

**CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK
(COH)**

June 2021



**Elm Fork Chapter
Texas Master Naturalist Program**

CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Chapter Organization	1
A. Dues	1
B. Board of Directors	2
C. The Board	2
D. Duties of Officers	3
President	3
Vice President	5
Treasurer	6
Secretary	7
E. Duties of Directors	8
Immediate Past President/Chapter State Representative	8
Member-at-Large	8
Membership Director	9
VMS Director	9
Initial Training Class Director	10
Volunteer Service Projects Director	10
Communications Committee/Communications Director	11
Publicity/Newsletter Editor/Webmaster/Historian/Archivist/Social Media/Plan Your Week	11
Outreach/Adult Education Director	12
Advanced Training Program Director	12
New Class Representative	13
Chapter Advisor(s)	14
F. Additional Non-Board Positions	14
Hospitality Manager	14
Resource Room Manager	14
A/V Manager	15
Open House Manager	15
G. Committees	15
Standing Committees	15
Executive Committee	15
VMS Committee	15
Initial Training Class Committee	16
Volunteer Service Projects Committee	16
Outreach/Adult Education Committee	17
Advanced Training Program Committee	17
Advanced Training Approval Committee	17
Annual Awards Committee	17
Ad Hoc Committees	18
Annual Financial Examination Committee	18
Budget Committee	18
Officer Nomination Committee	18
Director Nomination Committee	19
II. Membership	20
Member Categories	20
Member Transfer and Reinstatement	21
Conflict of Interest	22
III. Adoption, Amendment and State Office Notification of the COH	22
IV. Appendices	22

OPERATING HANDBOOK

Elm Fork Chapter

Texas Master Naturalist Program

I: CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

The documents governing the Chapter will be the TMN Bylaws and the guiding practices found in the TMN Chapter Management and Operations Protocols (TMN CMOP) and the TMN Chapter Operating Handbook (COH). In case of conflicting language, first the TMN Bylaws, and second the TMN CMOP shall govern the COH.

This Chapter Operating Handbook adapts the TMN COH to the specifics of the Texas Master Naturalist-Elm Fork Chapter. In addition to this Handbook and TMN Bylaws, the Chapter's Board and members will be guided by the current versions of the TMN CMOP, the TMN Standards of Conduct and the TMN Code of Ethics. (See TMN Website, [txmn.tamu.edu/For Chapters/Chapter Documents](http://txmn.tamu.edu/For_Chapters/Chapter_Documents).)

Nonprofit Status. This organization is a tax-exempt, charitable corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

A. DUES

Establishment of Dues: The Board of Directors may, with approval of a majority of members present at a duly called and convened general membership meeting, set and change the amount of the annual dues payable to the chapter. The Board of Directors must notify all voting members 60 days prior to the general meeting that the subject of dues or their increase will be brought before the convened general membership meeting for action.

Dues Amount: The current dues are \$25 if paid by January 31st, \$30 if paid during the month of February and \$40 if paid during the month of March. If dues are not paid by March 31st all privileges afforded a certified member are rescinded until dues are paid. A Texas Master Naturalist member who is not current in the payment of dues will be considered "inactive" for purposes of the State Annual Audit and will be removed from the VMS and the Elm Fork Chapter Directory.

The Board of Directors may, under special circumstances waive, in part or whole, individual membership fees, on a case-by-case basis, by majority vote of the Board of Directors. (Honorary members are exempt from payment of the annual membership dues.)

B. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Responsibilities of the Board: The Board is responsible for the success of the Chapter and has the authority to conduct the business of the Chapter as defined in the TMN Bylaws (Article VI, A. 2-3). All business before the Board requires approval of either a majority vote of Board Members in attendance at a Board meeting where a quorum is present, or a majority vote of all Board Members using Remote Communications Technology.

All official Board communications, i.e., voting, etc., via electronic media, shall be recorded and contained in the Chapter Secretary's records.

Committee Oversight: All committees and their activities are subject to review and approval by the Board.

Expenditure Limits: The Board will honor expenditure limits as set forth in the local COH (Treasurer 10, page 6).

Voting by Remote Communications Technology: A meeting of the Board or the Nominating Committee may be held by means of a remote electronic communications system, including videoconferencing technology or email only if:

- Three business days' notice is given to each person entitled to participate in the meeting and includes the relevant information to be discussed; and
- The system provides access to the meeting in a manner or using a method by which each person participating can communicate with each other; and
- Motions are made and votes are recorded in the written minutes of the meeting; and
- All requirements listed above are documented.

