

TEXAS SPELEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF TSA BUSINESS MEETING

16 October 2005

(Convened at 2005 Texas Cavers' Reunion, Flat Creek Ranch)

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

TSA Members in Attendance: Bill Bentley (PBSS), Aimee Beveridge (UTG), Michelle Bryant (BG), Allan Cobb (UTG), Jon Cradit (Ind.), Kara Dittmer (UTG), Tom Florer (BG), Mark Gee (MG), Andy Gluesenkamp (UTG), Will Harris (DFWG), Jay Jorden (DFWG), Cat Kennedy (UTG), Carl Kunath (Ind.), Ted Lee (BG), Linda Palit (BG), Joe Ranzau (BG), William Russell (UTG), Shannon Summers (UTG/ASS), Jacqui (Bills) Thomas (PBSS), George Veni (BG).

The meeting convened from 10:30 AM to 12:15 PM. The minutes from the TSA Business meeting held on 30 April 2005 at the TSA Convention at Fort McKavett Historical Site were accepted as read by the Secretary.

Chairman's Report : (Steele) Bill reported that he had represented the TSA at the NSS Congress of Grottos held at the NSS Convention in July. He also noted the upcoming Spring NSS BOG meeting which will be sponsored by the DFWG/Maverick/Cowtown Grottos on 25 March 2006 in Irving, Texas.

Vice-Chairman's Report : (Kennedy) No report.

Secretary's Report : (Atkinson) No report.

Treasurer's Report : (Cicherski) Michael submitted a written report on the financial status of the TSA as of 31 August 2005. The TSA has total cash assets of \$16,867.68 including \$6,229.21 in the Operating Account, \$3,638.40 in the Savings Account, and \$7,000.07 in the Land Fund. Year-to-date income was \$4,220.41 while expenses for the year were \$6,008.15, resulting in a net loss of \$1,787.74. Michael noted that this loss was primarily due to the late timing of membership renewals this year, and expenses related to the *Texas Caver*.

Michael also reviewed the 2005 TSA budget and reported that we appear to be operating in the black as membership renewals at TCR are expected to make up any shortfalls. Year-end goals for the treasurer are :

1. The TSA Land Fund trustees need to meet and review the current status of the account. Questions regarding various investment options need to be addressed.
2. A 2006 TSA budget needs to be drafted before the 2006 TSA Winter Business Meeting.

The Treasurer's report was accepted by acclamation.

It was noted that the TSA Store needs to have a stronger presence. Andy Gluesenkamp suggested advertising TSA Store items on the TSA website. Linda Palit noted that there are a lot of overhead costs and time sinks involved with web-based sales. Kara Dittmer stated that the TSA Store would need to reorganize operations prior to any internet sales.

Standing Committee Reports:

Conservation : (Bills) Jacqui noted that there had not been a lot of committee activity. She has drafted a proposed statement of TSA conservation principals which was handed out and read to the membership:

*The Texas Speleological Association does not have any sort of conservation statement.
The following are two possible conservation statements respectfully submitted for discussion.*

1.) *The members of the Texas Speleological Association (TSA) recognize that caves are unique natural phenomena that are easily damaged, and that this damage can rarely be repaired. We understand that the responsibility for the protection of these unique structures belongs to all of us. We will therefore do our best to minimize the impact our activities have on both caves and the areas around them.*

2.) *The members of the Texas Speleological Association (TSA) recognize that caves are unique natural phenomena that are easily damaged, and that this damage can rarely be repaired. We understand that the responsibility for the protection of these unique structures belongs to all of us. We understand that to protect caves we must learn to use them carefully, whether we are using them for recreation or scientific study. We will therefore do our best to minimize the impact our activities have on both caves and the areas around them.*

A short discussion ensued. No consensus was reached and it was suggested that members send proposed changes/additions to the Committee Chair. Jim Kennedy suggested that a similar statement be generated for the Safety and Techniques Committee.

Membership : (Atkinson) Jerry gave a report on the current TSA membership statistics. Prior to TCR, the TSA had 105 Individual, 34 Family, 1 Student, and 4 Library memberships, with an additional 33 publication exchanges with other organizations. This represented a voting body of 174 members.

