



Community Meeting Minutes September 11, 2018 - 6:00 PM GVTC Auditorium

Advocating for land, water and wildlife conservation in Comal County

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 PM by Elizabeth Bowerman, President.

Elizabeth welcomed everyone and gave special thanks to first time attendees and those who brought guests. She also encouraged everyone present to be sure to attend next month and to bring a guest. After introducing the CCCA Board Members she invited community group representatives to make announcements.

Julie Whitaker of the Guadalupe River Association announced the details and procedures for participating in the 2018 River Cleanup near FM 311 on Sept. 29 and encouraged everyone to come help. 8 AM, Wiedner Ranch, FM 311. Paddle your canoe with an assigned group. Dinner served and camping available. Contact David Zambrano at senorzambrano@gmail.com for more details. You must contact prior to event.

Jensie Madden, announced that the League of Women Voters is in attendance to register folks to vote for the November 6th election. October 6th is the end of registration for the next election.

On behalf of the Friends for the Preservation of Historic Landa Park, Tim Barker presented Elizabeth with a signed Partnership Resolution, making Friends of Landa Park an official partner and member of the Comal County Conservation Alliance.

Carmie and David McCallum of the Sentinel Peak Preserve briefly described the group's work to purchase and preserve the Boy Scouts of America- owned property on Hwy 32 known as El Rancho Cima. They then presented Elizabeth with Sentinel Peak Preserve's signed Partnership Resolution, making the group an official member of the Comal County Conservation Alliance.

Elizabeth mentioned the following local events of interest: TCEQ is reviewing a permit for a proposed sewage treatment plant near Honey Creek Natural Area that would allow discharge into Honey Creek. The treated wastewater discharged into Honey Creek, would then flow through Honey Creek State Natural Area on its way to the Guadalupe River and into Canyon Lake. The "No Dripping Sewage" group is running a "No Dumping Sewage Campaign" and is asking supporters to sign their petition at: nodrippingsewage.org. Conservationists in Wimberly are fighting a plan to build a sewage pipeline near Blue Hole Regional Park. The Texas Land Conservancy is asking everyone to write their senators and congressmen to urge them to vote for continuing the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program that is due to expire at the end of September. This fund provides federal monies for the acquisition of land, conservation easements, and programs that protect wildlife habitat, watersheds, working forestlands, farms and ranches, using revenues from offshore oil and gas leases. And some good news: the NBU Board passed the Dark Skies resolution today.

Treasurer Harry Sutherland reported a CCCA bank balance of \$1,273.58 as of today and invited contributions from all present.

Committee Chairs reported on their current and planned activities: Joel Dunnington, Outreach Chair, mentioned his committee is making progress on a PowerPoint program to present to community groups; they are also working on a Landowner Conference to be held in early 2019 and they will be setting up information booths at the Comal County Fair, the Sattler Market and Arbor Day. Jensie Madden, Government Affairs Chair, reported that her committee is focused on designing Talking Points to take to the Comal County Commissioners, asking them to establish a Task Force to identify options for conserving land now. Georgia Shaffer, Marketing and Communications Chair, reminded everyone that we have CCCA t-shirts available for \$15, that our Facebook following is over 202 and we now have a Facebook Business Page; new photos and tabs have been added to the website and a new Action Items flyer is in the works.

Marne' Peterson, Resource Development Chair, reminded everyone to come to the "Celebration for Conservation" social on September 18 and explained that the silent auction at the event will be a key fundraiser for our conservation efforts and that it promised to be very exciting.

Marne' then invited everyone to pause in recognition of the significance of today's date and encouraged everyone, in their own way and at their own time, to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice on this day 17 years ago. She went on to share her own experience on that day, as a senior Air Force officer working in the Pentagon. She praised the brave men and women who worked tirelessly making sure everyone was accounted for and then searching for the missing, and the Red Cross who set up a round-the-clock comfort station to care for the First Responders and military and civilian rescuers. At the conclusion of her very moving talk, Marne' introduced the speaker, Rashonta Fancher, wife of local Fire Battalion Chief Darryl Fancher. Rashonta's topic was "*A First Responder's Story of Inspiration Out of the 9/11 Tragedy*" which was presented in the form of a letter written by Darryl, accompanied by a slide presentation. The letter talked about what it was like to be part of a fire fighting crew from a California fire station that went to New York City on September 13th to help with the rescue efforts. The experience touched Darryl deeply and inspired him to get closer to the land for safety and security for his new family. After relocating to Texas, he and Rashonta bought a 3-acre property and went about creating a sustainable homestead. They built a rainwater collection system, bought a cow, goats and some chickens, planted a vegetable garden and learned how to live responsibly on the land. They learned how to care for their land and protect its natural resources. Darryl found peace on the land but has never forgotten the day that changed his life 17 years ago.

Elizabeth thanked Rashonta for sharing Darryl's moving story, and announced there would be a short working group session for the committees next. She invited all attendees to sit in with one of the four committees, and to consider joining a committee as a member and continue to help in the CCCA conservation efforts.

Following the committee breakout sessions, there were a few final announcements: Marne' reminded everyone to come to the "Celebration for Conservation" social on September 18, and encouraged everyone to bring their neighbors and friends.

Elizabeth asked everyone to please leave their Styrofoam cups on the back table as they leave, for recycling at the NB Recycling Center.

The next meeting is October 9th at 6:00 PM at the GVTC Auditorium.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Minutes submitted by Cliff Kaplan on behalf of the Secretary, Eva Silverfine Ott.