C. THE BOARD

The duly elected officers shall consist of:

- President (votes in event of a tie)
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

Terms and limits of office of elected Officers: All elected Officers shall serve for a period of 12 months and are eligible for re-election for an additional one year term.

Other Board members: All these positions (except Immediate Past President and Advisor(s)) are 'Appointed Positions' and are approved according to the TMN Bylaws ARTICLE V, F, (President 6 and 19, pages 4-5).

- Immediate Past President/State Chapter Representative
- Member-at-Large (page 8)
- Membership Director
- VMS Director
- Initial Training Class Director
- Volunteer Service Projects Director
- Communications Director
- Outreach/Adult Education Director
- Advanced Training Program Director
- New Class Representative (page 13)
- Chapter Advisor(s)

All Directors and Advisors are voting members of the Board.

There may be an occasion to appoint an Assistant or Co-Chair of a committee. The responsibility of the Assistant or Co-Chair would be to assist the Director with sharing some of the duties of the committee. The Director represents the committee at Board meetings, in the absence of the Director, the Assistant or Co-Chair would represent the Committee and have voting privileges.

Vacancies: If any Officer or other member(s) of the Board of Directors (except the Immediate Past-President) resigns or is unable to fulfil their duties of office, the President shall select a slate of candidates qualified to fill the vacancy, to be approved by a majority vote of the remaining Board members for the unexpired term of the vacancy (TMN Bylaws ARTICLE V, H).

Terms and limits of office of Directors: All appointed Directors, except Member-at-Large (page 8) and New Class representative (page 13), shall serve for a period of 12 months and are eligible for re-appointment. No Director shall serve in a single position for more than three consecutive years and for no more than six total years as a member of the Board of Directors. An exception to this rule may **only** be made with the approval of the Executive Committee, Immediate Past President and Advisor(s).

D. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

President

In accordance with TMN Bylaws, Article V, F. 3 Appointment Process for Board Members other than New Class Director, the Director Nomination Committee may be created at the discretion of the incoming President. (page 18).

1. Serve as Chair of the Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer.
2. Prepare and distribute the agenda for Board meetings.
3. Preside over Board and Chapter meetings, using basic parliamentary procedure (*Robert's Rules of Order*).

4. Present member awards at chapter meetings.
5. Sign all Board-approved documents that may be legally binding on the chapter.
6. Facilitate a Planning meeting of newly elected Officers and Directors with outgoing Board Members prior to the first Board meeting in January. The purpose of this meeting is to:
 - Appoint and present a slate of candidates for all new Director positions (including Member-at-Large and New Class Representative) for review and approval by majority vote of the elected Officers, Immediate Past President and Advisor(s). (Initial Training Class Director is approved by the Board at the December meeting, page 5, 19)
 - Facilitate an exchange of responsibilities between current and outgoing Board Members.
 - Encourage all Officers and Directors to read and be familiar with their duties, responsibilities and program guiding documents (i.e., TMN Bylaws, TMN CMOP and this EFC-COH).
 - Obtain Board approval for the Vice President, in addition to the Treasurer and President, to have check signing privileges (TMN Bylaws Article VI, B,1).
 - Review the proposed budget presented by the Treasurer on behalf of the Budget committee. The finalized budget will be approved by the Board at the January Board meeting.
 - Chart the Chapter's path for the coming year.
7. Co-sign checks with the Treasurer or Vice President for amounts greater than \$1000.
8. Be an ex-officio member of all committees, assisting as appropriate.
9. Assign additional duties to the Vice President and Member-at-Large as necessary.
10. Oversee the position of A/V Manager (page 15).
11. Prepare correspondence between the Chapter and the State Office, other Chapters or State agencies as appropriate.
12. Assist as requested with the State Annual Report Addendum.
13. Write donor-appreciation letters.
14. Communicate with Board and Chapter Members as needed; conduct votes by remote communications technology including email on issues between meetings as required by Section B, page 2.

15. Present a summary of the Chapter's previous years accomplishments at the Chapter's February Annual Awards meeting.
16. Ensure that before the Chapter makes any written commitments to County Governments, City Councils, etc., or executes Contracts or Memorandums of Understanding with other entities, that the TMN State Coordinator's approval is obtained.
17. In September appoint three chapter members to the Officer Nominating Committee, to be chaired by the Immediate Past President (page 18).
18. In September appoint a chapter member, with financial expertise, as Chair of the Annual Financial Examination committee. Also appoint two additional chapter members with financial expertise, if available, to serve on this committee (page 18).
19. Following the last formal training class session of the year recommend candidate(s) for the following year's Initial Training Class Director position to the Board for confirmation (TMN Bylaws Article V, F, 2). The new Initial Training Class Director shall assume his/her duties following appointment and confirmation by the sitting Board.
20. Become Immediate Past President/State Chapter Representative upon completion of term as President.
21. When a Chapter Advisor vacancy occurs work collaboratively with the TMN state coordinator and the exiting Advisor (if available) to select a replacement (TMN Bylaws Article V, B Chapter Advisors and TMN CMOP Appendix I, Advisor Guidelines).

