

## **GrassWorks Board Meeting**

**9/24/15**

### **Schmeekle Reserve, Stevens Point**

Board Members present: Kevin Mahalko, David Heidel, Wally Sedlar, Cheyenne Christianson, Peter Arnold, Julie Engel, Andy Jaworski

Absent: Dave Vetrano, Matt Hartwig, Larry Smith, Laura Paine

GrassWorks Staff: Jill Hapner

Advisors: Vance Haugen (UWEX), Paul Daigle, Marathon County LCD, Angie Sullivan, DATCP

### **DRAFT Minutes**

Call to order 10:20 am

Check in, personal reports from each person.

Review and approve minutes from May 17, 2015.

Julie moved to approve, Andy second, motion carried

### **Financial Report**

See report compiled by Jill for more information

Jill keeping books, Julie corroborates

OV and NSAC closed out on time, reports completed

Current grants:

OV CROPP: We are getting money in two different ways from Organic Valley. This one is a gift, not a grant, so there is no end date so no need to hurry to spend it.

OV CROPP: this is a new grant, it covers the manufacture of grazing sticks with their logo on the sticks.

We ordered 500 and sold 50 so far. There are cool pictures of Vance using in pasture on our website. Grazing sticks are being advertised on our website along with Grazing Guide.

Pasture sticks are \$12/stick

Clif Bar Foundation: Grazing Ambassador program. \$3,000

This is a new grant to cover the GA program. We brainstormed ideas to get more exposure for Clif Bar during GA talks, and also on the GA webpage. Cheyenne says he eats them while on the tractor, and Jill suggested that he take photos of eating them on his tractor. Then post the photos on webpage or GA talk. Or, during a pasture walk, hand out Clif Bars while touring and take pictures!

New grants pending:

SARE- Laura and Jill quick turn-around earlier this year.

We are getting it, the contract is forthcoming

We need to hire a coordinator. Kevin says to keep people in mind to hire to educate and coordinate. The position is 5-6 hours per week working with RC&D, mostly about soil health. Bridget O'Meara doesn't have time right now.

NRCS- Kevin reports: starting in Jan, we need to sit down with Jimmy Bramblett. Our partners are doing grazing plans. Now there is no funding but the workload still there. With the estimated pool of need for technical assistance, Kevin guessed we would need 240K.

Paul: The problem is the distinction between education and technical assistance. Marathon Co. needs money for technical assistance. Marathon Co agreed to administer for GrassWorks because GW is an educational organization and does not provide technical assistance. GW will receive 1% to cover administrative fees and GW will ultimately be accountable for fulfilling the contract. Dianne Hanson at Marathon Co is a competent administrator, so not worried about the complications of categorizing and keeping track of expenses. One hurdle he sees is that they said they will send a list of people that need grazing plans to Marathon Co via GW. They will be from all over the state. Paul says we can't cover the whole state. EQIP sign ups end soon, and we'll see how it goes and where the requests come from.

Wally: There confusing roles between grazing specialists, NRCS, County.

Paul: Grazing plans need to be written by experts. That might be one challenge. It is a one year contract, \$150K. Starts in October, goes through Sept.

Jill: We will try it out for one year. Goal is 30 plans written, \$1,270 each, 20 follow ups at a lesser price. We need to decided which plans are going to be written, where, and by whom. In order to do this, we need to create a selection committee. But, we are waiting for the list of requests from EQIP.

Pat Murphy retired.

Thank you Marathon County, for taking the bulk of the work for little return. GW goal/hope from all this is for quantitative measure that NRCS loves, and we hope that will serve as leverage to bring in more money in the future. Marathon Co will record time spent, and other actual investment.

2016 Conference:

As of 9/18

Balance \$52,973.40

Unrestricted funds = \$47,614.47

Foundation Fund = \$13,583.26

Wally moves to approve financial report, Peter seconded. Motion carries.

### **ED Report:**

OV grant smaller than hoped. We had applied for them to pay for a webpage update, and we still want to update website. (pending along with SARE and NRCS).

UNFI, \$10K for general expenses, declined, too many applicants

Farm Aid, \$2k Grazing Ambassadors, declined.

FSA- sent on to Heather, applicable to conference. Tract for FSA, 2017 conference.

Even though we get these grants to advocate for grazing, we won't net a lot from these grants. Keep relying on Strategic Plan. Grass mix, membership, conference will supply general funds.

Displays/exhibits: Entry fees were paid for by the Organic Valley farmer community giving grant. This is over and now we will have to pay.

Grazing Ambassadors: 6 talks given so far this year given by : Anders 1, Molly 4, Jill 1. Our Grazing Ambassadors are: Anders Gurda, Terry Groth, Cherrie Nolden, Kirsten Jurcek, Molly Myers. There is a packet all ready to go. Spread the word! Get more speakers! Funding is there for a little while. Our goal is 10 talks around the state. Who can we get to be a GA? Former board members? They are great because they are local. There is no time limit to spend these funds.

