Dodge County Healthy Soil Healthy Water Alliance

November 2, 2020 Minutes

Via Zoom Meeting

**Participants:** Bill Boettge, John Bohonek, Colleen Crane, Jeff Gaska, Dale Gasser, Karen Huber, Ruth Johnson, Becky Justmann, Wayne Kok, Tim Meekma, Charlie Nelson, Liz Orsay, Ellen Perkins, Mark Riedel, Michelle Scarpace, Michael Sorge, Bill Stangel and Tracy Zemlo.

No comments or corrections to the October 5, 2020 minutes.

**Operational Items:** Annual meeting is set for January 11, 2021. Board of Directors are elected at the annual meeting. Currently there are no BOD member positions open.

**October 22, 2020 Showcase Event:** Those in attendance felt the event went well and that it met the needs of the audience. Bill B thanked Matt Lienke for the use of his shop. Next time have a survey available for input from attendees.

**Other Farm Group Activities**

* **Future Events:** Fall event if held would be in December with the focus on Manure management. Looking to have the event on the eastern side of the County. Would bring in someone to talk regarding manure processes to reduce manure volume and handling. Also talk regarding ground water protection. Would be a farmer focus program.
* **February Event:** They have had no response from the Juneau Community Center for holding the event there. There has been no discussion on a virtual event. Will get more information out as it becomes available.

**Marketing/Communications**

* **Website:** Doug Condon and his assistant Al have been working hard. Hope to go live with the website as soon as approval from the Alliance group happens. Colleen will get the link to the website to the communication committee, then to the board and the Alliance group. On the how to help page under the marketing materials they do not have a very good image library. Colleen asked everyone to pass along any images that they would have that would be useful for this. Looking for a spokesperson from each of the groups to represent their group with a short 45 second to one minute video about their organization. Doug C would record the videos. Please contact Colleen to set up a time. Jared and Michelle are working on a video series for the HSHW farmer led group. Discussion was had regarding having the members names listed on the website. Partner organizations and board members will be listed for sure. Colleen will check with current members to ask permission to have their names on the website. Will change the membership form to included permission to use names on website.
* **Brochure:** Michelle shared a draft of the new brochure and visual guidelines. They are looking for photos of people working together, etc. to put in the brochure. They are working on pop up pull up banners to have at events. Working on a quarterly E-newsletter explaining who the Alliance is and what they do. Would include learning about new practices, upcoming events and promoting them. Updates on the Lake groups and Farmer group and what they are doing. Hoping to have something out by the end of 2020. More details to come.

**Rock River Coalition:** A small group has been formed to work on this. They will be meeting after the Alliance meeting. They will report back at the next meeting.

**Projects**

* **Slag:** Installation was completed two weeks ago. System is operating. The major rain event on Oct. 22nd with over 4” of rain overwhelmed the system and revealed some weak points. There is on site testing going on and the data is showing that it is reducing phosphorus. They will have another update later this week or early next week.
* **Cover Crops:** The HSHW Farmer led groups CCIP program slots have been allocated. There are around 5000 acres between the cost share and matching. Fox Lake’s cover crop program has 1000-1200 acres.
* **Conservation Farmland Lease:** Jeff Gaska is planning to set up a meeting in December.
* **Adaptive Management Project at Matt Lienke’s Farm:** Spoke briefly about it at the cover crop showcase. Looking to put together a sentiment basin on the east end of Matt’s farm. A small wetland scrape which would function as a filter/basin. The work would be part of the Water Utilities adaptive management program. Looking at starting in the spring of 2021.

Looking for additional projects if anyone has anything in the Beaver Dam watershed let Bill Stangel know.

* **“Love Your Lake” project with Liz Orsay:** Liz update the group on the project. Trying to start an educational campaign for lake residents. Goal is to have brief articles, email blasts, newsletter etc. Looking into having a monthly column in the newspaper. Liz put together a tip sheet for fall leaf clean up. Will be getting it sent out. They want to also highlight what the HSHW Farmer led group has been doing.
* **Other:** Sand County Foundation contacted the farmers group to partner with them on a farmer to farmer grant. Would be in conjunction with the University of Minnesota. Dodge County will be a major partner if it gets funded. Letter of support has been submitted.

**Updates from Organizations, Agencies and Groups**

* **FLILPARD:** Tracy Zemlo - Lake Management plan was submitted last Friday. Continuing to work with the Dept. of Corrections. Prison farm looking to possibly put in cover crops.
* **FLPO:** Charlie Nelson – No new updates.
* **Sinissippi:** Ellen Perkins – They will be sending out a letter/survey to area farmers. Working on strategic plan.
* **BDLIA:** Karen Huber – Buoys were taken out. Planning to have the fundraising banquet. Have three different scenarios for holding the banquet. Planning grant for Rakes Bay was submitted last week.
* **BDLD:** Bill Boettge – They are still waiting for the judge’s ruling regarding the petition that was filed. Hoping to have a decision in the next 30 days.
* **LWCC:** John Bohonek - Application has been submitted for the AIS grant. 880 letters were sent out for the new well testing program. 42% has responded. Test kits will go out early November. HSHW Farmer led group grant has been approved.
* **DNR:** Mark Riedel - The City of Watertown has reached out to the DNR and still expresses interest in exploring water quality trading and working with Dodge County farmers. It is in the very early stages, but the DNR will be coordinating in the future to make sure connections are made. Dale Gasser – The Nitrate Performance Standard Committee wrapped up a few weeks ago. 2021 trim grants came out a week ago.
* **UW Ext:** No new updates

**Other Business:** A board meeting is scheduled for 11/17/20 via zoom. They will be discussing a County wide cover crop program.

Next HSHW Alliance meeting will be held December 14, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. via zoom.

Annual meeting will be held January 11, 2021.