Vice President

1. Assist the President and act for the President in the President's absence.
2. Co-sign checks for amounts greater than \$1000 with either the Treasurer or President.
3. Prior to the September Board meeting contact the President to establish dates for the Annual Planning meeting, Board and Chapter meetings and Open House for the following year. These dates will be presented to the Board for review and approval at the September Board meeting.
4. Select and secure the venue(s) for the Annual Planning Meeting, monthly Board and Chapter meetings, including Open House, for the following year, based on Board approved meeting dates.
5. Serve on the AT Approval Committee (page 17).
6. Chair the Annual Awards Committee (page 17).

7. Oversee the position of Hospitality Manager, Resource Room Manager and Open House Manager (pages 14-15).
8. At the discretion of the President other duties may be assigned to the Vice President, i.e., Volunteer Service Projects Director, Advanced Program Director.

Treasurer

As a chapter that maintains a 501(c)(3), the Chapter's financial management system must meet Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) using either accrual, modified accrual accounting, or modified cash basis.

(Note: the use of Chapter credit/debit cards or PayPal is strongly discouraged by the TMN organization).

1. Receive all dues and monies for the Chapter and maintain them in a Chapter bank account. *Aplos* software should be used to record all transactions.
2. Present a financial report from the Chapters' financial management system at all Board meetings to include the status of all financial transactions and bank statement reconciliations.
3. Present a financial report at each monthly Chapter meeting.
4. In February/March work with the Membership Director to contact members who have not yet paid their Annual Membership dues.
5. In September/October request budgets from all Committees Chairs and Project Managers for the following fiscal year.
6. In November present the financial records to the Annual Financial Examination Committee (page 18).
7. In November/December develop an annual budget for the following fiscal year to be discussed at a December meeting of the Budget Committee (page 18).
8. Present proposed budget to the Board for discussion at the January Planning meeting and the finalized budget for Board approval at the January Board meeting.
9. Following Board approval of the budget at the January Board meeting notify all Committees and Project Managers of their budgets for the new fiscal year.
10. Committees and Project Managers should also be notified that any expenses that exceed their approved budget by \$25 will not be reimbursed without prior Board approval.

11. Pay all bills promptly upon receipt of a written statement or receipt for approved expenses. Treasurer shall sign all checks, drafts or other instruments for payment of money or notes of the Chapter.
12. For any payments greater than \$1000, the Treasurer must co-sign the payment instrument with either the President or Vice President. In the absence of the Treasurer the President and Vice President may co-sign checks for payments greater than \$1000.
13. Ensure that all financial records and documents are available on the Members only section of the Chapter website (Secretary page 7, 3).
14. Keep an account of all income, expenses, disbursements and other financial matters including a hard copy file of such documentation for at least seven years plus the current calendar year.
15. Submit all annual financial records, reports and audits as required by law (and/or sponsoring agencies).
16. Submit tax filings as required by IRS or State of Texas.

Secretary

1. Prepare Member and visitor sign-in sheets for all Board and Chapter meetings to confirm that a quorum of voting Board members is present (TMN Bylaws Article VII, A. 5). One copy to be maintained by the Secretary and the other at the Agri-Life Extension office with the Horticulture EA Admin Asst.
2. Submit a preliminary draft of the Board meeting minutes to members of the Board for comments and suggestions followed by a finalized version prior to the following months' Board meeting.
3. Following Board approval at the next Board meeting, the minutes together with the appropriate addenda, including financial records, are submitted to the webmaster for publication in the Members Section of the Chapter website.
4. Submit a preliminary draft of the Chapter meeting minutes to all members through 'Plan Your Week' for comments and suggestions.
5. Following Chapter approval at the next Chapter meeting, submit the minutes to the webmaster for publication in the Members Section of the Chapter website.
6. Participate in the Annual Financial Examination as a member or observer.
7. Participate as a member of the Budget Committee.
8. Conduct all necessary Chapter correspondence.

E. DUTIES OF DIRECTOR

The Directors should be available to assist the Officers in their respective responsibilities. Their specific duties are listed below under their titles and are required for the smooth operation of the Chapter.

