

TESA Winter Board Meeting, May 2, 2017 1:20 PM

Attending: DeDe Jones, Steven Klose, Billy Warrick, Joe Mask, Monty Dozier, Dennis Coker, Kay Ledbetter, Dean McCorkle, and Janet Hurley

Klose called the meeting to order and asked members of the group to introduce themselves and asked if there were any additions to the agenda.

Klose appointed Joe Mask as parliamentarian.

Minutes from Previous Board Meeting December 2016 minutes were circulated via email and in person. Mask made a motion to accept minutes as written, seconded by Jones. All were in favor.

Correspondence nothing to report

1. Reports

- a. Treasurer (D. McCorkle) – reported that there is \$14,894.09 in the TESA Checking account, and \$5,217.75 in the TEEFI account (where we collect credit card funds), plus our Certificates of Deposit gives us \$35,899.18 in total funds. Our annual income is slightly down, mostly as a reflection of fewer sponsors and less membership dues payments. As for expenses we are also down, but this is only the first half the year, and most of our costs occur after the annual summer meeting.

Expense	Amount
Uncategorized (refund for annual conference)	\$ 0
Ag Conf Social	\$ 0
Annual meeting Costs	\$ 0
Board Expense	\$215.00
Chapter meeting	0.0
Professional Development	0.0
Awards Recognition	\$ 0.0
Scholarships – 2 students	\$0.0
Support – Mask 4-H Foundation	\$ 0.0
Total Expenses for 2017 (to date)	\$215.00

- b. **Current Membership:** We have 23 Paid Members, 6 First Year New Members, and 121 Lifetime Members
- c. **4-H Foundation** (J. Mask): Mask reminded the group that the Foundation’s sole responsibility now is to raise funds. They will continue to oversee several accounts, but raising money for scholarships and youth development is their primary mission. The Foundation hired a consultant to find new funding sources – the goal was to raise \$600,000 which they did not make. 4-H Specialists have been contacted about future programming to see what funds need to be distributed on.
 - **The Foundation** has changed its by-laws. Although all five Professional Associations currently involved will still have member representing them, they no longer have voting privileges. They are also reducing the number of members to serve on the foundation board from 35 to 25. Their meetings will be twice a year spring and fall and held in

College Station. Since J. Mask is our representative and lives in the College Station area there will be little cost to our association for him to keep representing TESA at these meetings.

- **Action item:** Mask will find out if TESA still needs to pay his membership for the association.
- d. **Nominating** (D. Jones): Jones reported to the group that she has spoken to everyone who was interested in serving as an officer. The slate of potential officers for 2017/2018 are as follows:
- President: Monty Dozier
 - President Elect: Dean McCorkle
 - Historian/Website: Michelle Payne
 - Treasurer: Greg Kaase
 - Secretary: Janet Hurley
 - 4-H Foundation: Joe Mask
 - Retirement Liaison: Billy Warrick
 - Sponsorship: Jackie Smith
- Ballots will be sent out in June and returned to DeDe Jones for tabulation and reporting at the annual meeting in July 2017.
- e. **Audit** (J. Robinson): Klose reported for this committee. Based on changes made in 2016 to move the audit cycle to a calendar year rather than fiscal year, John Robinson will oversee this and conduct an audit in August of 2017.
- f. **Awards** (K. Ledbetter): Ledbetter reported that announcements for awards went out in April 2017, but due to a slow response the closing dates were extended by three weeks. Kay will work with DeDe Jones to review the award nominations and report the winners at our summer board meeting.
- **For award presentations, the following are dates to remember**
 - i. TCAAA July 16 – 19, 2017 Odessa
 - ii. 4-H August 2 – 4, 2017 Lubbock
 - iii. FCS August 6 – 9, 2017 Round Rock
- g. **Scholarship** (D. Coker): Coker reported announcements went out April 7th and again April 28th but they are not due until June 14, 2017. Dennis will work with his committee to review applications and winners will be announced at the summer meeting. He also plans to contact all recipients prior to the summer meeting and see if they will be in attendance for a presentation.
- h. **Professional Development** (A. McCorkle): D. McCorkle reported for Angela. Announcements went out with the Scholarship and Awards information. Angela had two applications at the time of our Board meeting. Announcements will be made at the summer meeting.
- i. **Retiree** (B. Warrick): Warrick reported that prior to each meeting, he goes through the retiree list (attached) and contacts all individuals to make sure their information is still the same. Currently TESA has 121 living lifetime members. Two recent retirees will be added soon, Judy Warren and Diann Mitchel Linger. Warrick also reported that Nelson Adams passed away on February 27, 2017. A name plate will be made for him and added to the plaque that hangs at the 4-H Center in Brownwood.
- j. **Industry Liaison** (J. Smith): Klose reported Smith is always looking for new vendors, if you have someone in mind please let him or someone on the Board know. M. Dozier will work with Smith for the 2017 annual meeting.
- k. **Website/Historian**: Jones reported that D. Burton can no longer participate as a TESA Board member due to work conflicts. Until M. Payne is installed as an officer it was agreed that D.

