



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, January 8, 2020, 12:57 p.m. – 2:04 p.m.

Brazoria County AgriLIFE Extension Offices, 21017 CR 171, Angleton, Texas

President: Bill Ahlstrom called the meeting to order. This being an abbreviated meeting held after the January General Meeting, Bill dispensed with reports that had been presented at that meeting and instead asked board members to indicate other items that must be attended to before February.

Attendance—

Elected Members of Board		Present	Appointed/Other Members of Board		Present
Bill Ahlstrom (President)		✓	Kristine Rivers (Immediate Past President)		✓
Mickey Dufilho (Vice-President/Programs)		✓	John Boettiger (Membership Dir.)		✓
Lisa Myers (Secretary)		✓	Mary Schwartz (New Class Dir.)		✓
Don Sabathier (Treasurer)		✓	Larry Peterson (Communications Dir.)		✓
			Ruby Lewis (Outreach Dir.)		
Chapter Advisor(s)			Bob Whitmarsh (Advanced Training Dir.)		✓
John O'Connell (AgriLIFE Extension)		✓	Oron Atkins (Volunteer Service Dir.)		✓
Paul Cason (TPWD: Sea Center Texas)			Connie Stolte (State Rep.)		✓
Guests/Other			Rose Wagner (Chapter Host)		
Neal McLain (Communications Support)		✓	Kathy Pittman (Class of 2020 Rep.)		
			Quorum		Yes

Approve Previous Board Minutes—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	Bob Whitmarsh	Don Sabathier	Minutes approved by unanimous voice vote of Board members present

Motions—

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded	Vote
Override the 45-day rule in those instances where necessary corrections to VMS must be made, as requested by the State office	Don Sabathier	Oron Atkins	Approved by unanimous voice vote of Board members present
Table the discussion on what to offer members as incentive to enter all volunteer hours until there is adequate time and information to continue	Bob Whitmarsh	Neal McLain (non-board member) and Lisa Myers	Approved by unanimous voice vote of Board members present

Kristine Rivers—Asked that Bill follow up with Jackie Hicks on the status of her Ecofund Grant Project and expenses.

Connie Stolte—Phil Huxford asked that Kirby Rapstein be designated an honorary member. This was done some months ago. Bob Whitmarsh checked the plaque in the lobby and Kirby's name is on it.

Neal McLain—Chris Kneupper asked that COT temporarily host on GoDaddy his "History of Forts Velasco" information until it can be transferred to the county website. Since only county personnel can edit their website, the board agreed to temporarily host this information. Neal indicated that he still does business cards, and Lisa will include this in the next newsletter.

Larry Peterson—The State office hopes to roll out to chapters the new TXMN/Wordpress theme in the spring. It was suggested that the new webpage should have a password-protected "members only" section that includes membership information. Larry also asked who on the board or otherwise has permission to post to the COT website and/or VMS.

Bob Whitmarsh—Indicated that 96 people had so far registered for the Bonus AT Day, of which 15 were non-COT members. After he posts today's registrants, he will establish a wait list. It was agreed that registration can go a bit beyond the 100-person cutoff to allow for no-shows.

John Boettiger—Is still resolving a few t-shirt issues. He is also working on his previously suggested program to incent members to enter all volunteer hours. Kristine suggested that 100 hours be the threshold to receive the incentive. Bill added that perhaps the chapter could cover some percentage of one day's registration to the State Meeting. Mickey suggested that we survey members to determine what might incent them. Bill suggested that this discussion be tabled until there was adequate time and information to continue **[see Motion]**.

Mickey Dufilho—Can the board and general meeting minutes be made available for easy access via the website? Neal will set up a link. Regarding future speakers, Mickey said that she would like to do a future nature note on soil microbes; John Boettiger will do the March nature note on feral hogs; Lisa suggested inviting Jennifer Sanchez to speak on the Mid-coast refuges, and Mike Lange to speak on land acquisition.

Don Sabathier—One more new-member training-class expense item is expected. Don asked who does not have to pay 2020 dues because he/she reached the 4000 volunteer-hours milestone, as previously decided by the board. Lisa will check past minutes for wording of the motion. *[Lisa's inspection of past board minutes and newsletters revealed the following: At the December 5, 2018 board meeting, the following motion was passed: "Waive the following year's membership dues for those members achieving volunteer milestones of 4,000 or 5,000 or 10,000 hours in the preceding year (effective the current calendar year)." According to 2019 newsletters, Tom Morris was feted for achieving 5000 hours at the September 2019 general meeting, and Jim Calvert was feted for 5000 hours at the May 2019 general meeting.]*

Mary Schwartz—Wanted and received confirmation that class of 2019 members must pay 2020 membership dues. She said that George Valadez is interested in joining the training team; Herb and Jo Myers can participate in the fall only. A spring training class is being planned, to be held from March to June, with classes on Thursday nights and field trips on Saturdays.



