

TEXAS SPELEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF TSA BUSINESS MEETING

17 October 2004

(Convened at 2004 Texas Cavers' Reunion at Flat Creek Ranch)

Officers Present: Diana Tomchick, Chairman; Jerry Atkinson, Secretary; Michael Cicherski, Treasurer.

TSA Members in Attendance: Don Arburn (BG), Jay Jorden (DFWG), Jim Kennedy (UTG), Linda Palit (BG), Bill Steele (DFWG, MG), George Veni (BG), Terry Holsinger (UTG), Joe Ranzau (BG), Cindy Lee (UTG), Bill Russell (UTG), Allan Cobb (UTG), Jacqui Bills (PBSS), Gary Olsaver (BG), Christi Burrell (BG), and Terri Whitfield (UTG).

Call to order: 10:05 a.m. by Diana Tomchick, chairwoman.

1. Reading of minutes from spring TSA meeting waived. M/Jim Kennedy, s/Joe Ranzau approved.

2. Officer Reports

- a. Diana welcomed TSA members to the Business meeting and thanked Andy Grubbs for organizing a successful Texas Cavers' Reunion. TSA will have its 50th anniversary next year. She has developed a poster in conjunction with events in 2005-2006. It features a Culverwell drawing of Devil's Sinkhole.
- b. For the 2004 financial report, treasurer Michael Cicherski distributed printouts of statements and reported the TSA's operating account assets of \$4,008.81, with \$3,624.55 in the savings account and \$10,080.01 in the Land Fund account. Total: \$17,713.37. Income for the calendar year totaled \$6,261.67, with expenses of \$5,646.51. Net income: \$615.16. Expenses from the latest Texas Caver are not included. The Land Fund's current return of .86 percent, annualized, can be improved. Access to the Fidelity Cash Reserve Account has been re-established. Since early July, all three accounts were audited and balanced. Officers have since received monthly reports. The data was entered into QuickBooks. Under the profit and loss statement, TSA Convention expenses totaled \$2,519.97. Ranzau said the convention broke even. Cicherski said a 2005 TSA budget can be developed based on his financial statements from this year.
- c. M/Kennedy, approved by consensus, to summarize the minutes from the May 22 spring business meeting at Burnet. Secretary Jerry Atkinson said the minutes are posted on the TSA Web site's business page: <http://www.cavetexas.org/template2.asp?content=meetingminutes.asp>. The summary showed total cash assets of \$18,786.15, including \$10,040.12 in the Land Fund account, and 160 paid TSA memberships. The meeting included discussion of membership; TSA needs at least 200 members in order to break even and 50 memberships have expired since the October TCR.

3. Committee Reports

- a. Texas Caver: Diana has agreed to be the new editor. Becky Jones is also editing an issue.
- b. TSA Land Fund: Jay Jorden gave a short history of the fund, established in 1995 with seed money from the honorarium given by the National Speleological Society to the 1994 NSS Convention Committee at Brackettville. Intended for acquisition of a permanent TSA site, with conservation as a secondary goal, the fund has grown through the years with deposits from attendance charges at association events and occasional miscellaneous contributions. Funds in the Fidelity Investments account have been deposited in a money market account. Diana and Jay are current Land Fund trustees, with a third, elected position vacant. Consensus to have election for the position at the winter BOG meeting.
- c. Membership: Bill Steele reported 180 paid TSA members as of TCR. The cost of a mailing to TSA members was split with TCR. The NSS membership list was reviewed for potential new TSA members.
- d. Safety and Techniques: Jacqui Bills said Becky has been involved in planning NCRC Level I/II training, scheduled for February at Colorado Bend State Park, with a \$150 registration cost. A wilderness first aid responders' course, including CPR, is scheduled for March 2005 at Dolan Falls, near the Devil's River. The \$400 cost will include continuing education credit. A vertical awareness and injury prevention course is in development.
- e. TSA store: The enterprise is doing well. But Logan McNatt wants to get out of the book store business. Sales of \$317.50 were reported from the TCR weekend.
- f. TSA webmaster: Travis Kinchen has had an illness in his family. But he's keeping up with demands of upgrading the Web site.