Jones, J. Hurley along with help from Loretta Cortez (Ag Communications) and retiree Diann Mitchell Linger would keep the TESA website up to date.

New Business

- a. **2017 Annual Meeting** (Dozier) – Reported that we have a signed contract with the Drury Hotel, and circulated an agenda with speakers for the summer conference. Monty shared the agenda with the group and we discussed field trip options. Since we are having our Monday evening meal at the Alamo, members will be able to tour the Alamo early and have access to Alamo Hall. We will also be able to view the gardens and other areas. On Tuesday afternoon, rather than have a formalized tour, members can will the afternoon to choose their own activities. Monty is looking at a couple of options for the evening meal on Tuesday.
 1. Candace Foster has indicated she can assist with registration again this year. She will also work on the announcement flyer and coordinate with D. McCorkle to set up a payment system online.
 2. Klose will approach retiree Lori Colvin to see if she is still interested in developing the design of the program. Once programs are done, he will get them printed as well.
- b. **2018 Annual Meeting** (Dozier) – Looking at hill country locations since we have trouble finding a coastal location that is reasonable prices. He found three potential places: the [Flying L Ranch](#) in Bandera, [Inn on Barons Creek](#) in Fredericksburg, and [Courtyard by Marriott](#) in New Braunfels. Dozier prepared a one-page document on each location with room rates and what that includes. The Flying L was priced at \$189 for a single occupancy and each additional person (adult and child) could cost appx \$129 more per night. The Inn on Barons Creek had a room rate of \$91 per night for double occupancy and the Marriott was \$154 per night, plus an additional cost for meeting rooms and food. After reviewing all the options, the group decided on the Inn on Barons Creek. Some of the options for this location would be a tour of the Nimitz Museum, bat viewing or a wine tour. Dozier will check with the other groups and try to book our 2018 annual meeting for the week of July 14th.
 1. Klose mentioned that he has been keeping a spreadsheet of the annual meeting locations going back 8 to 9 years to help us know where we have been and what the cost has been and it was over 10 years ago that TESA was in Fredericksburg.
- c. **Chapter Directors** (Jones) – Reported that as part of her duties to find board members, she will also look at each Chapter director position and see about getting more people to participate at the Board meetings and on committees. There was discussion about combing some of the district chapters like D3 and D8, and D4 and D5. Several TESA members were discussed that might be good to serve as chapter directors. DeDe will follow up with them before the summer meeting.
- d. Recognition/remembrance – see below
- e. **Life Members** – the recognition and life members discussion focused on purchasing a new plaque for the 4-H Center. The current plaque is full.
 1. Action Item: Mask made a motion to purchase a new plaque that was seconded by DeDe Jones. A discussion ensued about size (purchase one the same size as the current one, or purchase a larger one and move everything to this new plaque). The group decided a new plaque that was the same size as our current one with the new Agency name and logos would be appropriate. Motion passed by group.
- f. **Questions for Extension Administration**

1. Is there a way to give feedback to Extension Program Specialists on the strengths and weakness of their promotion packet after the promotion process is complete?? This would be especially helpful for Program Specialists moving from level 1 to 2.

