



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, March 4, 2020, 9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
Brazoria County AgriLIFE Extension Offices, 21017 CR 171, Angleton, Texas

President: Bill Ahlstrom called the meeting to order.

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—Bill Ahlstrom stated that the February 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 February 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
The evening training class must have at least 7 participants for the class to make	Kristine Rivers	Connie Stolte	Passed by unanimous voice vote of Board members present

NEW BUSINESS

Google Group Members List—Bill Ahlstrom distributed the current list and asked for corrections, which Bill will make. Mary Schwartz will verify that all new members are on the list.

Kirby Rapstein Commemoration—John Boettiger will ask Kirby if he can be present to receive a plaque in person or if he would prefer to be sent a letter and certificate commemorating his contributions to the chapter.

Aquaponics Program—Bill Ahlstrom indicated that Phil Huxford suggested that COT support a Freeport school by purchasing some supplies for a school program. The board decided not to since the program involved non-native plants and was not a fit for the TMN mission.

Earth Day—Bill asked whether COT should do anything for Earth Day. It was noted that we support other organizations' Earth Day-related programs.

Call for Presentations for TMN State Meeting—The deadline for entries is Monday, May 31. Kristine Rivers will email the membership to inquire if there is interest.

- Connie will email the membership with instructions for joining the State's TMN Listserv to facilitate members' staying up to date on the State Meeting and other TMN information [see Action Item]
- Discussion on possible tours to propose for the State Meeting.
 - Chris Kneuper might be interested in doing a tour of Fort Velasco or The Oaks
 - Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge – have participants participate in a FOBWR DEEP program
 - Sea Center
 - Nash Prairie – Native plants of the prairie.

Agendas for Board Meetings—Kristine voiced the need for meeting agendas. Mickey will prepare agendas for Board and General Meetings in the future. Bill will put together the March General Meeting agenda, but he will not be able to attend [see Action Item].

General Meeting Parking—We need to put up handicap parking signs; John O'Connell will ask county commissioners for permission to park in the county lot; Mickey will announce at meetings that parking is very limited and encourage car pooling and parking responsibly [see Action Item].

General Meetings at Night—Mary Schwartz suggested that we have some monthly meetings at night or video the meetings for those who cannot attend monthly meetings. A subcommittee was established to review suggestions and make a proposal [see Action Item]. The committee consists of Mary Schwartz, Mickey Dufilho (chair), Kristine Rivers, Don Sabathier, Neal McLain, Larry Ruhr, and John O'Connell. Mickey will send out a meeting notice.

COT's TMN Banner—Connie will look for the banner that was given to the organization by State. It was suggested to build a frame for it so we can have it at General Meetings as a backdrop for pictures [see Action Item].

ECO Funds Grant for GCBO—Jackie Hicks sent an update; three large metal signs for trails will be installed by the fall. Kristine will send to the membership the forms for the ECO Funds Grant [see Action Item].

Meadows Institute on Riparian Corridor Training—John O'Connell said that a June 20 training class to learn how to assess the health of riparians is scheduled. The time is 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. John said we could do this training as a group, and he would take the AgriLIFE van for transportation. The class limit is 25 participants. If we like the class, perhaps we could offer it as AT for the Chapter.

Nature Notes Ideas—Mickey Dufilho requested ideas for future Nature Notes. Several suggestions for speakers and topics were made including:

- Dave Brandis, Light Pollution
- John Bettiger, White Tailed Deer (not available May and October)
- Patti Brinkmeyer, Sea Life
- Tom Morris, Astronomy
- Bill Ahlstrom/Denis James, Betelgeuse
- Someone from Sea Center Texas (or a volunteer such as Roy Morgan, Garry and Janet Ellis, Dave Brandis, or Rainbow Johnson) could talk about a touch tank animal.

Migration of Website—Larry Peterson reported that web training will be posted; no update on the status of the COT Media Library; see Neal McLain's report below for additional information.

Publications—Larry Peterson provided Neal McLain's information below regarding publications.

WEBSITE

Site transition still as scheduled for Spring 2020; current Website maintained by Neal
Home Page currently hosts notice of the March General Meeting announcement and two adspots (most recent Newsletter and 25th Annual Migration Celebration)
Intern Training Page still contains the 2019 Schedule until it's updated with Spring 2020 information
Personnel Contacts page has been updated with 2020 information

NEWSLETTER

Latest copy is posted on the website. January and February issues went out on schedule.

<http://tmn-cot.org/Newsletters/index.html>

March publication schedule will be one week early; Lisa on vacation

MEDIA LIBRARY

Found on Homepage under Resources tab or by direct link:

<http://tmn-cot.org/MediaLibrary>

BUSINESS CARDS

Business cards with TMN-COT logo are available for any TMN-COT member
\$16/100 cards + \$4 shipping
To order contact Neal McLain
mclain@tmn-cot.org



SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook page "liked" by 555 people, followed by 620. Post reach is 286 people.