- f. Election Committee, Allan Cobb: Current nominees are Bill Steele, chair; Jim Kennedy, vice chair; Cicherski and Julia Germany, treasurer; and Atkinson, secretary. Election ballots were to be mailed within weeks.

4. Old Business

- a. TSA 50th anniversary preparations (Tomchick): M/Kennedy, s/Steele to allocate \$500 for the first printing of the commemorative poster featuring Devil's Sinkhole. Proof has been reviewed. The motion passed. Plans for TSA's 50th anniversary convention upcoming need discussion at the winter BOG meeting. The poster may be available then.
- b. Cicherski recommended that more than \$3,000 transferred from the operating account into the Land Fund should be restored to the general fund. Members discussed the possibility of leaving the money in the Land Fund, but there was concern about the possible need for its availability to handle TSA expenses. Cicherski said when more is known about the TSA's financial picture with development of a 2005 budget, it can be determined how much the organization should be setting aside in the Land Fund. Some upcoming TSA expenses include a new members' manual and future Texas Caver issues.
- c. Life category membership, TSA: George Veni said the NSS calculates long-term membership costs and allocates to lifetime membership costs about 20 years' membership dues. Greg Passmore originally proposed the membership category. It's not really fiscally feasible for TSA. Motion to defeat proposal approved.
- d. Proposed constitutional amendment regarding TSA officer elections (Atkinson): Outlines perceived inconsistencies in current election nomination, balloting and counting procedures; and advocates formalizing the process. (Atkinson reads proposed changes to Article VI: Terms and Elections; Section B; Subsection 1 of Bylaws.) The proposed changes will be printed in the December Texas Caver. Atkinson said TSA has had some hotly contested officers' races in the past; not every member is able to attend the meetings. Cobb, who has experience with education test scoring, said he could write guidelines for ensuring accurate vote tabulation. That point was added by consensus to the counting methodology.
- e. Members' manual (Tomchick): Official listings are being updated. Intent is to incorporate TCR membership renewals within the next week and send the manual to the membership by the year's end.
- f. Texas Caver digitization, NSS online library (Tomchick): Process is ongoing. NSS intends to have more internal organizations' publications available online. Several grottos' publications are already available online to their memberships. Discussion of copyright issues and whether older Caver issues should be posted online first. Releases from authors submitting articles and information may be required. Hard copies also must be archived. Cobb: Caver has no copyright statement or stated policy. Tabled to Publications Committee.

5. New Business

- a. 2009 International Congress of Speleology (Veni): For the Texas ICS bid, a poster is in development. A Web site is also set up. Veni gave a presentation at the Vietnam karst congress; positive feedback was received on the NSS proposal for a San Antonio ICS, but some are concerned about the political situation in the United States and potential airport hassles because of homeland security measures. The 2009 bid will be chosen next August in Greece.
- b. Membership standardization (Tomchick): General discussion on whether annual memberships should run from January 1 to December 31. Consensus that the Executive Committee will determine policy here.
- c. TSA is still looking for a store manager to replace Logan McNatt, who wants to resign.
- d. TSA website: The domain is currently renewed annually. M/Ranzau, s/Cobb to purchase <http://www.cavetexas.org/> for 10-year blocks to effect cost savings. The bulk purchase would amount to about \$1 a year for the period, compared with \$9.95 annually. Passed unanimously. Ranzau will expedite.
- e. Announcements: Powell's Cave sketching workshop is scheduled for Nov. 6. (Cobb) Photo monitoring workshop tentatively scheduled for a weekend in January 2005. A Devil's Sinkhole cleanup trip is planned for early 2005. A Kickapoo Caverns project weekend will be held early in 2005.

6. Next meeting

Scheduled for winter 2005, tentatively the third week of January, at the TSS office.

Meeting ended at 12:15 p.m.

Submitted by Gerald L. Atkinson and Jay R. Jorden.