Immediate Past President/Chapter State Representative

1. Assist the President and provide continuity from the prior Board of Directors.
2. Lead an annual review and update of the Chapters COH document.
3. Participate as a member of the Budget Committee.
4. Review draft state documents as requested.
5. Educate the Chapter's new Officers and Directors in the use of the state governing documents.
6. Chair the Nominating Committee (TMN Bylaws, Article V, E,2. and Officer Nominating Committee page 18).
7. Represent the Chapter in State level matters of the Texas Master Naturalist Program participating in State Representative conference calls as requested.
8. Help as requested with coordination of activities at the Annual State Conference.
9. Help find presenters for the Annual Conference.
10. If possible, attend the Annual State Conference.

Member-at-Large

1. This position is nominated from the floor at the November Chapter meeting and voted on by the members present. If no nomination is received from the floor, the position will remain unfilled for the following year unless a Chapter member subsequently expresses interest in the position when the procedure for Board vacancies will apply (C. The Board, Vacancies, page 3).
2. The Member-at-Large is elected to a one year term and maybe re-elected for one additional year.
3. Convey Chapter members concerns to the Chapter Leadership.
4. Serve as a member of the Annual Awards Committee.
5. At the discretion of the President other duties may be ascribed to the Member-at-Large

Membership Director

1. Maintain a roster of all Chapter Members with pertinent contact information, updated each year in May and November.
2. Maintain the Chapter Photo Directory.
3. Order and maintain the Member certification and Milestone Awards such as name badges, certificates and pins.
4. With the assistance of the VMS Committee, notify the Board of members who will be meeting certification and milestone achievements.
5. Notify members who will be recognized at the next chapter meeting.
6. Assist the president while presenting the awards at chapter meetings.
7. Participate as a member of the VMS committee.
8. Ensure a smooth transition for members transferring to EFC from another TMN Chapter.

VMS Director

1. Chair the VMS Committee (page 15).
2. Manage the Chapter's use of the TMN Volunteer System (VMS), (TMN CMOP, Article VI, Volunteer Service Requirements) for reporting volunteer service hours and Advanced Training.
3. Supervise the VMS Chapter Administrators activity in reviewing and approving volunteer service hours and advanced training for accuracy, correct categorization and appropriateness.
4. Assign Volunteer Service Project Codes to Board approved projects.
5. Assure that all approved Members-in-Training receive background checks and are entered in TMN VMS system.
6. Ensure all Members and Members-in-Training receive appropriate training in the use of the TMN VMS.
7. Present the monthly Volunteer Opportunities Report to the Board at each meeting.
8. Provide support, as needed, with the State Annual Report Addendum.
9. Assure members transferring to EFC are added to VMS.

Initial Training Class Director

1. Chair of the Initial Training Class Committee planning: curriculum, calendar, speakers, venues etc., through graduation (page 16).
2. Enlist chapter members to serve on Training Committee.
3. Recommend class tuition to the Board of Directors.
4. Submit budget to Treasurer.
5. Maintain training procedures manual as well as backups on Google Drive
6. Provide updates and information at Board of Directors meetings and Chapter Meetings.
7. Submit training schedule to the Board and State.
8. See Initial Training Class Committee for additional information (page 16).

Volunteer Service Projects Director

1. Chair the Volunteer Service Projects Committee (page 16).
2. Provide forms for Members to request a Volunteer Service Project Code and request changes as needed.
3. Review and recommend for approval or disapproval by the Board of Directors all Chapter volunteer service project opportunity requests using the TMN CMOP, Article VI Volunteer Service Requirements as a guide to review. It is recommended that the chapter member submitting the project request be present at this Board meeting.
4. In consultation with the new Project Manager, publicize the new Board approved Volunteer Service Project and associated VMS code to chapter members at a subsequent chapter meeting, in the monthly Newsletter and on the Chapter website.
5. Brief Initial Training Class members on current projects and service locations and on the procedure for starting a new project.
6. Ensure that a complete description of those Project activities for which volunteer service hours may be accumulated are available on the Chapter website and posted in Chapter VMS Opportunities.
7. Provide input to the Board on the selection of a project for the TMN Annual Meeting Project Fair

Communications Director/Committee

The Communications Committee is comprised of five components; Publicity, Newsletter, Webmaster/Historian/Archivist, Social Media and Plan Your Week. Each position is appointed by the President.

Communications Director

This position may be filled by one of the above Committee members or by another individual Appointed and approved by majority vote of the elected Officers, Immediate Past President and Advisors (President 7, page 4).

1. Oversee the Communications Committee.
2. Establish guidelines for TMN-EFC data retention to be approved by the Board.
3. Provide support for TMN-EFC Project Managers and Committees as needed.

