

Texas Ornithological Society
Board Meeting, Conference Call
March 30, 2021

Present on tonight's call were Christine Turnbull, Kendra Kocab, Daniel Hodges, Shelia Hargis, John Berner, Gailon Brehm, Randy Pinkston, Laura Wilson, Byron Stone, D D Currie, Frances Cerbin

Not present: Raul Delgado

President Christine Turnbull called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Minutes Approval

Gailon Brehm moved to approve the meeting minutes from November and January, Daniel Hodges seconded. Both sets of minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

John Berner went over the expense report and a few ways he found to make savings here and there. He said we need to check on the Zoom Pro subscription, which was supposed to have been downgraded until we needed it again. A dry tap was put in at Magic Ridge. It will cost \$70 to remove if we want water, but we will save \$12 a month until then.

Investments

Gailon Brehm went over the financial snapshot. The Endowments and Operations accounts are both up by about 4% since the last financial report. John Berner asked about moving some money from the bank account into a money market account or similar. This would be a low risk way to earn a small amount of interest. Gailon said it would be a good idea to look into it. D D Currie asked about tax free bonds, but those would tie up money for at least a few days if we needed it instead of being available at all times. She also suggested we look into how much we really need to keep liquid in the bank account.

Ballots, Slate of Directors

Gailon Brehm went over the election. Ballots were sent out, and those that arrive by April 15 will be counted. Shelia Hargis pointed out that Clay Taylor and Susan Foster need to be invited to the next board meeting (need link, etc) as we anticipate they will be elected to the new board. Gailon reminded everyone that we will need to nominate a new person to be Vice President.

Regional Reporting and Newsletter Deadlines

Randy Pinkston will continue reminding regional directors when their reports are due. Kendra Kocab asked about getting a set schedule of deadlines for the year. Randy will work on that.

Spring Meeting

Christine Turnbull talked about the upcoming spring meeting and reaffirmed the choice to make this meeting virtual. The newsletter announcing the meeting went out.

Virtual Programs

Byron Stone and Christine Turnbull talked about various virtual programs, including the two Rio Diablo birding camp fundraisers. The organizers for the camp were pleased with the turnout. Byron is working on getting a presenter for a hummingbird class. Bill Clark's raptor ID class from the fall was a success, so he offered to do a class on advanced raptor ID. Byron said they are trying to get the class approved for Master Naturalist credits and asked directors to help promote the class. Shelia Hargis suggested describing the program a bit better and reminding people that it will be recorded. Another program is going to be about Spanish for birders.

Sanctuaries

Shelia Hargis said Hooks Woods now has bleachers at the water feature and she improved the drips. Randy Pinkston passed along a positive report of a visitor who enjoyed the bleachers and water feature. Shelia inquired about hiring people to check up on the sanctuaries. Perhaps a Houston Audubon intern could be paid to spend a few hours each week at Hooks. Laura Wilson suggested having a park host, but Hooks Woods does not have sewer. Sabine Woods is in good shape currently, but a younger crop of volunteers will be needed there in the coming years. This issue needs to be discussed further. Shelia also said a relative of Mary Edna Crawford approached her about working on that sanctuary to make it a nice place for birders.

Byron Stone said people have developed RV lots in the area of Magic Ridge. Someone is needed down there full time. The closest volunteers are an hour away. Shelia will check on the removal of the old house. TOS has also been contacted by multiple people about illegal dumping going on. Byron would like to discuss installing an RV pad for a park host there.

Memorials

Randy Pinkston talked about potentially doing a festschrift book for Greg Lasley. Chuck Sexton said he will work on it, but it will take some time. That is where things stand right now.

Kendra Kocab talked about Dennis Shepler and the idea to ask GCBO to host the Spring 2022 meeting and have an in-person auction of his books and paintings. Profits would be split evenly between the two organizations. Kendra will approach GCBO about this. She also brought forth a suggestion about creating a new award in Dennis' name. Fred Collins will work on the details.

Other Business

Randy Pinkston was informed by Gary Voelker that we do not need to relocate the archives, but the materials need to be organized and consolidated. Dr. Arnold and local volunteers can probably help with that effort. TOS will be responsible for curating the archives.

Christine Turnbull said Eric Carpenter and Richard Gibbons asked for an endorsement of the new field guide they are working on. Proceeds would go to TOS. We will discuss this via email.

John Berner contacted David Sarkozi about renewing the webpage for the Texas Century Club.

The meeting ended at 8:20 PM.