Twitter @tmncot 39 followers; 78 Following

Action Register Review was led by Bill Ahlstrom [see *COT Board Action Register items at end of minutes*].

Treasurer's Report—Don Sabathier presented the February 2020 financial information, below.

1 February – 29 February 2019, COT Treasurer Report

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	\$ 10,328.68
Revenue Summary	\$ 723.10
Expense Summary	(\$ 208.25)
<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 10,843.53

Spring New Member Training Class Update—Mary Schwartz reported the following:

- Class will meet every Thursday starting March 19, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.
- Online registration is ready; five people are interested
- Kristine suggested that the class should have a minimum of seven registrants [see Motion].
- A few more presenters are needed, as follows:
 - a) April 2, 2020, 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.; presentation on By-Laws, etc. of the Chapter; Connie will do it
 - b) April 23, 2020, 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.; Code of Conduct/Ethics
 - c) Entering VT/AT hours by phone/tablet; Mary will do this
 - d) Don will order books and field notebooks for training class [see Action Item]
 - e) Kathy will do a Facebook post about evening training class [see Action Item].

BOARD REPORTS and OTHER TOPICS

General Meeting Programs—Mickey Dufilho provided the following schedule for upcoming General Meeting speakers:

- **March**—speaker Barbara Burkhardt on “Gardening for Habitat”; Nature Notes, Kristine Rivers, “Invasion of the Apple Snails”
- **April**—speaker Chris Kneupper on “The History of the Forts Velasco”; Nature Notes, John Boettiger on feral hogs
- **May**—speaker Ruby Lewis on “Safety for Outreach Events”; Nature Notes TBD
- **June**—speaker Mike Lange on “Columbia Bottomlands Acquisitions; Nature Notes TBD
- **July**—speaker Susan Heath, Director of Conservation Research, GCBO, on “Eastern Willet Migration and Nesting”; Nature Notes TBD
- **August**—TBD
- **September**—Bryan Frazier, Director of Brazoria County Parks, on “Brazoria County Parks Update and Vision for the Future; Nature Notes, Jackie Hicks on her Ecofund Grant

Membership—John Boettiger submitted the following impact data, VT and AT information, and award recipients, which Dave Brandes prepared for announcement at the March General Meeting.

Impact Data	# Adults	# Youth	Total
YTD Totals—February 29	987	1,431	2,418

Period	VT Hours	AT Hours	# of Volunteers
YTD Totals—February 29	2,985	712	93

Recertification 2020		2500 VT Hours
Susan Falcone-Potts Phil Huxford Kathy Pittman Barbara Yoder	Kathleen Purvis Kim Richardson Don Sabathier	John Boettiger

Volunteer Project, Public Outreach and Activity Request Review—Oron Atkins provided the following activities for inclusion in the minutes and posting at the General Meeting:

- **Exploration Green Nursery / Wetland Workday**—March 5, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Christie Taylor
- **TCWP at GCBO Workday**—March 19, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; contact Chris Kneupper
- **GCBO Native Plant Workday**—Every Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; contact Chris Kneupper
- **Pearland Natural Resources Workday**—Second Thursday this month; contact Cullen Ondracek
- **BCPD Trail Day**—Third Thursday each month, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; contact Mike Mullenweg
- **Bobcat Woods Trail**—TBD; see Calendar or Oron Atkins
- **Migration Celebration Nature Photo Contest**—Deadline March 20; Contact Kim Richardson
- **GCBO Brew on the Bayou (fundraiser, VT NOT approved)**—March 21, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; contact Celeste Silling
- **GCBO Spring Fling at Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary**—Daily April 4 through May 6, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; contact Regina Tippet

AT Opportunities and Bonus AT Day—Bob Whitmarsh indicated that he has new items to add to the calendar and for announcement at the General Meeting.

Outreach—Ruby Lewis provided the following activities for inclusion in the minutes and posting at the General Meeting:

- **DEEP at BNWR**—March 24, 26, 31, 8:30 a.m. to ~2:00 p.m.; contact Tom Schneider or Ruby Lewis
- **Nature Day at Sea Center Texas**—March 7, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **Brazoria Heritage Day**—March 7, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- **Brazoria NW Refuge/FOBWR Open House**—March 8-15, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **Epiphany Church Fair, Pearland**—March 28
- **Texas Wildlife Day at Rice University**—March 29, 12:00 p.m. to ?
- **Migration Celebration**—April 17 (kickoff dinner) and event (April 25 and 26)
- **Brazoria County Library System, COT Summer Reptile Program**—June
- **Camp Wild at Galveston State Park**—June 1 through 5
- **GCBO Bird Camp**—June 8 through 12
- **Brazoria County Library System, COT Wild in the City Program**—July
- **Nature Camp at Camp Mohawk County Park**—June 15 through 18
- **Nature Camp at Quintana Beach County Park**—July 13 through 16