Publicity

1. Oversee the production of all printed materials for the chapter.
2. Provide chapter news to area media contacts.

Newsletter Editor

1. Produce the Chapter's monthly Newsletter, accepting contributions from Officers, Directors and Members.
2. Collect, produce and distribute Chapter and state TMN news in the Chapter Newsletter.
3. Assist the Chapter Communications Director, as necessary.

Webmaster/Historian/Archivist

1. Maintain the TMN-Elm Fork Chapter Website.
3. Maintain electronic storage of TMN-EFC documents and photographs for members use.
4. Maintain historical records including, but not limited to, training classes, projects, recognitions, events, elections, meetings, Chapter scrapbooks and Newsletter archives.
5. Maintain electronic Resource Room requests.
6. In the absence of a Member-At-Large, manage the electronic member suggestion box and communicate .member suggestions to the Board.

Social Media

Social media should follow TMN Marketing & ID Guidelines, as well as TPWD and Texas A7M AgriLife Extension Service Policies

1. Oversee social media content and formats used by Chapter Members.
2. Publicize and promote TMN and TMN-EFC activities to the Community and chapter members.

Plan Your Week

1. Inform TMN-EFC members each week of upcoming Service and Advanced Training opportunities.

Outreach/Adult Education Director

1. Chair the Outreach/Adult Education Committee (page 16).
2. Share the Outreach calendar (dates, times, location of events and the need for volunteers) with the Communications and Initial Training Committees, to ensure chapter related materials (brochures, business cards etc.) are available for each event.
3. Serve as Project Manager for Chapter Project P070510 Advisory and Outreach.
4. Manage speaker requests (Speakers Bureau) – receive requests, process and match to appropriate chapter members. This responsibility also includes managing the chapter Subject Matter Enthusiast list, a list of local organizations who may be interested in receiving presentations, and a “stock” chapter presentation(s) for general informational speaking requests. Follow-up with requesting organization for speaker review and satisfaction.
5. Maintain Chapter trifold displays and other materials, updating as necessary.
6. Provide a form to record contact information from attendees at outreach events, for future follow-up.
7. Provide a Chapter Member volunteer sign-in form at each event to record the volunteer’s time entry. Following each event, the Outreach Director will submit the information to the AgriLife office.
8. Report impact data in VMS following each event.

Advanced Training Program Director

1. Plan, coordinate and schedule the Advanced Training Speakers for general membership meetings.

2. Chair the Advanced Training Programs Committee (page 16) in order to secure member recommendations for Speakers, other AT presentations and Field Trips.
3. Arrange for speaker gifts and honorariums as necessary. Provide budget requirements to the Treasurer.
4. Maintain contact information for past and prospective speakers and information on past programs.
5. Plan and coordinate field trips for the chapter. Notify membership of field trip requirements.
6. Chair the Advanced Training Approval Committee (page 17).
7. Review and amend, as needed, the form for members to request a program be considered for Advanced Training approval.
8. Review and recommend for approval or disapproval, with input as necessary from the AT Approval Committee, all Advanced Training requests submitted by the membership, using the TMN CMOP Article V. Advanced Training (AT) Requirements as the primary reference source.
9. Communicate all general meeting Advanced Training Speakers, Programs and Field Trips to Communications so that items are publicized in advance.
10. Communicate all approved Advanced Training Opportunities to the VMS Committee and the individuals who submitted the request.

New Class Representative

1. This position is chosen by the Initial Training Class to represent the class on the Board of Directors for the following year, attending all Board meetings, if possible. If subsequently unable to continue in this position the procedure for Board vacancies will apply, (C. The Board, Vacancies, page 3). If two New Class Representatives are chosen to represent the Class only one Representative will have voting privileges on the Board of Directors.
2. With input from the VMS director, monitor the Volunteer Service and AT hour of all New Class members and encourage them to achieve initial certification.
3. Provide a decorated cake or other refreshments at the February Awards Chapter meeting to celebrate the previous years' graduating class.
4. Participate as a member or observer at the Annual Financial Examination Committee (page 18).
5. When requested by the Initial Training Class Director, attend an Initial Class training session to provide the class with insight into the Chapter and the position of New Class Representative.

Chapter Advisor(s)

1. Reference TMN CMOP, Appendix I, Advisor Guidelines and TMN Bylaws Article V, B.
2. The Chapter-Advisor relationship is not a one-way street, in that the Chapter and its leaders also have responsibilities. These responsibilities include an appropriate level of communication, providing opportunities for Advisor interaction and a commitment to the success of the organization as a whole.