This year, the display went to 12 venues so far. Examples are the Mother Earth News Fair, Dairy Expo, Farm Tech Days.

Amazon Smile: haven't met quota, they pitied us and donated \$5 anyway.

Grazing Guide sales: we reprinted 350 in 2014. In 2015, we sold 28. We sold 55 pasture sticks.

Social media: Heather and Jill tag-teamed posts on social media on behalf of GrassWorks.

Membership: we have 86 members currently. This means they paid Nov- today. That is taking into consideration conference registration. We want 100 members!

Gift of money from Pey-rud-dah RCD, they are no more so we received a donation as they disbursed their remaining funds.

Next board meeting, Tuesday, November 17, 10-2 Schmeekle Reserve.

Jerold Berg has an idea- He was at Sheboygan County Fair and he saw a youth showcasing livestock raised on grass. What if GW came up with an award for a youth that is raising livestock on grass, and gave it once a year? We could come up with a nomination form, give it to 4-H groups, UWEx groups, etc to get the word out. It would have a deadline, then we would form a nomination committee, select a winner, and award a plaque. The board member that lived nearest to the child would give the award at some local function. Anybody want to work with Jerold Berg to make that happen? Paul suggested linking it to conference? But that wouldn't really work because the kid is probably in school. Peter suggested offering a one-year free membership. How do we get the word out to 4H? Dave outlined a pastured hog farmer that had paddock system at Sheboygan County Fair. Andy suggests: Could GW provide a stipend to youth, if they raise an animal on grass? Basically saying to the kid: if you take initiative, we'll give you incentive. We want to encourage youth to show grass fed livestock. And maybe become an ambassador for the practice. We could list this on the website. But, some more thinking needed. Jill will touch base with Jerold.

### **2016 Conference Update**

Heather's report read by Jill: Heather will be at November meeting.

Jerry Apps, Francis Thicke, as keynotes. See attached report.

Brochures will be out in early October.

Sponsors so far, \$21K (budget 18k).

Tradeshow so far, \$4k

Combined sponsor/tradeshow exceeds \$25k which was the goal.

DGA is a major sponsor.

There will be a dairy tract.

The RMA grant was declined.

CIAS and SARE fund silvopasture tract- Dianne Mayerfeld, Keefe Keeley are contact people for this.

Board members! Here is how you can help make the conference a success: solicit items for live and silent auction. Promote trade show vendors. Contact potential food supplier and donors. Send a press release in your local paper (Heather has press release). Promote on your website/facebook. Volunteer, staff the display, work at the bookstore.

Ray Archuletta is lined up for three sessions. Use him! He's great.

### **Meadow Fescue**

Larry apologizes. He's been working with Chad Hale from Byron Seed. Chad said there is cockle seed in the seed so it needs to be re-cleaned. It can't go into Canada to be planted as a seed crop source if it has cockle seed in it. Larry was not there and this report is as of 9/13. We are not sure whether it is white cockle or cockle burr or exactly what type of seed it is. They are not harvesting any seed to sell as of this year. We are one year delayed already.

### **Ag Coalition**

COOL (Country of Origin Labeling) feedback: isn't this illegal and going against trade agreement?

IOH (Implements of Husbandry): Enforcing is not equal. Uniform and consistent enforcement is needed.

We need two representative to participate on behalf of GW in the following: National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and state tech committee. Details are as follows:

NSAC- it is a monthly call, third Wed every month, early afternoon, 1pm. Also, there is a call to action once a month where they ask us to support or oppose certain legislation. This can be done remotely. Cheyenne volunteered.

State Technical Committee: Wayne Craig is leaving. Otto Weigand as replacement? Mark Karchinsky as board member? Wally volunteers.

Other business:

Wally says if the displays are at an event, then we could have sold Grazing Guides. Jill says print out pre-order form on resource tab on website we can hand out them out. Make their way to Jill, and it'll get out.

Kevin says Equity Livestock sales person interested in setting up grass fed livestock sale at one of their markets. Either beef or dairy. Do we have an interest? If so, when we should do it? There is not much

interest. There was no conclusion as to what time of year is best. It depends on the target audience, who will be buying these heifers, steers, etc? We recollected that the last auction did not go well.

Kevin raised \$165 for July picnic. Wally moves that he keeps it to cover cost of porta potty. Peter seconded. Motion carried

Kevin is going to a meeting in North Carolina to promote networking of graziers. He wants pictures of events that we go to.

Andy moved to adjourn. Wally seconded. Motion passed. Adjourn 2:02pm.