

**Golden Sands Resource, Conservation & Development Council, Inc.**  
**Regular Business/Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**November 21, 2019**  
**Golden Sands RC&D Office, Stevens Points, WI**

**Attendees:** Al Barden (Member-at-Large); Gary Beastrom (Marathon); Steve Bradley (Portage); Merlin Becker (Member-at-Large); Joshua Benes (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Bill Clendenning (Wood); Bob Ellis (Waupaca); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Diane Hanson (Marathon); Ed Hernandez (Waushara); Denise Hilgart (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Mike Kapp (Waupaca); Luke Melatik (Taylor); Kevin Munkwitz (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Pat Kilby (Marquette); Bill Leitchnam (Wood); Paul Pisellini (Adams); Al Rosenthal (Marquette); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Joe Tomandl (Taylor); Bob Walker (Member-at-Large); Shane Wucherpfennig (Wood). President Hugh O'Connell absent.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Barden at 11:03 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** At the request of Barden, everyone attending verbally identified themselves and named the organization or county being represented.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** One correction was made orally to the September 2019 minutes, which was changing the date of the state RC&D meeting from January to May 30, 2019. Motion made by Clendenning, seconded by Leitchnam, to accept the minutes of the September 2019 meeting as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The treasurer's report for September and October 2019 was passed around. Hilgart indicated that dispersals and receipts were fairly routine for the working season. No use of the contingency fund. Information on the credit card use and the endowment fund were also made available, as well as the 990 form for 2018. Motion made by Clendenning, seconded by Beastrom, to accept and file the treasurer's report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Wisconsin RC&D Update:** Barden reported that the November 1st meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is set for January 31, 2020. Officers will be elected at that meeting. President Ed Miller resigned as of October 1, 2019. Current Golden Sands delegates are: Al Barden, Bill Clendenning, and Hugh O'Donnell.

**Groundwater Legislation:** Leitchnam passed out copies of a press release announcing the formation of the Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGCC) for the UW Extension and the Counties of: Adams, Juneau, Marquette, Portage, Waushara, and Wood. The purpose is to meet the current and future needs for safe and sustainable drinking water and groundwater in the area. This organization is in its initial developmental stages, but it hopes to include more organizations, public members, and funding in the future. Leitchnam also reported on several groundwater-related bills pending in both the Wisconsin Assembly and Senate. These include at least three being promoted by Scott Klug that relate to permit fees for CAFOs, a nitrate testing pilot program, and distribution of fertilizer/soil additives in manure. Sponsors are being sought for all the groundwater-related bills.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**2020 Meeting Dates:** Copies of the current bylaws and current members list were passed around. After some discussion about whether quarterly meetings would be more appropriate than bi-monthly meetings, there was a motion by Clendenning, seconded by Pisellini, to keep the meeting bi-monthly. Motion carried unanimously. The 2020 meetings are now set for January 16th, March 19th, May 21st, July 16th, September 17th, and November 19th.

**Review of Current Council Members, Bylaws, and 2020 Elections:** A discussion about the several listed members that never attended a meeting and about members that haven't attended for many years, including one who last attended over 10 years ago, was had. Motion by Evans, seconded by Clendenning, to remove membership from those who have never attended or who haven't attended since the end of 2018, citing the bylaws that allow removal once 3 meetings are missed. After discussion, Evans/Clendenning withdrew the motion. There may be new members appointed after the April 2020 elections. Staff will contact the counties which do not have active members and encourage more frequent participation. Benes asked members to review the current bylaws and forward any recommended changes to Golden Sands staff. One thing currently missing is whether proxy votes are permitted.

**Southwest Badger Dissolution/New County Members:** SW Badger RC&D will be dissolving. Some SW Badger RC&D Counties may be interested in joining Golden Sands RC&D. Benes passed around a sheet outlining the positive and negative impacts of adding more counties to Golden Sands. According to Eugene Hausner, President of SW Badger, at least four of the counties have expressed interest in continuing to be involved in a RC&D. These include: Crawford, Grant, Iowa, and Sauk. Columbia Counties may also be interested. By consensus, it was decided that Benes, along with Hernandez and Evans, will contact counties formerly in SW Badger, as well as Columbia, to provide information about Golden Sands and to find out if other counties are interested. SW Badger has some funds left, so may be able to help offset travel/presentation costs.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel/Finance Committee Report:** Evans reported on the meeting this morning. Munkwitz, the new Administrative Assistant Intern, introduced himself. The treasurer's report was reviewed and forwarded to the full council. Review of the 2018 990 shows that Golden Sands finished the year over \$11,000 in the red. There is currently a job announcement out for a Soil Conservation Technician for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Medford, which closes December 2, 2020. It is hoped that it can be filled soon so that the new person could start in January 2020. Personnel reviews are ongoing. Benes is still looking into the state RC&D liability vs that of Golden Sands. The Personnel Policy/Handbook was reviewed and approved, pending some recommended changes and some grammatical issues. Deb Jacubek, P/F Board Member, wrote that she is stepping down from the Farmer's Union but still wants to be involved in Golden Sands. Staff will talk to her before the January meeting to determine what involvement she anticipates and about the appointment of a new council member from the Farmers Union.