John O’Conner—Approximately five people have expressed interest in a spring class. We will likely need two training teams. He also indicated that in order to accommodate a weeknight and weekend morning training schedule, we may need to amend the chapter’s guidelines on minimum training time required and meet only the state’s 40-hours requirement. He intends to set up online registration and payment options. Mickey added that she may have former student(s) interested in the training class, and she is willing to present information about TMN and the COT training to life science classes at Brazosport College.

John said that he needs to fill out the annual, state-required “Support Group Fund” report.

Lisa Myers—Again asked that board members meet the newsletter submission deadline (5 p.m. the Thursday before General Meetings) and submit board/other reports to her before the day of the meeting or no later than before the start of the meeting.

No Action Register Review was held other than as noted below.

Cradle of Texas Board Action Register				
Open Action Item	Who?	Due Date?	Complete/Ongoing	Comments
Ask local libraries if they are interested in showing the displays prepared for the Bonus AT Day	Ruby Lewis	October	Ongoing	To share information with the public and for COT PR purposes March: No update (Ruby absent) April: Ruby contacted the library system and they would like to display them at libraries that have space starting in August. Ruby will coordinate a schedule and transport by a TMN member June: Ruby said libraries said fall would be best; they need a container to hold the presentation boards for transport between libraries or we can transport; Ruby will work out details in September Sept: no update Oct, Nov: Ruby not present Dec: Ruby not present
Determine our liability and develop a procedure when there is an incident at an outreach event, e.g., accident.	John O’Connell Ruby Lewis	ASAP	Ongoing	John will speak to the Civil D.A. regarding risk management; Ruby can conduct an annual training during a general meeting and mini training before each event Sept: John not present Oct: No action Nov: John not present Dec: John and Ruby have met to discuss; John will pursue more information
Review and update partners webpage (see below)	Oron Atkins	ASAP	Ongoing	Sept: Oron has updated and will provide Neal with information to post on website Oct: Oron working to finalize changes Nov: Oron said that there will likely be 6 partners: USFWS Texas Mid-Coast Refuge Complex; GCBO; Arts Center Complex at Brazosport College; Brazoria County Library System; Brazos Bend State Park; Brazoria County Parks Department Dave expressed concern that these relationships should be reciprocal Dec: Agreements being worked on
Update VPAR agreements	Oron Aktins	ASAP	Ongoing	Sept: We have 16 partners; some paperwork is missing; Peggy Romfh checking to see if there is VT logged or not; the board agreed that agreements will be auto-renew with a 30-day cancellation clause and agreement contact information will be updated every two years



				<p>Oct: Oron working with Pete and Peggy; there was some discussion about putting the planetarium and museum under one VPAR</p> <p>Nov: Oron is working to finalize</p> <p>Dec: Oron continuing to work on</p>
At general meetings, show the dollar impact of funds received by state conservation organizations as a result of VT	President or Membership Dir	ASAP	Done	<p>The intent is to encourage members to enter all their volunteer hours</p> <p>Dec: Kristine indicated that some hours do not count for funds; therefore, it is hard to report. Oron suggested providing a snapshot of the impact volunteer hours make and why reporting is valuable vs a totally accurate accounting</p>
Investigate incentive merchandise/other that members can earn for volunteer-hour milestones	John Boettiger	Jan.	Ongoing	<p>The intent is to encourage members to enter all their volunteer hours</p> <p>Dec: John B suggested a logo hat/visor to match the new t-shirt or a pin; perhaps tie the incentive to an annual hours goal; Paul will provide Sea Center's program; Kristine will query Peggy for data</p> <p>Jan: Need to query members</p>
Find the portable loudspeaker system; possibly buy a new system for intern training (need cost information)	Larry Peterson	Jan.	Ongoing	<p>Location of COT's system is unknown but was not acceptable; need to investigate intern-class needs</p> <p>Dec: speaker system has been found; Larry will test it but likely is not adequate for our needs</p>
Find speaker to present on the topic of inappropriate behavior and creating a welcoming atmosphere	Connie Stolte	ASAP	Ongoing	<p>The State office has requested that chapters ensure they are creating a welcoming atmosphere</p> <p>Dec: Still reviewing possible wording of policy addenda</p>
Finalize 2020 Budget	Don, Board	Jan.		<p>Board to vote on revised draft in January</p> <p>Jan: No vote taken</p>
2020 State Meeting Planning	Preliminary State Mtng Comm: Kristine, Lisa, Bob, Bill		Ongoing	<p>Need photo contest committee and volunteers; find/create easels for display; Field Trip Committee Liaison and trip ideas; session ideas; vendor ideas; silent auction items</p>
Executive Committee meet and draft wording on harassment and accommodations for disability policies	Officers and Past President	ASAP	Ongoing	<p>State suggested that chapters provide a "welcoming atmosphere"; Peggy Romfh requested that accommodations for impairments be included</p>

