

Texas Ornithological Society
Board Meeting, Conference Call
April 29, 2021

Present: Frances Cerbins, DD Curie, Susan Foster, Byron Stone, Gailon Brehm, Raul Delgado, Christine Turnbull, Shelia Hargis, Daniel Hodges, John Berner, Clay Taylor, and Laura Wilson.

Minutes: Daniel Hodges moved that we accept the minutes from the last meeting as written. Motion seconded by Byron Stone. All in favor. Motion passed.

President Christine Turnbull recognized outgoing board members Daniel Hodges and Raul Delgado and thanked them for their contributions and service to TOS. She has plaques for each of them as well as for Catherine Winans. Shelia Hargis asked if we can follow tonight's agenda or if the bylaws dictate our direction.

Election Results: Gailon Brehm reported the results of the election committee. 828 ballots were mailed out based on eligible voters. Approximately 200 were returned, which satisfies the 10% required. Elected were Byron Stone (At-large), Randy Pinkston (Region 6), Susan Foster (Region 7), and Kendra Kocab (Region 8). Randy Pinkston will resign from his current At-large position to take over the Region 6 position. Clay Taylor was nominated by the committee to replace Randy Pinkston as an At-large board member. Gailon Brehm moved that the board approve the appointment of Clay Taylor to the At-large position. The motion was seconded by Daniel Hodges. All in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 3:48 p.m.

The new board convened at 3:49 p.m. and elected officers for the next year. Kendra Kocab agreed to continue as secretary, Gailon Brehm nominated Christine Turnbull to continue as president, Kendra Kocab to continue as secretary, John Berner to continue as Treasurer, and Frances Cerbins as Vice-president. John Berner moved to accept this slate and Byron Stone seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

Financial Report: Treasurer John Berner reported that due to the coronavirus, numbers were down last year and all categories of income are up across the board this year. Contributions from The Birding Classic paid for the Bleachers at Hooks Woods. Our inventory income was zero due to no in-person meetings. John is trying to avoid bank fees by not exceeding allowed deposits each month. Meeting expenses were lower since we are meeting virtually. Expenses included postage, Bill Clark's fee, and plaques for outgoing directors.

Assets and Investments Committee: Gailon Brehm explained the Operations Account and Endowment Account which are managed by a paid financial advisor who provides professional financial decisions. The numbers provided for the sanctuaries have not been actively evaluated

and are listed at \$422,000 as of two and a half years ago. We have had a good run in the financial markets which has produced some nice gains. The long term performance has been profitable. John Berner stated that in 2019-2020 money was transferred from our bank account to an investment account, and we could do that again. Gailon Brehm added that we can choose to spend it as well.

Sanctuaries:

Magic Ridge: Byron Stone said that there are some small but troublesome developments on properties adjacent to Magic Ridge. The attorney is doing research on the property lines. One of the adjacent properties is developing an RV Park. We are looking for someone to help us with this. We need access for birders and security. We are looking for other organizations to help us with management which is difficult without a physical presence.

Sabine Woods:

John Berner reports that it is all good news. John Whittle of Golden Triangle received a grant from the county which has paid for some of the expenses that are our responsibility, such as porta potty and brush hog work. John suggests adding a sign to the right side of the gate like we currently have on the left side of the gate which lets people know about entrance fees.

Hooks Woods:

Shelia Hargis advised new board members that we have an MOU with Houston Audubon Society. Hooks Woods is included in the properties accessible by the High Island pass, and in return, their organization includes Hooks Woods in their work days. This has been a good relationship for us. John Berner reports that he has recently visited, and the property looks well kept.

Directors' Reports:

DD Curie and Susan Foster discussed recent and upcoming in-person local festivals that have employed covid-19 protocols and have been successful.

Other Business:

We are looking into using Neon to sell t-shirts and caps online but do not have much inventory. Christine Turnbull will contact Catherine Winans about how we have chosen art for the t-shirts in the past.

Christine also talked about the Lights Out initiative. They are seeking \$7,500 to pay their interns. Byron Stone suggested that they could provide a tour of the facilities to TOS members, and in turn, we could solicit donations. Susan Foster suggested they could give a presentation during one of our future meetings as well.

Christine Turnbull also suggested discussing guiding principles for our sanctuaries during the board retreat this fall. We need to discuss our vision and goals for our sanctuaries.

Our next in-person meeting will be at Lake Jackson in the Spring of 2022 and hosted by the GCBO. We need to confirm the date of either April 28-May 1 or May 5-8.

Non-meeting programs:

Byron Stone reported that Bill Clark presented twice for us. There were 30 participants the first time and 20 the second time. This netted approximately \$2,400 for TOS. Bill would like to do a live program in the fall limited to 25 participants. TOS would be responsible for advertising, recruiting, and registration. Cost is \$150 per person. Of that amount, TOS would receive 25%. Bill Clark would take care of expenses.

Discussed continuing to support on-line programming as well as in-person programs for our membership. Gailon Brehm thinks that we could hold virtual programs when we are not holding in-person meetings, like in summer and fall. Clay Taylor added that we need to figure out what we want to accomplish and can have a mix of virtual and in-person programs. Sessions can be filmed and put on our website for viewing at a later date when convenient for our membership.

Christine Turnbull will send out a doodle poll to decide the date for the next meeting. Gailon

Brehm moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Susan Foster. Meeting adjourned.