



**Southwest Project Grass**  
**6024 Glades Pike, Suite 103**  
**Somerset, PA 15501**

**PROJECT GRASS MEETING MINUTES**

**November 19, 2021**

**Tailgatez Sports Grill, Somerset, PA**  
**1640 N Center Ave, Somerset, PA 15501**  
**10 AM – 12:30 PM**

- **Call to Order** – 10:12 AM
- **Additions to the Agenda**
  - None
- **Public Comments**
  - None
- **Treasury Report**
  - Sue Moon sent a copy of the budget (current and proposed, see attached)
  - 2022 dues from Armstrong and Beaver Counties are on the way.
  - Proposal to remove the income/costs associated with the Conference and Bus Tour because these items will not need to be in the budget for 2022
  - Under the Grassland Evaluation Contest expenses, proposal to reorganize the line items to include a facility rental fee. The category should now read: food - \$300; Insurance - \$300; facility rental fee - \$200 (results in the same bottom line listed in the proposed budget.
  - Both the NW Grazing Conference and the Appalachian Grazing Conference are scheduled for 2022 so the \$500 sponsorship for each conference should remain in the budget.
  - Sue will be sending a revised copy of the proposed budget to Riley Kinney.
    - Motion to accept budget as revised:
      - Rich motions, Don seconds, motion carries.
- **Previous Meeting Minutes**
  - No Quorum at July meeting, and not enough final copies of May meeting minutes to take action, proposed to review 2 meetings worth of minutes at next meeting.
- **Activities, Updates and County Reports** – Quorum declared

<b>Allegheny</b> (Riley) – None	<b>Indiana</b> (Jason)
<b>Armstrong</b> (Jess) – Working on a new grazing plan and new grants. New manager is joining soon.	<b>Somerset</b> (Don) – Recap of the Shober field day and working on REAP fence/watering project.
<b>Beaver</b> (Rich) – CD is under new management.	<b>Washington</b> (John) – Weary project of streambank fencing and restoration and also has grazing books that are ready for distribution.

<p><b>Blair</b> (Rich) – Field days with Huntington County and trying to get them to rejoin SWPG. And a comment about the reduced capacity of the local NRCS office.</p>	<p><b>NRCS Advisor Report</b> (JB) – implementing grazing systems, understaffed but there are a lot of new positions in all SW counties. There are 16 existing staff members and 18 new staff for NRCS. Working on a new course for NRCS staff about working with livestock producers. Will work with 3 farmers in Somerset in July for the course and the hope is that this will open up to non-NRCS staff in the future. NRCS is also still functioning under COVID protocols. Mike Hamilton (Somerset-NRCS) was present and gave a brief report.</p>
<p><b>Cambria</b> (Shannon) – New ag tech Shannon Piece.</p>	<p><b>SCC Advisor Report</b> (Laurel) – Closing REAP soon and have allocated all funds for this fiscal year. Working on NM Tech and Admin trainings.</p>

- **Absent Counties:**
  - Bedford
  - Butler
  - Centre
  - Fayette
  - Greene
  - Westmoreland
  - PA GLC
  - Penn’s Corner RC&D
  - Southern Alleghenies RC&D
  - DEP
  - ARS
  - Farmer Reports

Committee Reports

- **Executive Committee**
  - No meetings
- **Website/Social Media**
  - Grassland Evaluation Contest press release
- **Grassland Evaluation Contest**
  - Great turnout with 12 teams and 48 students.
  - Interest in updating the study guide, but in order to update it must be retyped into and editable text. This could be a good job for an intern at a CD.
  - Need someone to replace Lisa as a scorer for next year’s competition.
  - Will need more volunteers to pull off the event next year.
    - Laurel will access new NM staff to get volunteer participation.
- **Anniversary Committee**
  - Piece was not present at the meeting so this agenda item was not addressed.
- **Treasurer’s Report**
  - Budget

