



Treasurer’s Report—Don Sabathier presented the May 2020 financial information, below. Don indicated that he has attempted to Contact John Minkert regarding 2020 membership renewal. Also, Don has provided Jackie Hicks information for reimbursement of Ecofund Grant expenses.

1 May – 31 May 2019, COT Treasurer Report

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Beginning Balance</u> | \$ 10,996.42 |
| Revenue Summary | \$ 274.11 |
| Expense Summary | (\$ (85.84) ¹ |
| <u>Ending Balance</u> | \$ 11,154.69 |

¹ Expenses primarily for refreshment supplies.

2020 TMN Annual State Meeting—Connie Stolte reported on the status of the Annual State Meeting and the May 13 COT State Meeting Planning Committee meeting. [See Attachment A].

BOARD REPORTS and OTHER TOPICS

General Meeting Programs—Mickey Dufilho provided the following status on upcoming general-meeting speakers:

- **June (VIRTUAL MEETING)**—speaker Mike Lange on “Habitat Conservation in the Columbia Bottomlands”; Nature Notes, Ed Barrios on “Murder Hornets”
- **July**—speaker Susan Heath, Director of Conservation Research, GCBO, on “Eastern Willet Migration and Nesting”; Nature Notes TBD
- **August**—speakers Jim and Deb Nance and Neal McLain on “Geology and Paleontology”; Nature Notes 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
- **October**—Chris Kneupper’s cancelled April presentation on the history of Forts Velasco has been rescheduled for October; Nature Notes TBF

Secretary—Lisa Myers would like to refresh the COT display in the lobby of the AgriLIFE building. She has some nature-themed fabric, and Ruby Lewis has volunteered to help Lisa with this effort. At this time, there is no cost associated with the project other than possibly replacing the TMN-COT logo sign.

Membership—John Boettiger reported the following year-to-date impact data and awards. He indicated that there are currently 115 paid members. Due to COVID restrictions, only 30% of members are currently reporting hours. Bill Ahlstrom said that many TMN presidents would like to see 2020 hours requirements reduced but State is so far resistant.

| Impact Data | # Adults | # Youth | Total |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|
| YTD Totals—May 31 | 1628 | 5340 | 6968 |

| Period | VT Hours | AT Hours |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| YTD Totals—May 31 | 5592 | 1003 |

| Recertification 2020 | 2,500 Hours | 15,000 Hours |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Mickey Dufilho Debbie Nance Jim Nance Carolyn May-Monie | Jimmy Salinas James Calvert Larry Peterson | John Boettiger Phil Huxford |

State Representative—Connie Stolte reported on the May 28, State Representatives’ Meeting. [See Attachment B].

Training Director—Mary Schwartz said that she going to finalize the fall new-member training schedule and plan for virtual as well as in-person training or a combination of both.

Volunteer Service Director—Oron Atkins said that he will add Camp Mohawk Nature Camp to the Calendar. He noted that UTV use for Turtle Patrol is still cancelled, but people can patrol on their own. Connie Stolte added that Sea Center is now reopened but without volunteers. Bob Whitmarsh said that the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science is opening on a limited basis, and docents are needed. Bill Ahlstrom added that The Center for the Arts and Sciences would like help refurbishing the nature trail.

Advanced Training Director—Bob Whitmarsh indicated that there were no new opportunities. He said that John O’Connell had trained 16 members on use of MS Teams Meeting software in advance of the June 10th Chapter Meeting.

Outreach Director—Ruby Lewis announced that most events have been cancelled or postponed and provided the following updates:

- **Brazoria County Library System**, COT Summer Reptile Program*—June; virtual via recorded presentations
 - **Brazoria County Library System**, COT Wild in the City Program*—July; virtual via recorded presentations
- * Ruby provided a report on the video presentations (to be posted to the Brazoria County Library System website) that are replacing in-person presentations this summer. These are not eligible for AT as there is no interaction. The library would like us to prepare presentations for adults at some point
- **Nature Camp at Camp Mohawk County Park**—June 15 through 18; still planned at this point; Mike Mullenweg is limiting the number of campers and will need fewer volunteers
 - **Nature Camp at Quintana Beach County Park**—July 13 through 16; still planned at this point.

