

Environmental Task Force Meeting – Minutes for 10/2/2007

Attendees: Jody Gonzalez, Rich McMullen, Mike Sweet, Jan Thompson, Sarah Hartpence, Elain Smith-Poyourow, Mike Weldon, Amanda Lehde, John Cooper (speaker)

Meeting was called to order at 7:10pm by Amanda Lehde in the absence of the chair. A brief introduction of Mr. John Cooper of the Texas Cooperative Extension was given.

Mr. Cooper explained several different programs that are currently done by the Master Naturalists or the Master Gardeners. He said their main focus was environmental stewardship, which he defined as helping people to understand their vegetative environment.

Project learning is done through the Master Naturalists to reach 5th graders at Jennings Elementary.

Junior Master Gardeners program is conducted mainly through the 4-H program.

A state curriculum is being created for the JMG program to be used in science courses.

Through LISD Master Naturalists give saplings to 3rd graders (3700 in the fall)

Through DISD Master Naturalists give red bud saplings to 3rd graders (1,800 spring)

There is a 60 day horizon for participation of volunteers from the Master Naturalists.

After Mr. Cooper spoke and answered questions the minutes from April 2007 were reviewed. Mike Sweet moved to approve with the changes mentioned. Jan Thompson seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve with corrections.

Elaine presented ideas about ETF's environmental awareness project and lead the discussion. The final decision for this years project/contest was to focus on younger grades countywide. K-4 will have the opportunity to compete in the "My Favorite Tree" contest. A form will be created for them to fill out and attach a picture of their favorite tree to. 5th graders will have the opportunity to compete in an essay question. The form of the essay will be a problem/solution essay that should be appropriate to that age group. The topic is to "Identify an environmental concern in your community and provide your possible solution." To encourage involvement the ETF members discussed different levels of recognition with the best countywide from each of the two contests receiving \$50 gift certificates from sponsoring businesses and possible recognition in Commissioners Court.

Members tasks for the project were outlined. Elaine will pull together the description of the contests and materials to distribute to the ISD's and PTA's. Jody Gonzalez and Mike Sweet will nail down the two \$50 sponsors. Once Elaine has the information ready she will send it to all ETF members for their approval before sending it to schools. We need to reply as soon as possible so she can get the materials to the teachers by the end of the month.

Mike Weldon made a motion that ETF recognize Elaine for her hardwork and efforts with the Environmental Awareness project last year and this year. Rich McMullen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

With no other business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm