

GrassWorks Board Meeting
September 29, 2016
Schmeekle Reserve

Board Members Present: Wally Sedlar, Andy Jaworski, Larry Smith, Jason Cavadini, Laura Paine, Peter Arnold, Dave Vetrano, Cheyenne Christianson

Staff: Jill Hapner

Advisers: Vance Haugen, Otto Wiegand

Meeting was called to order at 10:07 am by Wally S.

Agenda and minutes review

Minutes from May 12, 2016 reviewed

Motion to approve: Larry/Laura – carried

Financial report

The financial report was reviewed by Jill. She started by discussing the current status of grants and gifts. The current checking account balance is \$26,691.80, and the savings account balance is \$20,005.81. The current foundation fund balance is \$14,546.75. Jill mentioned the option of having Jean come to speak at the March or May meeting about the Foundation.

Motion to approve financial report: Dave/Andy – carried

Paul Daigle call in

Paul called into the meeting to give an update on the NRCS agreement. As of now, all plans are complete. There is a full list of all of the completed plans, including who received them and who wrote them. There was some urgency to wrap up by August because of the potential to receive more money from 2016. It was later discovered that the money was not available, but they are interested in creating a new 2017 multi-year contract. Golden Sands, Taylor County, and Marathon County have expressed interest in a new contract. The biggest barrier to making this happen is the match requirement because many don't have the resources to meet the match. Paul is interested in moving forward with a new contract if people are interested. Another issue is that the TSP's need a little more money; probably about \$200. Initially, Brian advocated for more money which resulted in the increase from \$1,143 to \$1,160. He could look into another \$200 increase. It was emphasized that NRCS doesn't care where the match money comes from, but it cannot come from a charge to the farmers.

Motion to approve the negotiations of a new contract: Dave/Laura - carried

Executive Directors Report

SARE Grant – The main purpose is to promote soil health, and to get RC&Ds to work with Extension offices. Thus far, River Country hosted 8 pasture walks and Badger hosted one large walk. Jill suggested renewing the contract with Kirsten.

Motion to approve renewing Kirsten's contract: Laura/Andy - carried

Organic Valley gift – \$140 remaining

Clif Bar – Another grant for \$3,000 was just secured. That money will support the Grazing Ambassador's Program. Clif Bar Foundation could be a strong future partner for GrassWorks. The goal right now is to introduce their foundation to GrassWorks' programs little by little.

Amazon Smile – \$34 thus far

Displays – The displays have been used at 17 venues so far this year. The World Dairy Expo is the next big event. A spot at the MOSES conference is already paid for.

Newsletter – The second Graze edition is coming soon. The newsletters cost \$225 each. Jill recommended that we consider paying Julie to write the newsletters. She has been doing a great job and compensating her for her time and commitment would be worth it for GrassWorks.

Motion to offer up to \$25/hr or a \$100 flat fee: Larry/Peter – carried

Social Media – GrassWorks is still in need of a social media volunteer

Grazing Guides and Pasture Sticks – Once the inventory is depleted the guides need to be revised

Membership – There are currently 120 members. Anyone who doesn't renew by February will receive a follow-up letter. The question was posed: "why don't more people who attend the conference choose to become members?"

Bylaws Review

The following amendments to the bylaws have been proposed:

- Article II – strike "voting" from section I so producers and landowners are known as "members" and all others as "associate members"
- Article IV – strike the bonding requirement from bylaws as it is not currently necessary
- Article V – revise to allow up to 2 non-producer directors

Motion to approve proposed amendments: Larry/Cheyenne - carried

Grazing conference update

The agenda and schedule for the 2016 conference are about 95% complete. Some of the notable speakers include Jim Gerrish and Alan Nation. So far there is \$18,150 committed by sponsors. The major sponsors thus far are DGA and WI Grassfed Beef Co-op. Because it's the 25th year of GrassWorks, we want to choose 25 reward recipients who have been instrumental in the grazing community. So far there are more than 25 people on the list. How do we choose who's on the final 25-person list? Should we have the entire board vote, or assign a committee to vote? Another proposed idea for celebrating the 25th year of GrassWorks is to give away 25 - \$25 gift cards. Every board member should try to secure at least one. Other ways of celebrating 25 years were discussed. The recipient of the Grazing Advocate Award must also be chosen. This will be voted on by the board in November. There are already some donations coming in for the auction. Do we want to have an auction again this year? The company that recorded the presentations last year is not able to do it this year. There is a different company that could do it, but they want more money up front. They would put all the recordings online, because there aren't enough hard copies sold to cover their costs. Heather would like more money for advertising because she feels like she has more to sell this year because of the 25th year.

Motion to approve increasing advertising money by \$600: Vance/Laura - carried

Meadow fescue report

Larry harvested and dried the Hidden Valley meadow fescue. It was going to cost approximately \$500 to clean the seed, and Byron wanted to clean it themselves in Indiana. Larry explained that Byron has been

very difficult to communicate with. Last year Larry spent about \$2,000 to raise the seed and didn't get much acknowledgment from Byron. That was the second lot of seed that he sent to them. After this year, Larry is no longer interested in growing seed for them.

NSAC update

Cheyenne made it to one meeting. He feels that he may not be the best person for the job because he doesn't really keep up with regulations and policy. However, it was discussed that it is important just to have a presence there and continue to participate on the Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee monthly conference calls. Kevin offered to sit in on the meetings as well.

NRCS technical update committee

Grazing is part of the discussion at local workgroup meetings, along with cover crops, drain tiling, and soil health.

Ag Coalition update

Larry attended the last meeting. Much of the discussion was related to roads across the state because the DoT was present. Many of the roads need repair. The assembly/senate may consider raising gas tax. The Kewaunee County water issues were discussed. It is possible that the EPA could eventually aim for stopping all manure applications. There was also a great deal of discussion regarding the use of atrazine in corn production. The EPA wants to stop its use, and the commodity groups are fighting the EPA.

Other business

- A good potential topic for the conference could be predators and wolves
- There is a silvopasture standard in development for CSP

Motion to adjourn: Dave/Laura - carried