Publications : Texas Caver Report : (Steele) As Diana Tomchick was absent, Bill reported that Diana requests help in laying out the *Texas Caver*. Andy Gluesenkamp suggested that Joe Mitchell may be able to help. Jay Jordan also offered to help. Linda Palit was concerned about the status of the *Texas Caver*. Steele could not comment on the concerns raised.

Atkinson proposed that: 1.) The *TSA Activities Newsletter* be reactivated. 2.) Reduce the number of *Texas Caver* issues per year, and 3.) Consider an electronic version of the *Texas Caver*. Andy Gluesenkamp suggested that the *Texas Caver* be published either quarterly or three times a year to coincide with major meeting events. A general discussion ensued.

Atkinson volunteered to edit the *TSA Activities Newsletter* in an electronic form and will announce it on TexasCavers.com. Palit asked what was to become of the missing 2004 *Texas Caver* issues. Veni noted that editors tend to underestimate the time and effort required to put out the *Texas Caver*. The membership directed Bill Steele to ask Diana Tomchick whether she intended to continue in the role of *Texas Caver* editor.

Safety and Techniques : (Broussard) No report as Don was absent.

Temporary Committee Reports:

TSA Projects : (Kennedy) Jim has not completed the proposed guidelines for TSA Projects but plans to send it to the Executive Council for review next month. Intent is to have a policy ready by the 2006 Winter Business Meeting.

It was reported that communication problems exist between the CBSP Project leaders and TPWD. Butch Fralia has been compiling some of the project data but does not have all of it. A short discussion ensued. M/Andy Gluesenkamp : TSA to draft a letter to the CBSP Project leaders requesting that all CBSP data be sent to TPWD by 31 December 2005. The motion passed by acclamation. Jim Kennedy will expedite the letter.

Officer Nomination Committee : (Dittmer) Kara read the 2006 TSA officer nominations as of the meeting:

Chairman : John Brooks

Vice-Chairman : Jim Kennedy and Kara Dittmer

Secretary : Andy Gluesenkamp and Cat Kennedy

Treasurer : Michael Cicherski

Ed Goff is the chairman of the Election Committee. The intended schedule of election events is:

End October : Ballots mailed to membership

Mid-November : All ballots received from membership

First week December : Election results announced

Other Reports:

Land Fund : (Jordan) Jay acknowledged that the Land Fund trustees need to meet and discuss investment management and fund objectives.

TSA Webmaster : (Bentley) Bill noted that there were approximately 650 subscribers to the

CaveTex list server prior to its demise during Hurricane Rita. TexasCavers.com took up the slack in the wake of CaveTex and currently has approximately 260 subscribers. Unfortunately, TexasCavers.com is limited to sending to only 350 subscribers per hour. The intent is to have the CaveTex domain reinstated soon with unlimited messages per hour.

TSA Store : (Dittmer) Kara noted that the TSA Store inventory is at Logan McNatt's house. The store is doing reasonably well and there is an increased emphasis on women's clothing. Kara is looking into web-based options for the store.

Project Reports : Jim Kennedy suggested that the Project Reports be dispensed with if they had not already been submitted prior to the meeting. It was decided by consensus that Jim will solicit any outstanding reports by 31 October 2005 and submit them to the Secretary.

Internal Organization Reports : Nothing to report.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

15th International Congress of Speleology (ICS) : (Veni) George reported that the NSS won the bid during the August 2005 14th ICS in Greece to host the 15th ICS in Kerrville, Texas, in July 2009. He described how the last ICS in the US, which was held in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1981, was a major turning point for caving, cave science, cave management, and many caving careers in the US and throughout the world. The 2009 ICS is expected to attract about 2,000 people, to out-do the 1981 ICS, and prove the most significant speleological event ever held in North America. Whether or not people are formally part of the ICS committee or not, George noted that US and especially Texas cavers will be seen as hosts for the event. He will be giving presentations to at least 2-3 Texas grottos and probably during the 2006 TSA Spring Convention to keep Texas cavers up-to-date on the ICS and what they can do to help. For more information and updates, see the ICS website <www.ics2009.us>.

Veni asked if the TSA wanted to do anything specific to support the 2009 ICS. Kennedy suggested some sort of monetary support. M/Kennedy, S/Palit: TSA will officially support the 2009 ICS in some manner to be determined. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements : There were no announcements.

The Winter TSA Business meeting will be held Saturday, 21 January 2006 at the TSS office in Austin, Texas.

Submitted by Gerald L. Atkinson.