

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

Attendees: Bob Walker (Member-at-Large); Bill Clendenning (Wood); Al Drabek (Marathon); Joe Tomandl (Taylor); Brent Tessmer (Taylor); Bill Leichtnam (Wood); Gary Beastron (Member-at-Large); Shane Wucherpennig (Wood); Nancy Eggleston (Portage); Jared Mader (Marathon); Amanda Gurklis (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Jennifer Glad (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D); Asher Maliepaard (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Denise Hilgart (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Nathan Sandwick (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Jacob Fluor (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Chris Hamerla (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Robert Bauer (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Claire Harwood (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Todd Morris (Green Lake); Erin Richards (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Carmen Wolfe (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Ken Borzick (Marquette); Andrew Senderhauf (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Jenna Tuma (Golden Sands RC&D Staff).

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Wucherpennig at 11:08 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS: Everyone introduced themselves.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT: Hilgart provided a treasurer's report orally in addition to written reports available for activity since the September 2024 meeting. The accounts reviewed included the checking account from Associated Bank, the money market account from Associated Bank, the savings account from Associated Bank, the money market account from Simplicity Bank, the savings account from Simplicity Bank, and the Simplicity Bank line of credit. Details of the September and October credit card activity will be provided at the next meeting. The third quarter report from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin Fund was also reviewed and reports were provided. Glad noted that there are still some reimbursement and invoices still outstanding. A motion was made by Walker, which was seconded by Tomandl, to accept and file the treasurer's report. Motion passed unanimously.

VICE-PRESIDENT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION: This election was postponed from prior meetings. Wucherpennig nominated Leichtnam for the position. Leichtnam indicated he was willing to accept the position. It was noted that they are both from Wood County, so having Leichtnam be an officer would give Wood County an additional vote. A motion was made by Clendenning, which was seconded by Walker, to close nominations and elect Leichtnam into the position. Motion carried unanimously.

NATIONAL RC&D UPDATE: Glad announced that two people from the National organization recently visited the Golden Sands office. Some grants may be available for Golden Sands through this contact. The National conference is set for May 2025. Glad & directors of two other Wisconsin RC&Ds will attend, with costs covered by the Wisconsin RC&D.

REVIEW OF 2023 990 FORM: Thorstenson reviewed the recently-submitted Tax Form 990 for Golden Sands RC&D for 2023. This is a multiple-page document, so she explained some of the pages and what they meant for Golden Sands . It showed \$1,410,268 in income and \$1,161,509 in expenses, leaving a net revenue of \$248,759. She noted that because 2023 was a transition year, the net revenue amount did not mean that Golden Sands was making a big profit. These forms are available online for the public to review. Glad noted that projects are now not taken on by Golden Sands, unless administrative expenses are part of the project. Thorstenson also provided a list and graph showing Income and Expenses from 2005 through 2023. In six of those nineteen years, Golden Sands had a loss. From 2005 into 2011, part of the expenses were covered by the federal NRCS, but that ended in 2011. Thorstenson calculated some years ago that the organization needed an income of about \$600,000 to operate efficiently as a business and it has now reached that level. It has the highest rating on the Guidestar network where some people look to determine whether to donate to an organization. It is also listed on the state Natural Resources Foundation.

PASSING OF BILL EBERT: Bill Ebert was the head of Golden Sands when it was partly-supported by the NRCS. He recently died. Thorstenson and Glad attended his memorial. Staff were encouraged to wear tie-dyed clothing for this meeting in honor of Ebert.

2025 DRAFT OVERHEAD/ADMIN BUDGET: Glad explained that the budget proposal included two new part-time positions, one for a part-time administrative assistant and one for a part-time marketing/PR coordinator. With the increase in the NRCS contract and contracted services, plus other projects, there are considerably more administrative requirements. She also noted that an adjoining space to the current office had become available for Golden Sands at a reasonable rent. This space will be able to be used for several purposes, including for council meetings.

COUNTY DUES: Glad listed the counties that have not yet paid any 2025 dues, as well as some that paid partial dues. She will send out another request for dues.

2025 MEETING DATES: 2025 Meeting dates were approved unanimously for January 16th, March 20th, May 15th, July 17th, September 18th, and November 20th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel/Finance Committee: Evans reported on today's P/F Committee meeting. The committee was in closed session to discuss various confidential matters. The committee approved raising the contracted service hourly fee from \$55 to \$60. It also approved a 3% increase in staff pay rates. Golden Sands does not provide health insurance for its employees, but does provide them with an hourly stipend to help with costs in purchasing insurance. The P/F voted to increase the hourly stipend from \$2.75 per hour to \$3.00 per hour.

Forestry/Wildlife Committee Report: Walker reported on today's meeting. Al Drabek is the new committee chair. The Central Wisconsin Windshed Partnership installed 12 miles of windbreaks in 2024. There was a demo forest event, in Portage County, that included information on invasives. The two terrestrial invasives partnerships also reported on various activities during the 2024 season and are looking for more projects for 2025. A banquet for demonstration forest

participants is planned for February 2025. Several outreach events were held. Tree shelter sales continue.

Agriculture Committee Report: Richards provided a report on the meeting today. Cover crops increased in several counties, including Taylor and Wood. Lots of water testing also occurred. Work continues on various aspects of grazing, including the writing of grazing plans, training, and a newsletter. Urban agriculture also wrapped up its 2024 season.

Water Committee Report: Evans reported on today's meeting. AIS staff—Senderhauf, Hamerla, Gurklis, and Lince—provided reports on their activities since the last meeting. There was a County Field Day event for 350 kids. Marsh pennywort was found in Green Lake County. Starry stonewort is still a problem in the Chain O' Lakes. Harper Lake is dealing with Japanese Knotweed. Hamerla participated in a pet surrender event in Rothschild, where people could turn in unusual pets, including a sugar glider, a bearded dragon, and several fish. Gurklis is preparing for AIS lessons to start in January. These lessons are offered to 12 counties. Staff helped in a mussel rescue project at the Necedah Wildlife Refuge and also gave a presentation about AIS issues at a furbearers conference. County reports were given from Marathon, Wood, Portage, and Taylor counties.

NEW PROJECTS: None.

STAFF/PROJECT UPDATES: Staff reports were sent out prior to the meeting and paper copies were available during the meeting.

AGENCY/PARTNER REPORTS: None.

OTHER BUSINESS: Glad announced that Roy Diver, a county conservationist in the past for Wood and Portage Counties, is retiring at the end of this year. He has been a big supporter of Golden Sands. Evans provided a report on the honoring of Al Barden. She will be ordering a plaque for the planned Leopold bench this week. Once there is an idea of when that will be available, a small installation ceremony will be held in Eagle River, Barden's town of residence. Thorstenson informed the members that Walker recently published a mystery book, and copies would be available after the meeting. Clendenning indicated he had recently attended a meeting at the Synergy Agricultural Center, in Plover, and suggested Golden Sands could consider that as a meeting place.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m. upon a motion that was made by Walker and seconded by Borzick.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans
Temporary Recording Secretary