**Forestry/Agriculture/Wildlife Committee Report:** Benes reported that there is a gold sheet that is pending for funding of new Demo Forest maps and brochures. The Soil Conservation

Technician position being advertised will be located in the Medford NRCS office and cover Taylor and Price Counties. Wood for bat houses is still being sought. Tree shelter information has been distributed to the Golden Sands Counties. Neighborhood gardens have been mulched for the winter and some improvements were installed at the Cornell-Whitney site. Several workshops, which will be open to all, are being set up under the Woods and Wildlife Program. Landowners are being invited to gain information on wildlife habitat, invasive species, and timber harvesting as a group. These will likely take place in April/May 2020. Plonsky reported on the latest activity in the CWIP program and the plan to start a Cooperative in the Fox Valley. More than 23 people have already signed up for the Fox Valley informational meeting. New funding for forest invasives is pending. More grazing plans and managed grazing workshops are being sought by partnering with Grassworks. The Waupaca County Conservation Field Day in September was successful.

**Water Committee Report:** Kilbey reported on today's meeting. Starry stonewort, an invasive aquatic macrophyte, was discovered this past summer in Marquette County. Before that discovery, it was only known in the SE part of the state. Hamerla and Cisar are working on the aquatic invasive species (AIS) grant application that is due on December 10, 2019. Several gold sheets are pending in this committee, including one to amend the resolution and AIS grant application to add Lincoln County. Leitchnam outlined several pending pieces of groundwater-related legislation. The Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGCC) is holding an informational meeting on December 9, 2019, at the Hancock Agricultural Station. A meeting is also planned to have a speakers' panel set up that would include politicians, researchers, and farmers. The American Public Health Association has recommended a moratorium on any new concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) setups until more research is done about the potential health effects. In a county roundtable, Wucherpennig announced that the Mill Creek 9 Key Element Plan had been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Marathon is working on revising its county SWAMP plan. There were several manure spills this year. The county is looking at setting up a loan program for landowners that need new septics, since the state assistance program is going away. The Groundwater Education program is adding two new lessons for its work in Waupaca and Waushara Counties. Several other counties indicated interest in adding such education to their schools. Waushara resolved a long-term manure issue through the court. Private well testing is going on in several counties.

### **NEW PROJECTS:**

There are two new projects from the Forestry/Ag/Wildlife Committee.

- (1) Continuing the SARE Grassworks professional development program by subcontracting grazing work: This is a fee-for-service contract for approximately \$20,403. The feds need to sign before this is completed. The project started on October 1, 2019.
- (2) NACD Urban Agricultural Technical Assistance: This project involves working with Farmshed to present workshops about neighborhood gardens. Estimated cost is \$16,000, with \$12,000 from a grant and \$4000 from in-kind. Anticipated dates of this project are March 1st, 2020-February 28th, 2021.

Four new projects came from the Waters Committee:

- (1) Continuation of the multi-county AIS program, amending the grant application and resolution to include Lincoln County.

- (2) Acquisition of lake property in Portage County; Golden Sands will serve as consultants to help the lake district draft a grant, due February 1, 2020, to buy three lakefront properties to preserve them. This project started September 23, 2019.
- (3) Renewal of AIS work on a service contract on Lake Helen for \$5517, which started on October 13, 2019.
- (4) Expansion of Groundwater Lessons in Waupaca and Waushara Counties: using a CD Besadny Grant, this will add two lessons to the school program on groundwater education.

Motion by Evans, seconded by Becker, to approve the new projects. Motion carried unanimously.

**STAFF/PROJECT UPDATES:** Written staff reports were sent out electronically before the meeting.

**AGENCY/PARTNER REPORTS:** None.

**OTHER REPORTS:** Thorstenson asked that any council member who did not wish to keep a copy of the 2018 GS 990 for his or her files turn them in to her, since this is private corporation information.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be January 16, 2020.

**ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:38 p.m. on motion by Beastron, seconded by Evans.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans  
Recording secretary