

TEXAS SPELEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF TSA BUSINESS MEETING

30 April 2005

(Convened at 2005 TSA Convention, Fort McKavett State Historical Site)

Officers Present: Bill Steele, Chairman; Jim Kennedy, Vice-chairman; Jerry Atkinson, Secretary; Michael Cicherski, Treasurer.

TSA Members in Attendance: Michael Anderson (PBSS), Bill Bentley (PBSS), Allan Cobb (UTG), Linda Palit (BG), Jacqui Bills (PBSS), Don Broussard (UTG), Walter Feaster (PBSS), Keith Goggin (Ind), Orion Knox (UTG), Logan McNatt (UTG), Diana Tomchick (MG), Joe Ranzau (BG), Jay Jorden (DFWG).

The meeting convened from 5:15 PM to 6:40 PM. The minutes from the TSA Winter Business meeting held on 22 January 2005 at the TSS office in Austin, Texas were accepted as submitted by the Secretary.

Chairman's Report : (Steele) Bill reported that the TSA Convention had approximately 120 attendees. He also requested that members submit any NSS-related issues to him that could be brought up at the Congress of Grottos to be held at the upcoming NSS Convention in July.

Vice-Chairman's Report : (Kennedy) Jim stated that he's been occupied with both organizing the Convention and laying out the Members Manual. He went on to acknowledge the staff of Fort McKavett for hosting the Convention. The TSA only spent approximately \$200 for all the onsite facilities which included three buildings. In consideration of their outstanding hospitality and cooperation, it was decided that the TSA would send a letter of appreciation to the staff of the Fort McKavett State Historical Site.

Secretary's Report : (Atkinson) Jerry reported that he has completed the 2005 Members Manual. Continual additions and/or corrections are being made to the membership database.

Treasurer's Report : (Cicherski) Michael submitted a written report on the financial status of the TSA as of 27 April 2005. The TSA has total cash assets of \$18,298.48 including \$7,837.38 in the Operating Account, \$3,632.33 in the Savings Account, and \$6,828.77 in the Land Fund. Michael noted that these figures reflect some Convention-related expenses but not all of them. As soon as he receives the final receipts for the Convention, he will submit a final financial report. The TSA Convention is the second largest financial activity of the year for the organization, and a great deal of the TSA's income and expenses occur during this short period of time.

Michael also acknowledged Alana Skrabanek, the treasurer of the Bustamante Project, for her timely and professional reporting of the project's financial status.

Standing Committee Reports:

Conservation : (Bills) Jacqui gave a talk at the Convention regarding new concepts in cave conservation practices. Jacqui also noted that Val and Jim Hildreth-Werker have donated a series of PowerPoint presentations on cave conservation that can be used for educational purposes.

Membership : (Goggin) Keith gave a report on the current TSA membership statistics. Prior to the Convention, the TSA had 122 Individual, 32 Family, 1 Student, and 4 Library memberships, with an additional 33 publication exchanges with other organizations. This represented a voting body of 187 members. Denise Prendergast has sent emails to cavers with recently lapsed memberships requesting renewals.

Publications : Texas Caver Report : (Tomchick) Diana reported that the April issue of the *Texas Caver* is at Texas Mailhouse and will be in the mail soon. She also noted that there will probably not be a special 2004 compilation issue of the *Texas Caver* to cover missing issues. Instead, she proposed an expanded, 33-page edition of the June 2005 *Texas Caver* that would include most of the remaining 2004

material that was submitted. A discussion ensued as to how to handle the missing 2004 *Texas Cavers*.

Atkinson proposed that a special thematic color issue of the *Texas Caver* be published in lieu of the missing issues. The concept being that the TSA owed the membership something for the dues they had paid during 2004, and that a single, color issue would be appropriate and cheaper than the cost of publishing the remaining 4 issues of the 2004 *Texas Caver*. Palit responded that it would be good for the credibility of the organization to print a compilation 2004 issue. Cicherski stated that the organization has the funds to publish a color edition of the *Texas Caver*, but noted that it was not in the 2005 budget. He wanted to know if the TSA plans to adhere to the proposed 2005 budget or not, or if the proposed issue of the *Texas Caver* would be a special one-time expense. Tomchick responded that we should probably either print a compilation issue of the missing 2004 Texas Cavers, or include the submitted material in an expanded 2005 issue; but not both. A general discussion ensued as to the costs and merits of different viewpoints.

M/Palit, S/Kennedy to allocate \$2500 toward printing the missing 2004 *Texas Caver* issues as one combined issue. A general discussion ensued. The consensus was to table the motion to the Publication Committee for consideration. The committee will report back to the Executive Council by May 21st, 2005 with their recommendations.