F. Additional Non-Board Position

Hospitality Manager

1. This position is overseen by the Vice President.
2. Maintains an inventory of Hospitality supplies in the Resource Room, buying coffee and other supplies when needed.
3. Transports Hospitality supplies to Chapter Meeting venues each month, setting up the room, preparing the coffee and setting up other refreshments, before members arrive.
4. Assists with Open House and Holiday Party activities, purchasing the meat (paid for by the chapter) and recruiting members to bring food to donate to the event.
5. Organizing clean-up in the kitchen area after all chapter meetings and special events.
6. Provides Hospitality supplies to the Initial Training Classes, as requested.

Resource Room Manager

1. This position is overseen by the Vice President.
2. Maintains an inventory of all supplies stored in the Resource Room (except Hospitality, A/V, Outreach, Initial Training Committee supplies and Holiday Decorations). The inventory is found in the 'Members Only' section of the chapter website.
3. Using the Resource Room Inventory, perform an annual audit of all supplies
4. Maintain a map of the Resource room with all supplies in their designated locations, with additions as necessary.
5. Checks periodically that supplies have been returned to their designated position on the Resource room shelves.

6. Assists the Webmaster with Chapter members' requests for kits used for chapter outreach activities.

A/V Manager

1. This position is overseen by the President.
2. Provides computer and audio/visual support at chapter meetings, initial training classes and other events as requested.
3. Maintains an inventory of all A/V equipment stored in the Resource Room.

Open House Manager

1. This position is overseen by the Vice President.
2. Organizes a public event to showcase chapter activities.

G. COMMITTEES

All committees and their activities are subject to review and approval by the Board. The President appoints the Chair of the Standing Committees. The Chair is responsible for seeing that the Committee fulfills the responsibilities and objectives for which it was formed.

Standing Committees (the President may form additional committees as needed)

- Executive Committee
- VMS Committee
- Initial Training Class Committee
- Volunteer Service Projects Committee
- Outreach/Adult Education Committee
- Advanced Training Program Committee
- Advanced Training Approval Committee
- Annual Awards Committee

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the elected Officers of the Chapter (TMN Bylaws, Article VI, B).

VMS Committee

Serves under the leadership of the VMS Director.

1. Manages and/or assists in maintaining the Chapter's records and reports within the TMN VMS.

2. Supports the Membership Director and Communications Committee by assuring member contact information is updated in the Photo Directory and MailChimp databases as needed.
3. Reviews and approves hours for volunteer service and advanced training for accuracy, correct categorization and appropriateness as assigned by the VMS Director
4. Supports the Membership Director by identifying each month those members who have achieved Certification, Re-certification, and Milestone awards so that the Members can quickly be recognized.

Initial Training Class Committee

Serves under the leadership of the Initial Training Class Director.

1. Plans, implements and evaluates the Chapter training curriculum and training calendar.
2. Acquires the TMN State Curriculum for each new Naturalist-in-Training and prepares additional class materials, as needed.
3. Selects speakers and coordinates any audio-visual equipment needed.
4. Obtains speaker gifts and sends thank you letters following their presentations.
5. Obtains the use of training venue(s) and required facilities equipment for all class sessions.
6. Organizes and provides a mentor program in conjunction with the initial training class.
7. Facilitates class field trips

Volunteer Service Projects Committee

Serves under the leadership of the Volunteer Service Projects Director.

1. The committee should include one or two current Project Managers.
2. Supports the Volunteer Service Projects Director in reviewing, organizing, assigning codes and notifying Chapter Members of approved Volunteer Service opportunities and projects.
3. With input from Project Managers, assists in drafting complete descriptions of those Project activities for which volunteer service hours may be accumulated and assures such descriptions are promptly posted in the Chapter VMS Opportunities and on the Chapter website
4. Assists in managing project opportunities with the Chapter's TMN VMS Director and maintains an archive of discontinued, completed and closed projects.

Outreach/Adult Education Committee

Serves under the leadership of the Outreach/Adult Education Director.

1. Assists with Speakers Bureau needs.
2. Research event and other outreach opportunities in the chapter's three county area (Denton, Cooke and Wise Counties).
3. Assists in planning booth and other outreach support needs.
4. Coordinates volunteers helping with outreach opportunities.
5. Maintain a count of attendees at events for input in VMS.
6. Maintain an inventory of Outreach materials in the Resource Room.

Advanced Training Program Committee

Serves under the leadership of the Advanced Training Program Director.

1. Assists the Advanced Training Program Director with recommendations for selections of speakers and topics for General Membership Meetings.
2. Assists the Advanced Training Program Director with recommendations for Chapter Field Trips.
3. Assists with coordination of Field Trips and assumes leadership of events when requested.

