT should be represented. Kristine said that she would contact Cullen Ondracek to get details.

Chapter Adviser—John O’Connell said that he received approval to open the AgriLIFE gate for Bonus AT DAY overflow parking and reaffirmed that the main and conference rooms were reserved. He added that we have permission to place displays wherever is best. Rose noted that per Evite, 72 people had registered to date for the event.

Immediate Past President: Dave Brandes suggested that Kristine ask at the beginning of each board meeting whether anyone must leave early so that he/she can present prior to leaving.

Cradle of Texas Board Action Register				
Open Action Item	Who?	Due Date?	Complete/Ongoing	Comments
Add an additional COT Chapter Advisor	Kristine Rivers	ASAP	Ongoing	Must be a Texas Parks and Wildlife employee August: Kristine will contact David Abrego at Sea Center Texas September to December: No update January 2019: Connie said that Sea Center Texas is about to fill the vacant positions; perhaps one will be a good candidate
Correct information on the COT website regarding how to log travel time for VT	Neal McLain	ASAP	Ongoing	Connie will provide accurate information to Neal November: Connie and Neal to check if the information posted is correct. December: Connie stated that the information posted reflects the revised COH; item will be complete once membership approves COH, likely in January January 2019: Board will vote to approve via email no later than January 23, then document will be sent to members to review 10 days prior to their vote at February general meeting
Review and update Chapter Operation Handbook Appendices	Connie Stolte	Nov.	Ongoing	COT calls this document Policies and Procedures Handbook on the website. Current Appendices need updating and revision November: Connie suggested that we organize this website document via a sub-index under "Forms"; Neal will review and make recommendations. December: Connie finished latest draft and sent to reviewers; then will be sent to Board; then ready for membership vote; no appendices yet January 2019: No appendices yet
Update TMN milestone plaques	Bob Whitmarsh	ASAP	Ongoing	To add milestone names for 2018 December: Bob took President's Call to Service plaque to add this year's names January 2019: Bob will pick up

NEW Action Item(s) Added at January Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Comments
Upon receipt of application from Chris Kneupper, set up a citizen science project designation for VMS hours related to the Brazoria County Big/Rare Tree Registry	Oron Atkins	ASAP	So that volunteers surveying trees can enter VMS hours

President: Kristine Rivers adjourned the Board Meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary

Cc: Board Members
Crystal Andablo, AgriLIFE Secretary Crystal.Andablo@ag.tamu.edu



Attendance Date 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Rivers, Kristine	X												
Ahlstrom, Bill	X												
Sabathier, Don	X												
Myers, Lisa	X												
Advisor(s)													
O'Connell, John	X												
Immediate Past President													
Brandes, Dave	X												
Appointed Board Members													
Boettiger, John	X												
McLain, Neal	X												
Lewis, Ruby	X												
Whitmarsh, Bob	X												
Atkins, Oron	X												
West, Pam	X												
Rose Wagner (2018 class)	X												
Stolte, Connie	X												
Peebles, Ed	X												
Peterson, Larry	X												
Guest(s)													
Kneupper, Chris	X							X					



ATTACHMENT

Publication Director Report
 By Neal McLain
 January 2019

OLD TITLE	NEW TITLE	2018	2019
President	President	Kristine Rivers	Kristine Rivers
Vice President	Vice President	Bill Ahlstrom	Bill Ahlstrom
Treasurer	Treasurer	Don Sabathier	Don Sabathier
Secretary	Secretary	Lisa Myers	Lisa Myers
Past President	Immediate Past President	Dave Brandes	Dave Brandes
Membership Director	Membership Director	Pete and Peggy Romfh	John Joettiger
Training Director	New Class Director	Carolyn May-Monie	Vacant (John O'Connell temporarily)
Communications Director	Communications Director	Neal McLain	Neal McLain
Outreach Director	Outreach Director	Ruby Lewis	Ruby Lewis
Advanced Training Director	Advanced Training Director	Larry Ruhr	Bob Whitmarsh
Volunteer Projects Director	Volunteer Projects Director	Oron Atkins	Oron Atkins
Chapter Host	Chapter Host	Pam West	Pam West
New Class Representative	New Class Representative	Bob Whitmarsh (Class of 2017)	Rose Wagner (Class of 2018)
State Representative	State Representative	Connie Stolte	Connie Stolte
Chapter Advisor	Chapter Adviser	John O'Connell	John O'Connell

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Publicity Coordinator	Publicity Coordinator	Dick Schaffhausen	Larry Peterson
Speakers Bureau Coordinator	Speakers Bureau Coordinator	Ed Peebles	Ed Peebles
	VMS Data Managers		Pete/Peggy Romfh