

Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
Regular Business/Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
September 19th, 2024
Mead Wildlife Area/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); Kevin Munkwitz (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); Thor Gustafson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Claire Harwood (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Maria Lefevre-Knusta (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Todd Morris (Green Lake); Erin Richards (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Kristin McAdow (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Kaitlan Schott (NRCS); David Smith (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Carmen Wolfe (Golden Sands RC&D Staff).

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

INTRODUCTIONS: Everyone introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Leichtnam, which was seconded by Evans, to approve the July 2024 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Hilgart provided a treasurer's report for July and August 2024. 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 credit card activity were also provided. The second quarter report from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin Fund was also reviewed and reports were provided. A motion was made by Evans, which was seconded by Tomandl, to accept the treasurer's report. Motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY: Current Secretary Evans previously announced that she would not continue as secretary. Nominations for the position were opened. Clendenning nominated Leitchnam, but Leitchnam declined. Walker indicated that he would assume the position of secretary if someone agreed to take his place as vice-president. After further discussion, it was decided to leave the issue open until the November 2024 meeting to give people time to consider Walker's offer.

FORESTRY/WILDLIFE CHAIR: After the split of the Forestry/Wildlife/Agriculture Committee into two committees of Forestry/Wildlife and Agriculture, no chair of the Forestry/Wildlife Committee was elected. Al Drabek indicated that he would agree to take the position. A motion was made by Evans, which was seconded by Walker, to nominate Drabek as the chair of the Forestry/Wildlife Committee. Motion carried unanimously. Walker agreed to take minutes for the committee meetings. Tessmer will continue as chair of the Agriculture Committee.

NATIONAL RC&D UPDATE: Glad announced that Anna Cornelius of the National RC&D Council will come to Golden Sands RC&D in October 2024. NACD will also attend this meeting. The national conference will be in May 2025 in Pennsylvania. The current director of Glacierland RC&D is stepping down, so a new director is being sought. Glad is on the search/hiring committee.

RESOLUTION FOR APPLICATION FOR LAKE MONITORING & PROTECTION NETWORK FUNDS:

This document permits going forward with continuing to fund the AIS Coordinator positions. A motion was made by Eggleston, which was seconded by Evans, to approve the resolution. Motion approved unanimously.

MEAD WILDLIFE AREA COLLABORATIVE STREAM BANK RESTORATION PROJECT: Hamerla described the completion of a streambank restoration project at the Mead Wildlife Area, which was completed recently, using a federal grant of \$100,000 and donations from several organizations on the Little Birch Flowage. This project will be part of the tour scheduled for after the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel/Finance Committee: Evans reported on today's P/F Committee meeting. The committee voted to forward the treasurer's report to the full council. A line of credit was established at Simplicity Bank to be sure cash flow is available in case of the slow receipt of reimbursements. Glad will present proposed wage increases for 2025 at the November 2024 meeting, as well as ask for an increase in the hourly fee for service rate. There might also be a draft overhead/admin budget available. The NRCS is interested in having Golden Sands RC&D provide personnel for up to 8 administrative positions in NRCS offices. The federal Employee Retention Credit funds still have not been received but are expected by the end of 2024. Glad provided a report on recent hirings and unfilled personnel openings. Evans reported on the status of honoring Al Barden. Wolfe has taken on responsibility for communications and marketing for Golden Sands RC&D.

Forestry/Agriculture/Wildlife Committee Report: Walker reported on today's meeting. There are now three full-time grazing specialists. The Waupaca County Field Day, set for 9/27/2024, is expected to be attended by 350 students. A joint project for improving habitat for Karner Blue Butterfly and other pollinators, with the USFWS, is going well. The CWWP completed 12 miles of windbreaks in 2024. Demo forest sites are being sought in three counties. Demo forest events for the ones already established are already scheduled. Reports were given from the two terrestrial invasive species programs. All the neighborhood garden spaces were rented this growing season, and several produce products from those gardens were donated to the local food pantry. Tree shelter sales came to over \$12,000 this year. The Committee approved two new projects to be forwarded to the full council for consideration. Glad then announced that flyers for several upcoming events were available for attendees to pick up and take back to their counties and organizations.

Water Committee Report: Evans reported on today's meeting. The Waters Committee approved two new projects to be forwarded to the full council for consideration. AIS staff have filed the required mid-season reports to the relevant counties and the WDNR and are working on getting

things in place for 2025, since initial applications are due by 11/15/2024. Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) was discovered in Big Bass Lake and a new invasive, water pennywort, was discovered in the Twin Lakes. Starry stonewort was being investigated in Waupaca County. Several aquatic plant surveys were completed. Curtis Lake, in Columbia County, was checked to see if it had a population of the weevils that attack EWM. It was determined that it does have a population of the weevils, so there is a "wait and see" attitude now to see if the weevils can keep the EWM population down. County updates were given.

NEW PROJECTS:

- LMPN 12 County Regional AIS Program: \$159,891.35 will fund three full-time AIS Coordinators and one part-time project manager.
- Taylor County Annual AIS Surveys & Aquatic Services: This is a fee-for-service agreement for \$6,000.
- Building the Buzz about Grazing in Central WI: This \$483,754.10 project is to reach new audiences and expand/improve services to producers. This is in partnership with the NRCS and will fund an internship to improve working with the UWSP-CNR on grazing.
- CWIP DNR WMA 2024: Mapping of terrestrial invasives on 80 acres of TNC land with financial assistance from the WDNR. Project amount is \$11,250.

A motion was made by Clendenning, which was seconded by Evans, to approve all four projects and the companion resolution for the AIS project. Motion passed unanimously.

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

AGENCY/PARTNER REPORTS: Kaitlin Schott, of the Madison NRCS office, presented information on the Urban Conservation project aimed at increasing practices and outreach strategies in three urban areas in Wisconsin: Madison, Milwaukee, and Stevens Point. The program expands the definition of "agricultural producer" with no operator size limit, no minimum farm production level required, and no farm sales requirement. Practices already being explored are low tunnel systems, raised beds, composting, cover cropping, wildlife habitat planting, mulching, and tree-shrub establishment. Other activities, such as rain gardens, are being considered. The idea is to make the program conservation based, not practice-based.

OTHER BUSINESS: Bill Clendenning asked that the council consider having name tags for future meetings and also that meetings be ended by making a list of items to be considered at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m. upon a motion that was made by Clendenning and seconded by Walker.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans
Temporary Recording Secretary