Safety and Techniques : (Broussard) Don sent a letter to Chief Jim Evans of the Austin Fire Dept. requesting a 24/7 phone number to be used for emergency cave rescue. He is waiting for a formal response.

Don is polling volunteers to be included on a list of cave rescue organizers to be known as Temporary Incident Command (TempIC). The plan is that these organizers (or tempICs) will ensure that the right cavers are present at a cave rescue ASAP. A callout list will be maintained by the individual tempICs. The intent is to have a functional Texas Cave Rescue phone number to the cavers of Texas within the next 12 months. Details of the program will be posted to CaveTex shortly.

Temporary Committee Reports:

TSA Projects : (Kennedy) Jim has generated a set of proposed guidelines for TSA Projects that will be distributed to the other committee members for feedback. It will then be sent to the Executive Council for review. Intent is to have a policy in place by mid-summer 2005.

It was reported that TPWD's concerns with the CBSP Project have been alleviated for the moment.

Other Reports:

Land Fund : (Jordan) Jay reported that the current plan is to increase both the visibility of the Land Fund and its principal balance. To this end, Jay has written an article for the *Texas Caver* which will be published shortly. Jay noted that there is a need to have the Land Fund Trustees formally meet now that a full Board of Trustees is in place.

TSA Webmaster : (Bentley) Due to scheduling conflicts, Bennett Lee handed over the responsibilities of TSA Webmaster to Bill Bentley in March. Bill has updated and archived the old web pages, and has uploaded the new TSA web pages to the internet. It was reported that comments on the new site have been positive. Any suggestions for the website should be directed to Bill Steele for compilation. A round of applause was given to Bill for the excellent job he has performed in so short a time.

TSA Store : (McNatt) Logan noted that the new t-shirts have arrived and are for sale. Financial status of the store is similar to that reported at the TSA Winter Business meeting as interim sales have been poor.

Project Reports :

Bustamante Project : (Knox) The final trail layout for the cave is being completed with the assistance of Italian advisors. The Entrance Room needs to be cleaned up which will require a lot of effort. This may be the theme of the next Bustamante Project trip.

The latest development concept includes boring an estimated 100m long entrance tunnel from the upper parking lot into the Entrance Room.

(In the interest of time, it was decided by consensus to dispense with the remaining Project reports.)

Internal Organization Reports :

(In the interest of time, it was decided by consensus to dispense with the IO reports.)

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

Electronic Voting by the Executive Council : (Atkinson) As the Bylaws address only the process by which business is conducted during a regular Business Meeting, there is a need to formalize the process by which the Executive Council conducts its business by email. This will ensure that all council members are properly informed and that the actions of the Council are recorded and reported to the membership. M/Atkinson, S/Bills that :

“Every act or decision done or made by a majority of the Executive Council that is conducted by an electronic ballot sent by email by an officer of the organization in which a majority of the Executive Council participate, is the act of the Executive Council, unless the Constitution, Bylaws, or provisions of law require a greater percentage or different voting rules for approval of a matter by the Executive Council. In the case of an electronic ballot, all official responses to the ballot by the Executive Council will be copied to every officer of the corporation. The act or decision done or made by a majority of the Executive Council in an electronic ballot will be an act of the Executive Council once the ballot results are verified by all officers of the organization and the results of the ballot are communicated to the Executive Council by the Secretary of the organization. The Secretary will record the actions of the Executive Council and communicate them to the regular membership at the next Business Meeting.”

The motion passed unanimously.

TSA Road Signs & Banner : (Kennedy) Jim noted that the TSA needs new road signs and a banner for public events . Probably will cost <\$1000 total. Twelve 18” by 24” formatted signs cost approximately \$500. A general discussion ensued. The consensus was to treat the costs as 2006 expenditures so as to not impact the 2005 budget. M/Kennedy, S/Palit to spend up to \$1000 for TSA signs and a banner for TSA events; costs to be included in the 2006 budget. The motion passed unanimously. Kennedy will expedite.

Digital Projector : (Kennedy) Jim brought up the subject of the TSA purchasing its own digital projector. The consensus was that since they are so cheap to rent nowadays, that the TSA would not purchase one.

Signature Card Change : (Atkinson) Need a formal resolution of the membership to be recorded in the minutes so as to change the signature card of the TSA’s Land Fund held with Fidelity Investments. M/Atkinson, S/Cicherski to remove Diana Tomchick from the TSA Land Fund signatories and to add Bill Steele. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements : There were no announcements.

The next TSA meeting will be held at the 2005 Texas Caver’s Reunion.

Submitted by Gerald L. Atkinson.