Communications Director—Larry Peterson presented the following report:

WEBSITE

The website suffered a major crash and loss of data this past month. The site was recovered from previous backup with some data loss; most has been restored or recreated. Site transition is expected

in June with live launch of new site, <http://txmn.org/cradle>. I am working with Joshua Frazier, TAMU AgriLifeWeb Developer, on the migration. The current website layout continues to be primarily supported by Neal McLain. Website visits have been at the normal level

BUSINESS CARDS

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

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook page “liked” by 570 people. New page followers, 4. May page visits, 49. May page reach is 223. Post engagements were 70.

Twitter @tmncot, 47 followers (6 new); following, 82 (3 new).

| 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 2020: No action; Ruby will follow up Apr: Not discussed; libraries are closed May: Libraries still closed Jun: Libraries opened for limited hours/access; too soon for the displays |
| Review and update partners webpage (see below also) | 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 2020: Agreements being worked on Apr: Agreements being worked on May: No update; Bill said Angleton Parks & Recreation wants to be a VPAR Jun: No update |
| 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 Oct: Oron working with Pete and Peggy; there was some discussion |



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| | | | | about putting the planetarium and museum under one VPAR Nov: Oron is working to finalize Dec: Oron continuing to work on Feb 2020: 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 Apr: Oron is working to finalize May: Bill said Angleton Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) is applying to be a new partner Jun: Bill said that APRD is requesting changes to its VPAR that Bill will send to the board; Oron will follow up |
| 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 2020: Larry will determine training class needs and cost to meet them; Kathy suggested individual earphones for participants Apr: Larry has found one in the \$150-200 range that he thinks will meet our needs May: Larry asked to table this until late summer |
| Executive Committee to meet and draft wording for harassment and accommodations for disability policies | Kristine Rivers | | ASAP | State suggested that chapters provide a "welcoming atmosphere"; Peggy Romfh requested that accommodations for impairments be included Feb 2020: The Executive Board has not yet met Apr: Not discussed May: Connie has collected some wording; John O'Connell will provide the 4H volunteer policy Jun: No update |
| 2020 State Meeting Planning | State Mtng Comm: Kristine, Lisa, Bob, Bill, Rose, Connie (chair), John O., Kim Richardson | Oct. | Ongoing | 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 Feb 2020: Committee meeting to be set up Apr: Not discussed May: As of now, the meeting is still on; Bill needs volunteers to help with the photo contest (Kim has offered). Connie will coordinate a May 13 virtual meeting with committee members Jun: See Connie's report in minutes and Attachment A |
| Spotlight a different COT member each month on Facebook and in the newsletter | Kathy Pittman | Mar. | Ongoing | To honor the efforts of our membership and help us get to know each other Apr: Kathy requested information from several members; none has yet replied May: Kathy has put on hold Jun: No action |
| Hold a brief training session on how to enter hours in VMS via Smart Phone | ? | TBD | TBD | To facilitate the capture of more volunteer hours Apr: Not discussed May: No update Jun: On hold pending in-person general meetings |
| NEW Action Item(s) Added at June Meeting | Who? | | Due date? | Comments |
| Exploratory committee for area beaches cleanup | Oron Atkins (chair), Bill, | | ASAP | Jun: Bryan needs help for beach cleanup but cannot currently use probationers. <i>Suggestions:</i> patrol beaches (possibly |



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| | Mickey, Rose, Larry, parks person(s) TBD | | combine with education effort and hand out garbage bags); combine cleanup with citizen science project; join with Adopt - A-Beach |
| Set up a time for COT to “take over” State’s social media for one week as part of its program for chapter promotion themselves | Kathy Pittman | ASAP | |
| Complete Volunteer at a Distance Idea Form (on State website) | Oron Atkins with Dave Brandes | ASAP | For chapters to share ideas for volunteering during COVID-19 |

President: Bill Ahlstrom adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ladd Myers, Secretary

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A State Meeting Planning Committee Report

The committee held a virtual meeting on May 13, 2020. Members present were Connie Stolte, John O'Connell, Bob Whitmarsh, Lisa Myers, Bill Ahlstrom, Kim Richardson, and Kristine Rivers.

