

Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
Regular Business/Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
January 20th, 2022
Online

Attendees: Ed Hernandez (Waushara); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Gary Beastron (Member-at-Large); Amanda Burzynski (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Bill Clendenning (Wood); Bill Leichtnam (Wood); Al Rosenthal (Marquette); Brent Tessmer (Taylor); Paul Pisellini (Adams); Hannah Butkiewicz (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Bob Walker (Member-at-Large); Denise Hilgart (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Joe Tomandl (Taylor); Al Barden (Member-at-Large); Robert Bauer (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Al Drabek (Marathon); Jen Schmitz (Monroe); Gerry Zastrow (Portage); Shane Wucherpfennig (Member-at-Large); Darren Schroeder (Columbia); Rachael Whitehair from UW-Extension, Robert Gustison, and Brendan Woodall from the US Fish & Wildlife Service also attended.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President Hernandez at 11:36 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS: Everyone introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Rosenthal, and seconded by Barden, to approve the minutes from the November 2021 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The treasurer's report was emailed prior to the meeting. Dispersals and receipts were fairly routine. The largest expenditure was completing the purchase of a small boat, trailer, and motor. Information about credit card use and the endowment fund was also made available. A motion was made by Clendenning, and seconded by Wucherpfennig, to accept and file the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Groundwater Legislation: Leichtnam reported that nothing went on legislatively since the last Golden Sands RC&D Council meeting. He noted that the six county groundwater consortium will meet next week.

Wisconsin RC&D Update: A Zoom meeting was held this week. Three State RC&D's attended. The main topic of discussion was how the organizations might collaborate and assist each other on projects and marketing. The state RC&D requested voluntary dues of \$200 per organization to help cover basic operation costs. Glacierland RC&D recently lost its director due to his death. It is not clear whether River Country RC&D is currently active; it may be approached later. It is also not clear about the status of the National RC&D. Thorstenson noted that Golden Sands RC&D did not pay national dues in the last couple of years. However, the National RC&D recently sent some information about available grants that are only available to members that pay dues. National dues are \$400 annually. Golden Sands RC&D has been paying the \$200 voluntary State RC&D dues.

50th Anniversary Planning: Butkiewicz indicated that another meeting for the planning committee will be held on February 9th at 1 p.m. via Zoom. Some ideas already discussed include having informational booths from various organizations, music, and perhaps allowing

food and drink trucks to come in. Anyone interested in helping with planning should contact Butkiewicz or Thorstenson. The event will take place on Saturday, September 17th, 2022, at Pfiiffner Pioneer Park (100 Crosby Ave, Stevens Point, WI) from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

Virtual Director Binder: Golden Sands RC&D's director binder is now available online. Butkiewicz will send the link information out to board members.

Update on Board of Directors: County Board elections will occur in April for all of Golden Sands RC&D's counties. Depending on how quickly member counties appoint representatives, there will be an update at either the May or July meeting.

Voluntary Dues: Letters will be sent out soon to member counties and organizations about the 2022 voluntary dues. Dues will stay at \$1900 for counties and \$350 for member organizations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel/Finance Committee Report: Evans reported that the treasurer's report was sent to the full council for review. The search for an accounting firm and human resources consultant continues. Butkiewicz and Walker reported on the recent State RC&D meeting. The P/F Committee authorized Golden Sands RC&D to pay \$200 for state dues. Dues statements will be sent out soon to county and member organizations, with voluntary county dues of \$1900 for counties and \$350 for member organizations. The change in employee benefits went smoothly. The employee handbook is being updated. Once a draft is complete, it will be sent to P/F Committee members for review. It will be virtually available to employees once revised. The 2021 Highlights is currently being worked on. When completed, it will be on Golden Sands RC&D's website. Information about the 50th Anniversary will be put on the website and also on the dues letters.

Forestry/Agriculture/Wildlife Committee Report: Walker reported that Butkiewicz and Fluor are covering both the Central Wisconsin and Northeast Wisconsin Invasive groups until a replacement can be found. Landowner education events and pasture walks are being planned. Grazing projects continue. A soil conservationist position for the Green Lake Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office is being sought. No bluebird houses were sold but several bat houses were purchased in 2021. About \$19,000 in tree shelter sales was received in 2021. There will be a state-wide NACD event in February. There were no new projects from this committee.

Water Committee Report: Evans reported that Thorstenson reminded the committee that Clean Boats, Clean Waters projects will be coming up soon. Most of the lakes that previously worked with Golden Sands RC&D are expected to return, so there will likely be eight LTEs needed for the season. Both Wood and Marquette Counties are interested in having groundwater education in their 5th grade classrooms. There will be virtual training for both Clean Boats, Clean Waters and Citizen Lake Monitoring. In-person training will be available upon request. Kunding and Hamerla will be contacting the counties to get information about specific needs for the upcoming season. A third Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Coordinator position will be available

to start as an LTE from spring through fall this year. Updates were given by the various counties that attended. There were no new projects from this committee.

NEW PROJECTS: None

STAFF/PROJECT UPDATES: Staff reports were sent out electronically before the meeting.

AGENCY/PARTNER REPORTS:

Whitehair, from UW-Extension in Wood County, announced that her agency will be helping fund the 5th grade groundwater lessons in Wood County this year. The county is expected to take over funding after that. There will be a Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo, at Mid-State Technical College in Wisconsin Rapids, on February 15th. A producer-led group in Baraboo will hold a Healthy Soil, Healthy Water event on February 9th. Whitehair's office is interviewing candidates for the educator opening left from Nancy Turyk's resignation.

Brendan Woodall, the Private Land Biologist for the US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), reported that there are grants for wildlife and wetland habitat available for private landowners through his agency. They have had good success in partnering with Golden Sands RC&D for these grants in seven counties. Due to lots of turnover in the FWS, things have gotten behind, but positions that were left open last year are being filled. This may help make more assistance available. He indicated that there may even be more funds made available.

OTHER REPORTS: None

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Barden, and seconded by Leichtnam, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans
Recording Secretary