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 Feb: No action; Ruby will follow up Mar: No action. Ruby not present
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 Feb: Agreements being worked on Mar: Agreements being worked on; will add Angleton Parks Department
Update VPAR agreements	Oron Atkins	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 Oct: Oron working with Pete and Peggy; there was some discussion about putting the planetarium and museum under one VPAR Nov: Oron is working to finalize Dec: Oron continuing to work on Feb: Oron spoke with the Center for Arts and Sciences, which is in the process of consolidating all its entities; Oron will coordinate a meeting with them to discuss our relationship Mar: No progress
Find the portable loudspeaker system; possibly buy a new system for intern training (need cost information)	Larry Peterson	Jan.	Ongoing	Location of COT's system is unknown but was not acceptable; need to investigate intern-class needs Dec: speaker system has been found; Larry will test it but likely is not adequate for our training needs Feb: Larry will determine training class needs and cost to meet them; Kathy suggested individual earphones for participants Mar: Need input from Training Team. Mary will coordinate with Larry
Find a speaker to present a Nature	Connie Stolte	ASAP	Ongoing	The State office has requested that chapters ensure they are creating a welcoming atmosphere



Note/other on the topic of inappropriate behavior and creating a welcoming atmosphere				<p>Dec: Still reviewing possible wording of policy addenda</p> <p>Feb: The Executive Board has not yet met</p> <p>Mar: No progress (see next action item)</p>
Executive Committee to meet and draft wording for harassment and accommodations for disability policies	Officers and Past President		ASAP	<p>State suggested that chapters provide a “welcoming atmosphere”; Peggy Romfh requested that accommodations for impairments be included</p> <p>Feb: The Executive Board has not yet met</p> <p>Mar: John O. will get the Extension Office policy to use as a template</p>
2020 State Meeting Planning	Preliminary State Mtng Comm: Kristine, Lisa, Bob, Bill	Oct.	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> <p>Feb: Committee meeting to be set up</p> <p>Mar: Connie will take lead. Kathy and Kyle Purvis are doing photo contest</p>
Spotlight a different COT member each month on Facebook and in the newsletter	Kathy Pittman	Mar.	Ongoing	<p>In order to honor the efforts of our membership and help us get to know each other</p> <p>Mar: Kathy will have a list of questions to send to the person chosen to be featured. She suggested several people be featured on Facebook and one for the newsletter. Suggestion to begin with those who have the most hours</p>
Hold a brief training session on how to enter hours in VMS using a Smart Phone	Kristine Rivers?	TBD	TBD	To facilitate the capture of more volunteer hours
NEW Action Item(s) Added at March Meeting		Who?	Due date?	Comments
Email the membership with instructions for joining the State’s Master Naturalists Listserv		Connie Stolte	ASAP	
Put together the agendas for the Board and General meeting in the future		Mickey Dufilho	Ongoing	
Speak with county commissioners to get permission to park in county lot for General Meetings		John O’Connell	Before next meeting	
Announce at the meetings about the issue of parking; encourage carpooling and parking responsibly		Mickey Dufilho	March Meeting	
Consider having some General Meetings at night or put together a video of the meetings for those who cannot attend		Mickey Dufilho	Ongoing	A subcommittee was established to review suggestions and make a proposal; committee consists of Mary, Mickey (chair), Kristine, Don, Neal, Larry and John O.; Mickey will send a meeting notice
Find the COT’s TMN banner that was given to the organization		Connie Stolte	ASAP	It was suggested to build a frame for it so we can have it at General Meetings as a backdrop for pictures
Kristine will email to membership application forms for this year’s ECO Funds grant		Kristine Rivers	ASAP	
Order books and field notebooks for the		Don Sabathier	ASAP	



next new-member training class			
Create a Facebook post about upcoming evening new-member training class	Kathy Pittman	ASAP	To promote applicants for the class

President: Bill Ahlstrom adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary
(Meeting notes provided by Mickey Dufilho)

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	X	X										
Mickey Dulilho	X	X	X										
Sabathier, Don	X	X	X										
Myers, Lisa	X	X											
Advisors													
O'Connell, John	X	X	X										
Cason, Paul		X											
Immediate Past President													
Rivers, Kristine	X	X	X										
Appointed Board Members													
Atkins, Oron	X	X	X										
Boettiger, John	X		X										
Lewis, Ruby		X											
Peterson, Larry	X	X	X										
Pittman, Kathy		X	X										
Schwartz, Mary	X	X	X										
Stolte, Connie	X		X										
Wagner, Rose		X											
Whitmarsh, Bob	X	X	X										
Guests													
McLain, Neal	X	X	X										