Advanced Training Approval Committee

Serves under the direction of the Advanced Training Program Director.

1. Assist the Advanced Training Program Director, when necessary, to determine if the member advanced training requests meet required guidelines.

Annual Awards Committee

Serves under the direction of the Vice President.

1. The term of the Committee runs from March through the Chapter Meeting in February, when awards for the previous year are distributed.
2. Committee members should include the Member-at-Large and three other members from the chapter membership; both Board and Non-Board members should be considered.
3. To provide continuity at least one member should have previously served on this committee.

4. The committee should continually review the selection process and make changes as necessary.
5. Recommended candidates for awards are presented to the Board at the January meeting.

AD HOC Committees

Ad Hoc committees are formed for a particular and specific short-term purpose.

Annual Financial Examination Committee

1. Responsible for conducting the annual examination of the financial records of the Chapter each November. The President will select a Chapter member, with financial expertise as Chair, along with two additional Chapter members.
2. The Secretary and New Class Representative may attend as a member or observer.
3. The Treasurer provides the financial records for review. The results of the Financial Examination will be reported to the Board and recorded in the minutes of the following December Board meeting with signed attestations from each member of the committee.

Budget Committee

Serves under the leadership of the Treasurer

1. Members should include the Outgoing and Incoming Executive Officers and the Immediate Past President.
2. The Treasurer will present, for discussion, a preliminary budget containing the budget requests from Committee Chairs and Project Managers.

Officer Nomination Committee

Proceed in accordance with TMN Bylaws, Article V, E. 2. Election Process.

1. The Immediate Past President will chair the Officer Nomination Committee formed by Chapter Members appointed by the Chapter President.
2. The Committee shall endeavor to select candidates from the Chapter membership who demonstrate appropriate skills for managing the office of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer; and where possible, with an eye to increasing diversity. Diversity being not limited to sex, ethnicity, creed, or national origin, but including attributes such as age, sexual orientation, gender identity, formal education, background experience, and county of residence.

3. Preference may be given to candidates whose total time in any Board capacity and total time of service in a single Board position is less than other candidates for the same position. Selection of candidates based on these additional diversity attributes would maintain experience and continuity for the Board while recruiting new Members to serve. Officer candidates must be Certified Members of the Chapter, except for Chapters in their first year of operation.
4. The Officer Nomination Committee must review the required skills, duties and responsibilities of each Officer position with the proposed candidate to assess the candidate's understanding and willingness to perform the functions of the office prior to nominating the candidate for any position.
5. Committee will report the names of the proposed Officer candidates to the President at least three weeks prior to the November Chapter meeting.
6. The President must publish the slate of candidates to the Chapter membership in writing, 15 days prior to the November Chapter meeting.
7. The Officer Nomination Committee will present a slate of candidates and conduct the election process at the November Chapter meeting.
8. Nominations for all positions will be accepted from the floor prior to the vote.
9. If only one candidate is nominated for an office, that candidate may be elected by voice vote.
10. If an election is needed it will take place by secret ballot and the winner determined by a simple majority.
11. The newly elected Officers assume their duties in the month of January.
12. The Nomination Committee may also encourage Chapter members to stand for the position of Member-at-Large, to serve for a one year term. This position is elected from the floor at the November Chapter meeting (page 8).
13. This committee may also serve when an Officer or Board vacancy occurs which requires candidates. In addition, the Committee may serve at the request of the incoming President to advise on the selection of Director Candidates.
14. The TMN State Program Coordinator may provide oversight to a Chapter's nomination process.

Director Nomination Committee

Proceed in accordance with TMN Bylaws, Article V, F. 3 Appointment Process for Board Members other than Initial Training Class Director. The Director Nomination Committee may be created at the discretion of the incoming President (Officer Nominating Committee, 13).

1. The Director Nomination Committee shall endeavor to select candidates from the Chapter membership who demonstrate appropriate skills and where possible, with an eye to increasing diversity. Diversity being not limited to sex, ethnicity, creed, or national origin, but including attributes such as age, sexual orientation, gender identity, formal education, background experience, and county of residence.
2. Preference may be given to candidates whose total time in any Board capacity and total time of service in a single Board position is less than other candidates for the same position. Selection of candidates based on these additional diversity attributes would maintain experience and continuity for the Board while recruiting new Members to serve.
3. The Director Nomination Committee must review the required skills, duties and responsibilities of each Director position with the proposed candidate to assess the candidate's understanding and willingness to perform the functions of the position prior to nominating the candidate.
4. The incoming President will present a slate of new Director candidates to the newly elected Officers, Immediate Past President and Advisor(s) for confirmation by a majority vote at the January Planning meeting.
5. The TMN State Program Coordinator may provide oversight to a Chapter's nomination process.