General information about the state meeting and timelines were reviewed. A list of questions and action items for the photo contest was generated, and Bill was to follow up with Mary Pearl and Michelle about the items. At the time of the meeting, Bob Whitmarsh was 90% complete with the spreadsheet proposal for field sessions to:

- 1) Nash Prairie and Brazos Woods
- 2) GCBO
- 3) Sea Center Texas
- 4) DEEP sessions at Brazoria Wildlife Refuge.

Other items discussed included:

- Soliciting for meeting sponsorships
- Registration bag items
- Our response to the call for proposals (Chris Kneupper submitted a proposal)
- Encouraging COT member participation in the meeting.

A lot of decisions and progress cannot be planned until our chapter finds out if the meeting will be at the Omni in Houston or a virtual meeting.

Connie created a poll to see what members were thinking about attending the state meeting. The poll had some design flaws so very little was gathered from it. Connie's best guess is that about eight members said they might attend an in-person meeting.

The committee planned a follow-up meeting for Wednesday, June 3, at 1 p.m. Later, Connie suggested that the meeting be postponed until after June 10, when we will know more about State's plans. A date and time has not been set.

The **photo contest sub-committee** (Connie, John, Kim, Rose, and Bill) planned and conducted follow-up meeting on May 19. The state office was not able to give any answers to the group's questions about the contest until after a decision about the format for the meeting is made. This will not happen until after June 10. In order to be more prepared in case the decision is to have an in-person meeting, Bill has contacted the chapter that organized last year's contest (Cross Timbers Chapter).

Kim Richardson agreed to review the contest rules and provide input on what might need to happen if the contest is conducted virtually or by email.

Until a meeting format is decided upon planning is at a standstill.

Attachment B
State Representative Report June 2020

I sent out to chapter members a survey regarding the State Meeting, but it was not valid; however, I received some useful information from it. Out of 37 responses received, seven people said they would attend an in-person event.

State Representatives met via a Zoom meeting with Mary Pearl Meuth and Michelle Haggerty on May 28 at which the following were discussed:

- The state office is offering each chapter the opportunity to “take over” the state’s social media apps for a week at a time. If our chapter is interested, we need to email the TMN intern at a.regennitter@exchange.tamu.edu to be put on the calendar.
- **The state office must decide the format of the TMN annual meeting by June 10.** All chapter members are asked to complete the survey developed by the state office by May 30. (Different than the chapter survey.) I sent a reminder email to chapter members about the survey.
- “Return to service guidelines” were reviewed. They are the same as Bill distributed in his email to chapter members.
- Ideas for volunteer service at a distance were requested from chapters. There is another survey about this topic that the state office will be sending to everyone. They will also be sending out volunteer service guidelines for citizen science volunteer projects. There is a form on the TMN State webpage.

Ideas for volunteer at a distance projects included:

- Citizen science—iNaturalist and ebird
 - Anniversary event planning
 - Grant writing
 - Planning future intern training events
 - Updating chapter website
 - Creating new outreach materials
 - Reviewing and updating Bylaws, CMOP, and COH
 - Write chapter member profiles or guidebooks
 - Top ten presentations (members favorite topics and ten things about that topic)—can turn into AT presentations, bingo games and scavenger hunts for outreach events
- Regarding fall training classes, the state office will be sending a survey to each chapter’s Training Director.
 - Michelle asked that each chapter’s current officers and committee chairs be up to date in VMS.
 - State has started a project to collect members’ videos indicating what nature means to them.