

Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
Waters Committee Meeting Minutes
March 18th, 2021
Online via Zoom

Attendees: Pat Kilbey (Marquette); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Paul Pisellini (Adams); Al Rosenthal (Marquette); Ed Hernandez (Waushara); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D); Amanda Burzynski (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Jodi Scheppe (Adams); Anna Cisar (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Bill Leichtnam (Wood); Bob Ellis (Waupaca); Chris Hamerla (Golden Sands RC&D Staff).

CALL TO ORDER: Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 10:06 am.

INTRODUCTIONS: Everyone introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Ellis, seconded by Pisellini, to approve the January 2021 Minutes. Motion was approved unanimously.

NEW PROJECTS:

Thorstenson outlined six new Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) projects that were awarded grants. There are single positions at Big Bass, Chain O' Lakes, Helen, Pearl, and Silver Lakes, as well as two positions at Green Lake. Some of the positions will be filled by returning workers. Motion by Pisellini, seconded by Ellis, to approve all six projects and forward them to the full council. Motion carried unanimously. Thorstenson entered a link to the project sheets in the chat message for anyone who wanted to review the actual sheets. Cisar Reported that Pigeon Lake decided to use another vendor for its lake management plan.

GROUNDWATER PROTECTION: Leichtnam described a DATCP grant for \$60,000 that was received by the multi-county groundwater consortium. This includes funds for a position to collate all water data from the involved counties, as well as testing for nitrogens and neonicotinoids (known to harm pollinators). It is possible that other funding may come from the Joint Finance Committee. Evans mentioned that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) proposed a change in NR151 (commonly called the "runoff rule") to include potential nitrogen contamination leached into groundwater by agricultural producers. There is currently a public comment period, about the economic analysis for costs connected to the proposed changes, that ends on 4/10/21. Later this year, there will likely be a public comment period on the proposed rule itself. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said that Wisconsin is one of the 12 states with rising nitrogen contamination in its groundwater.

COUNTY AND STAFF UPDATES:

Leichtnam: The Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department has a new engineer. Money for purchasing a roller crimper was recently approved. It will be available for rent by county farmers.

Ellis: Many of the lakes in the Chain are still frozen.

Pisellini: Well testing of private wells is expected to start in Adams County this year. The county tree sale went well. Work on the addition to the main county building is on track. Much of it is dedicated to rooms related to an additional courtroom for the second circuit court judge, who is expected to start in 2022. Sand Valley is building a new private golf course that will not be open

to the public; it is hoped that taxes from this course will help county funds. He introduced Jodi Scheppe, who is a new member of the Adams County Land & Water Conservation Department and the vice-chair.

Hernandez: His office is involved in winter/spring transition projects. His office will be starting the third round of private well testing for nitrogen and chloride this year; looking at performance standards for areas of high nutrient production.

Kilbey: His office has been doing one-on-one training with farmers about Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) 590, sometimes with laptops borrowed so that farmers could create their own with the county's help. This has been working better than prior group training has done.

Hamerla: He forwarded the press release about the NR151 changes to committee members. The purple loosestrife season will be starting up soon. Hamerla and Cisar are working with Portage County lakes to set up a county-wide lake group. They are also working with various counties for AIS agreements. He has been working with DATCP, as well as Petco and Petsmart, on aquarium moss-balls the businesses were selling that turned out to contain invasive zebra mussels. They have been pulled off shelves. Some non-native crayfish have been available in Wisconsin. It is illegal to possess non-native crayfish, much less sell them.

Cisar: She and Hamerla are conducting interviews for AIS technicians. There are 12 applicants this year, which is more than usual.

Thorstenson: Besides the CBCW projects, she is also leading a mass weeding for Eurasian Watermilfoil weevils this year.

Burzynski: She has been teaching groundwater (original and expanded) and aquatic invasive species (AIS) lessons virtually. Unlike the AIS lesson, the groundwater lessons are only available to 5th graders in Waupaca and Waushara Counties.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Leichtnam, seconded by Pisellini, to adjourn at 10:54 am. Motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans
Recording Secretary