

Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes
November 21st, 2024
Wood County River Block/Online

Attendees: Brent Tessmer (Taylor); Bill Clendenning (Wood); Denise Hilgart (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Erin Richards (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Brooke Patrick (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Asher Maliepaard (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Gary Beastrom (Member-at-Large); Ken Borzick (Marquette); Carmen Wolfe (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Brady Albers (Golden Sands RC&D); Robert Bauer (Golden Sands RC&D); Jenna Tuma (Golden Sands RC&D); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D).

CALL TO ORDER: Tessmer called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS: Everyone introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Clendenning, which was seconded by Beastrom, to approve the minutes from the September 2024 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

STAFF & COUNTY MEMBER UPDATES:

Wood: Clendenning mentioned that the county has been fighting water issues for decades and that it has very high nitrates.

Marquette: Tessmer reported that there is a county-wide water sampling project with UWSP. Samples were collected in the last few weeks to track ground water quality in the county.

Marathon: Beastrom reported that the county is also doing groundwater sampling. PFAS, Nitrogen, and Phosphorus are a big concern in the county. The county is experiencing algal blooms in the flowage.

Taylor: Borzick reported that the county is finishing end of year projects. There are contracts for cover crop cost share and new manure pits for 2025.

Gustafson: He reported that there are 12 grazing plans for Crawford County. Several are out of Richfield. There is a high demand for grazing plans in the county due to soil erosion issues.

Patrick: Reported that there is one plan in Outagamie with extremely wet soils, near CAFO size. A farmer series event is being planned.

Maliepaard: Reported that counties, within the Lake Michigan watershed, are a current focus for managed grazing plans. His goal is to complete plans in time for the spring EQIP cycle. There were many outreach events this fall. For the World Dairy Expo, there was a booth in which he partnered with other organizations, which was effective. For the Small Scale Sheep and Cattle Pasture Walk, there was a good turn out and it was a good example of farmers coming

together to learn from one another and have natural, unstructured conversations. He is currently planning for spring events.

Bauer: He reported that his main workload has been training new staff, working with NRCS partners and other non-profit partners, and setting new grazing techs up for success. He is continuing to develop grazing plans. His goal is to transition away from training and continue to service Monroe and Vernon County grazing plans. He attended meetings and trainings to promote managed grazing. He also had a table at the World Dairy Expo, which was a great networking event.

Albers: Reported that he is working on EQIP applications for grazing, helping with pollinator plantings, working on cover cropping and no till contracts, and working on tree plantings.

Richards: She has been winterizing spaces and off season planning for spring. For the Giving Farm, she has been working with UWSP land planning and architecture class to design space, and plans to reach out to other organizations and community partners. She is already focused on neighborhood engagement and her priorities for spring for the site are fencing and irrigation. For the Stevens Point Area Neighborhood Gardens (SPANG), she is continuing to support gardeners, especially those with physical limitations who reached out to ask for support. Winterizing of spaces has begun and leftover produce was donated to the Salvation Army HOPE Center. Some survey feedback was received, which will be used for deliverable planning in the spring. Her priority is installing tall raised beds, because older gardeners have a hard time with the existing beds. Planning improvements are underway.

Wolfe: She is working with McAdow to develop a grazing newsletter. She is creating social media posts to highlight events.

NEW PROJECTS: None.

MEMBER REPORTS: None.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Clendenning, which was seconded by Beastron, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Richards
Temporary Recording Secretary