New Business

- **2022 Meeting Schedule**
  - The question was proposed, would it be possible to add a “call-in” option to the SWPG meetings? However, this would require a change in the by laws. SWPG prefers meetings to be held in person, so discussion about how to allow for emergency circumstances needs to be further developed.
  - Suggestion to have Rich draft a change in bylaws that could be proposed at one meeting and voted on in a 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.
  - Set a meeting schedule for 2022
    - *Thursday, February 17*
    - *May or June for a field day (possibly Blair County for a field day)*
    - *Thursday, September 15*
    - *Thursday, November 10*
- **2022 Nominating Committee** (nominations for executive committee)
  - Piece and Tom will reach out to those who are expiring.
- **Bus Tour 2022**
  - Discussion about when to reschedule the bus tour. Deposits were paid so it would be possible to do it in 2022 for a 42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary tour. However, the price of the bus has doubled and there is some discussion about having individuals drive themselves on the tour and provide a gas stipend.
  - There are also questions related to COVID and the hotel as well as ensuring the timing is right for the trip.
  - At this point in time, NRCS and SCC cannot participate in the event.
  - Recommendation to postpone the trip to the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2025)
    - Rich from Blair motions, John from Washington 2nds – motion passes.
- **Grassland Evaluation Contest**
  - Sent a letter to PLC for funds. There is a need for a fundraising committee because we are currently short on funds if all of the scholarship students request their payments.
  - Suggestion to draft a letter that can be sent to CDs to illicit more fundraising. Have the Envirothon coordinator at the district also fundraise for Grassland Evaluation Contest.
  - We need to be fundraising \$4,000 annually to cover the cost of the scholarships, however we rarely distribute that much money because students are required to send out requests for their scholarship.
  - A suggestion was presented to sell things at our other events that could also raise money for GEC.
  - Sugar Valley would like to go to Nationals and we usually give them a scholarship to go, but we are short on funds so we have to get the funds in order.
  - Abby Z. submitted a request to have her scholarship deadline extended from August 2021 to November 30, 2021.
    - Scholarship is \$250 and she was a winner from 2019. She is currently enrolled in college.
    - We need to see if we have the request in writing and we also think that moving forward, deadline extensions for scholarships should be approved if the extension request is for the same calendar year.

- Jess motions to extend the scholarship deadline and Rich from Beaver seconds.
  - JB volunteered to lead the group and Laurel can manage volunteers, however because of their position, they are not able to fundraise.
    - *Need a Fundraising Committee*
    - *Need a new administrator* (good fit for a district that also participates in Penn's Corner)
    - Laurel volunteered Pierce to join the GEC committee and Shannon from Cambria also agreed to join the committee. We will also be reaching out to CD Envirothon staff for additional help.
- **County Field Day**
  - Blair County possibility
- **Retirements (Dan Griffith and John Hewitt)**

### Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember

- Appalachian Grazing Conference – Waterfront Hotel Morgantown, WV March 10-12, 2022

### Southwest Project Grass Committee Members

#### Executive Committee

- Chair: Jason McGinnis<sup>(2023)</sup>, Vice Chair: Dan Komarinski<sup>(2023)</sup>, Secretary/Treasurer: Riley Kinney<sup>(2023)</sup>, Financial Secretary: Sue Moon, Advisors: JB Harrold, Laurel Rush
- Don Williams <sup>(2023)</sup>, Jim Cowell<sup>(2023)</sup>, Tom Ulrich <sup>(2023)</sup>, Rich Huether<sup>(2023)</sup>
- Appointed:
  - Financial Secretary: Sue Moon
  - Advisors: JB Harrold & Laurel Rush

#### Website/Social Media:

Laurel Rush, Tom Ulrich, Danielle Rihel

#### Grassland Evaluation Contest Committee

*JB Harold, Laurel Rush, Pierce Wilson, Shannon Pierce.*

#### SWPG Anniversary Committee

Pierce Wilson, Sue Moon, Riley Kinney, Danielle Rihel, Tom Ulrich, JB Harrold, Laurel Rush

#### SWPG 2022 Conference Committee

TBD