NEW Action Item(s) Added at January Meeting	Who?	Due date?	Comments
Make board and general meeting minutes easily accessible via the webpage	Neal McLain	ASAP	
Determine whether to keep COT training class requirements or adopt State's minimum of 40 hours	Board	ASAP	In order to accommodate time constraints of spring class
Determine who does not have to pay 2020 dues because s/he reached 4000 volunteer hours	Lisa Myers	ASAP	

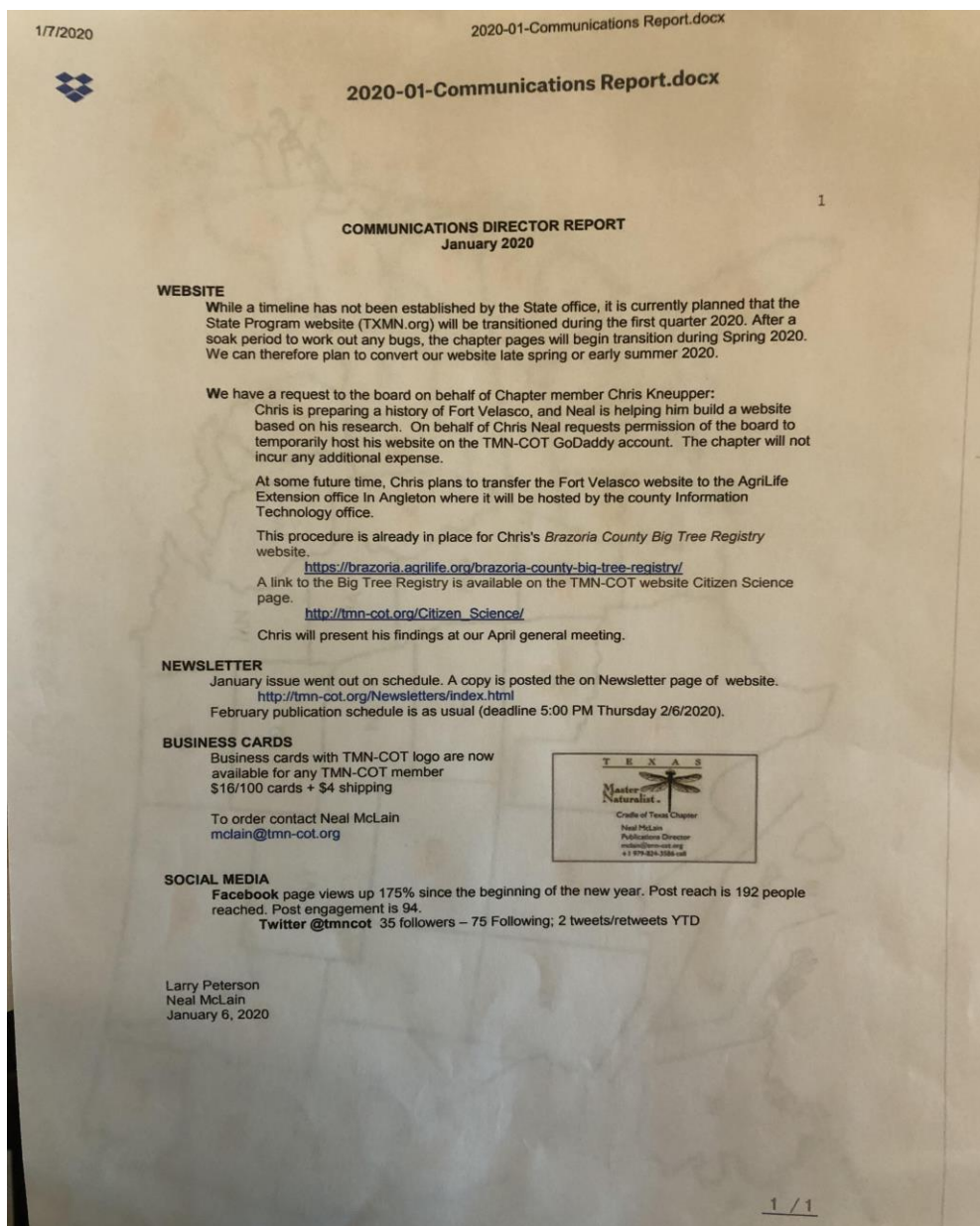


President: Bill Ahlstrom adjourned the Board Meeting at 2:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary

Attachment: Communications Director Report, January

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





Attendance 2020	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Bill Ahlstrom	X												
Mickey Dulilho	X												
Sabathier, Don	X												
Myers, Lisa	X												
Advisors													
O'Connell, John	X												
Cason, Paul													
Immediate Past President													
Rivers, Kristine	X												
Appointed Board Members													
Atkins, Oron	X												
Boettiger, John	X												
Lewis, Ruby													
Peterson, Larry	X												
Pittman, Kathy													
Schwartz, Mary	X												
Stolte, Connie	X												
Wagner, Rose													
Whitmarsh, Bob	X												
Guests													
McLain, Neal	X												