Response: With the recent overhaul of the Program Specialists promotion guidelines, this would be a good time to evaluate the formal feedback process possibly comparing it to the recently implemented county agent promotion process.

2. TESA has recognized that Paul Pope with Organizational Development occasionally falls behind in getting evaluations processed into final reports, what can be done to help him?

Response: Also recognize Paul gets overloaded at times, but it does appear to come in seasons. While budget realities don't allow for simply adding resources, two requests could potentially help the situation. 1) Avoid sending small batch evaluations. If you have 20-30 evaluation responses, you could key those into a spreadsheet and summarized the responses in about the same amount of time it would take to package up and send to Paul. 2) Send evaluations in right away. Paul tends to get overloaded prior to end-of-year reporting time, when people remember they need those evaluation summaries.

3. How can faculty provide input on Dept. Head and Associate Dept. Head evaluations?

Response: No one remembers this being a part of the Associate Dept. Head evaluations. We do it for Dept. Heads and District Administrators, so we will consider that process.

4. A couple of reminders: New Employee Orientation might be too soon; many employees have trouble understanding some of the acronyms used. At the same time, info shared with Associate Dept. Heads is not always passed on to the units in a timely manner. Need better internal communication.

No response needed, but the issues are recognized and improving communication is a constant pursuit.

- g. **Board Meeting Expenses** - group recognizes that since we approved these expenses in our annual budget we don't need to approve at each meeting.
- h. All other items that needed a full board were discussed. Prior to leaving for dinner, the Board adjourned the meeting at 4:24 PM with a motion from Dozier and second by Mask. The group met again on the morning of May 3rd for the General Assembly.

General Assembly meeting with Doug Steele, Jeff Ripley, and Steven Green

Introductions for each group by Daphne Richards and Steven Klose (Epsilon Sigma Phi, TESA, TCAA, TEEA)

A special recognition by Mark Carroll to Debbie Barnes who is retiring this year.

Doug Steele, Extension Director

- Dr. Steele opened his session by thanking everyone in the audience for the work we do for Extension. He reminded the group that his goals are to represent the best interests of AgriLife Extension employees, AgriLife Extension (agency) and AgriLife partnerships. We can't do what we do without these individuals.
- Dr. Steele then recognized all the members who traveled to Washington, DC for the PILD conference. (Steve Klose represented TESA)
- One of his responsibilities is Chair of the ECOP Budget and Legislative Committee. Priorities include reviewing the SNAP-Ed funding and how that can help with the continued education we do for families, schools, and restaurants on food safety and education. Also, looking at an increase of 20% for direct professional training for items like 4H, STEM and rural development, another area that we as an agency do a lot of work in already.
- On May 1st, Dr. Steele along with Chancellor Sharp attended a Wildfire Disaster Relief luncheon in Hemphill County which had 250 attendees. He reminded the audiences that Agents work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week helping Texans in times of need (fires or the recent tornadoes in Van Zandt county). It's truly rural America helping rural America.
- The Value of Extension – is something Dr. Steele likes to share with Legislators, the public and employees when he has a chance. Here are a few items he has been expanding on.
 1. South Texas and recent cattle fever tick outbreaks – there is a lot of work to be done and he is seeking additional funding to help with educational efforts. We don't need this to spread and devastate the cattle industry
 2. Zika – Through multiple groups Extension could mobilize and raise awareness about this disease and mosquito control.
 3. Feral Hogs – Agents and Specialists have been working with TDA and stakeholders on the topic of feral hog baiting. This has been a constantly changing topic with more to come.
 4. Path to Plate - this topic is important for all Texans as it relates to nutrition and chronic health. We will be expanding the program later this year.
- Budget at the Federal level - the hope is that funds will stay at least at the current level of funding. At the same time, Extension is seeking a 20% increase so that rural health and safety education can be increased as we are the only agency that constantly works within rural communities. As stated before would like to see some changes with SNAP-Ed so that we can "eliminate the middle-man" which would give us additional funding for agents and specialists working on these topics.
- Budget at the State level changes daily. The Senate has requested a 5% reduction in state general funds and funding no Exceptional Items. The House is asking for a 2 ½ % to 3% reduction. We continue to educate on the role and value of Extension and that our Agency funding is distinctly different from Texas A&M University funding.
 1. Developed a 1-page document on TALL and V G Young on why these two items are important not just to AgriLife but to County Government as well
 2. Healthy South Texas was a success and should be continued throughout the state. We will keep pushing for this funding.
 3. Senate Bill 2, capping the amount local governments can access for property taxes, if passed will hurt county funding, Extension will work with others to keep educating state legislators about the importance of funding county governments and Extension.
- Other items of interest

