**SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION**

Wisconsin Land + Water Conservation Association

**Southern Area Counties:**

Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock & Sauk

**President:** Luke McGuire, Lafayette County

**Vice President:** Kurt Calkins, Columbia County

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Tess Wallner, Green County

**Area Coordinator:** Todd Jenson, Green County

**October SAA Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday October 20th, 2022**

**Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept.**

1. Meeting called to order by Kurt Calkins at 10:05am
2. Roll Call of Counties: Columbia- 1 staff; Dane- 1 staff; Dodge- 1 staff 1 LCC; Grant- 2 staff; Green- 2 staff; Iowa- 1 staff; Jefferson- 0; Lafayette- 1 staff; Richland- 0; Rock- 1 staff; Sauk- 2 staff.
3. Approval of Agenda: motion by Sauk/ 2nd by Lafayette to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
4. August Minutes: motion by Dane/ 2nd by Dodge to approve the minutes. Motion carried.
5. Treasurers Report: motion by Lafayette / 2nd by Dane to approve the treasurers report. Motion carried.
6. Update on FSA representatives:
	* Kurt Calkins explained what has been discussed in Legislative Admin meetings in regards to Chapter 92. The Leg. Admin committee has decided to take a stance if legislative action occurs on how counties should proceed with delegation of a “FSA representative”. He is working with Farm Bureau and Wisconsin Counties Association to make sure there is an ag producer on LWCC in all counties.
7. 2023 Poster and Speaking Contest:
	* Justine Bula was present to give details. Judging for the poster portion of the contest will be January 27, 2023 and judging for the speaking portions will be January 25, 2023. She requests all materials are sent to her by January 20 and to be notified about if counties will do speaking in person or virtual by December 1, 2022. The state contest will be held in person. The group discussed prizes and decided to continue offering gift cards but to look into other options of what businesses to get gift cards from (Amazon, Visa, digital, etc).
8. Agency Updates: none
9. County Roundtable
	* Columbia: hardest budget yet due to coal power plant closing in county and trying to retain staff, lots of public frustration with incoming solar farm
	* Dane: with NRCS demo farm grant they will hire a position next year and have two graduate student researchers, they will conduct a feasibility study next year for a county manure treatment facility, through a grant from American Farmland Trust they are hosting a “train the trainer” event on soil health February 1 and SAA is invited
	* Dodge: budget meeting is still upcoming, projects are winding down, Land and Water Plan has been approved, getting ready to send samples for third year of water study, tracking watershed group information for DATCP has been very complicated and time consuming
	* Grant: rewriting FPP plan, training a new technician John, also introduced Bill who has worked for the county for almost a year, busy with project installations
	* Green: budget meeting went smoothly partly due to contribution agreement with NRCS for work on CRP contracts and received $50,000 through ARPA funds for construction projects, youth conservation day was held early October, held or assisted with three land judging contests recently, seeing new invasive “Johnson grass”
	* Iowa: new hire is starting soon, budget meeting was easy, receiving money for natural resource projects from ATC lines being built, SWIGG is applying for grants to study risk factors of past findings, hosting a CCA outreach event November 14 and SAA is invited
	* Lafayette: budget is slow going with new financial personel, will be without phone or internet for a few days while moving offices, hosted Southern Area land judging contest with 142 kids attending, getting a new truck hopefully soon, county was discussing changing hours but unlikely LWCD office will, CAFO is considering building a digester
	* Rock: continuing nitrate reduction efforts, watershed groups are focused on promoting cover crops, installing equipment to sample on fields for at least three years has been funded, cities of Janesville and Beloit are doing phosphorus trading with producers, updating 9 key element plan, county is pushing to reduce carbon footprint and putting solar on 20 acres of county farm
	* Sauk: bids have been sent out for county farm producers, request for proposal on demo plots has been chosen, tree sale will be live online November 1 and Melissa will be presenting on how to transition sale to online format, youth conservation day was held at Upham Woods, hosting Farm Tech Days next summer and organizing area tours, hosting speaker Dave Brandt on February 7, 2023 with an open invite
10. Next meeting date: March 1, 2023 at Land and Water Conference
11. Motion by Dodge/ 2nd by Lafayette to adjourn at 11:20am. Motion carried.