II: MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a Chapter is open to qualifying individuals regardless of race, age (must be 18 years of age or older), sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability or national origin. All persons who are Chapter Members or persons applying for TMN membership must submit to and pass the required Criminal Background Check, (CBC).

Member Categories (TMN Bylaws, Article IV, Membership and 2019 VMS Administrative Guide Appendix 1).

1. Texas Master Naturalist-in-Training (TMN-Active)
Volunteer Participant of an official class from the first day of class to the end of the training period continuing until the Trainee has completed Chapter Training requirements.
2. Texas Master Naturalist Pledge (TMN-Active)
Volunteer Participant who has completed the Chapter Training requirements and has yet to complete the Chapter minimum Certification requirements for advanced training and volunteer service to become 'Certified' within the calendar year following the end of the training period.
3. Certified Texas Master Naturalist (TMN-Active)
Volunteer or previously Certified Texas Master Naturalist who has completed the Chapter minimum requirements for advanced training and volunteer service hours for the year and is current in the payment of chapter dues.

4. Texas Master Naturalist Member (TMN-Active)
Volunteer who has previously been a Certified Texas Master Naturalist, is current in payment of chapter dues, but has not yet completed the required Volunteer Service of 40 hours and 8 hours of Advanced Training towards re-certification requirements **for more than one year.**

5. Former Texas Master Naturalist (TMN-Inactive)
Volunteer who has previously been a Certified Texas Master Naturalist but has not submitted volunteer service or AT hours to their chapter/program within a calendar year for which the last Annual report was submitted or is not current in the payment of chapter dues.

6. Texas Master Naturalist-Interested
Potential volunteer who
 - (a) has signed on-line through the TPWD web site, has come through the VMS inbox, has not yet attended class or does not have a 'passed' CBC, or
 - (b) did not complete the TMN initial certification by December 31st of the year following the end date of the initial training class. In order to become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist this volunteer must rejoin the program by repeating the training program in a subsequent class.

7. Texas Master Naturalist-Not Eligible
Volunteer who has previously been a Certified Texas Master Naturalist, has paid dues to remain on the chapter's membership/mailling list but does not wish volunteer at this time.

8. Honorary Texas Master Naturalist
The candidate for Honorary membership is typically not a Texas Master Naturalist but has made a substantial contribution to the activities of the Chapter. Honorary Members are entitled to all of the privileges as a Texas Master Naturalist Member of the Chapter without payment of dues, including the right to vote as a Member of the Chapter.
For further information see TMN Bylaws Article IV, D.

Member Transfer and Reinstatement

Members may readily transfer between Chapters within the State of Texas and must meet all requirements of membership for the Chapter into which they are transferring (TMN CMOP Article III, C,1).

It is *strongly* recommended that a transferee complete additional training that is applicable to the new area, Chapter and/or ecoregion(s) (TMN CMOP Article III, C, 2).

Members who may have been 'inactive' for some reason, may petition a local Chapter for reinstatement, providing all Chapter membership requirements are met.

Conflict of Interest (COI)

Neither Members nor Interns shall use their position with TMN-EFC to further the manufacture, distribution, promotion, or sale of any materials, products, or services for personal or material gain unless specifically authorized by the TMN-EFC Board of Directors (BOD). Suspected COIs shall be reported to a Director for investigation and disposition (TMN Bylaws Article III, B, and TMN CMOP, Article VIII).

III: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF THE CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK

Adoption

1. Initial adoption and ratification of the COH and Appendices will be by a majority vote of those present at the next scheduled general membership meeting following written distribution of the proposed COH to the general membership ten (10) days before the meeting, with notice that the ratification vote will be held at the next general membership meeting.
2. Written distribution may be via conventional mail, email or other equivalent means.

Amendment

1. Changes and amendments may be proposed by the Board of Directors at a regular Board meeting with a two-thirds vote of the Board Members in attendance. The general membership must be notified in written form of the proposed changes or amendments ten (10) days before the next Board meeting and be given an opportunity at that Board meeting to voice any concerns about the changes or amendments.
2. The general membership must then be notified in written form of the final proposed changes or amendments ten (10) days before the next general membership meeting at which time a membership vote will be held.
3. Written form may be via conventional mail, email or other equivalent means.

State Office Notification

Once a Chapter has adopted a revised and/or amended Chapter Operating Handbook, an electronic copy must be sent to the TMN State Coordinator within 30 days.

IV: APPENDICES

Any appendices added or modified must also be approved by the Chapter membership as would any other changes to the Chapter Operating Handbook.