1. Internal communication – don't wait to complain – Dr. Steele restated how important it is to use your professional associations to “voice” your concerns so they can help move the message forward.
2. Lara Burhenn has been with AgriLife Extension for 1 year and it's been a busy one. She is working on better ways to market what we do to show the value we offer to the citizens of Texas.
3. Career Ladder for Agents – Jeff Ripley will discuss in more detail but the changes made by the County Agents and RPLs was effective. This process was driven by “your” peers where we worked with employees to have a more outcome based process and will keep improving as we move forward.
4. Provost Search – Dr. Steele remains optimistic in the search for a new Provost. This individual, if they understand the role of Extension has for the University System, can help us with future funding but also serve as an additional champion for all the work we do.
5. Budgets – Extension budget is primarily in people – 92% of our budget goes towards salaries. With a 5% reduction, this would impact future hiring – currently we have 64 County Agent and 15 Specialist positions open if we go forward with a budget reduction we will only be able to hire 14 Agents and 10 Specialists. At the same time, AgriLife Extension leadership is also looking at restructuring how Agents are “labeled” but this could be difficult to achieve under the current county agent model.

Steve Green, Assistance Agency Director

Stated he had three brief updates from Dr. Ballabina

1. 4H Program Leader – a search has gone out to fill this position. The committee has 14 members made up of leadership, specialists, and agents. This group hopes to begin interviewing in July, make an offer in August with a goal of start date of Sept. 1, 2017.
2. Learning Management System (LMS) – The agency is in the process of seeking out potential vendors to develop and/or customize an online learning management system that would host online courses and other resources for Extension clientele. A committee has been appointed to lead this effort. The LMS will consolidate a variety of platforms that are currently being used by several different units throughout the agency. The committee is working on a request for proposals (RFP) and hope to have a contract in place by Sept. 1st.
3. Path to the Plate Initiative -started with the Healthy South Texas initiative and dinner tonight. To further this effort statewide the Agency will be recruiting and training 24 agents who will be champions for Path to the Plate. This program helps consumers understand how their food choices impacts well-being by making the connection between food and health.

Jeff Ripley, Associate Director County Operations

Jeff started off his talk with a “joke” about sending himself his notes on what to say but they got stuck in Proofpoint. His point to the group is Leadership is aware of some of the unique challenges our SPAM filter is posing to all employees and they continue to work out the “kinks” in this system.

The Commissioners Court and the County Judges Group have been our best advocates. They are great people to bounce ideas off and a good sounding board to discuss the future of Extension. They help us stay focused and guide the way forward. They have been very positive for our Agency.

The county agent career ladder changes appear to be effective. There were 91 individuals who submitted promotion packets, which is the most the Agency has seen in one year. The timing has changed, as well as the process which allowed for Agents to put more comprehensive packets together. As time goes on, Jeff said he hopes this process becomes even more streamlined.

Changed in Academy for Agents – rather than having new agents spend two weeks in College Station, they will now have a shorter time at Academy and go back to their regions to be trained by veteran agents in a more local setting. This will help with some of the programming that is required for county agents and keep them closer to home.

Jeff has been working with an economist to look at salaries for agents. This salary study is looking at cost of living, what others in similar fields of work make and other benefits. This is a good exercise as it helps the Agency understand what they can do to improve and retain employees. More to come on this topic later in the year.