

AWSGP Annual Meeting

July 16, 2022

The meeting was held at Morgan Hills golf course with seventeen in attendance. There were several that joined in on the zoom sessions.

Will Brandau welcomed everyone and we were ready to start with our first speaker.

Craig Kaiser, President of LandGate discussed carbon credits and solar potential through their calculations. They are a data & logistic web-based company. If you go to landgate.com and put in your information you can find out the value of the natural resources on your land, parcels two acres plus. He showed several examples.

Our next zoom speaker was Neal Tilhou, who spoke on renovating native grass swards: on farm trial of improved warm-season grass varieties. He has a proposed study submitted to NE SARE for a grant to have varieties survive the northern winters, because they will have a later flowering time and produce a greater yield.

Bruce Trumbower discussed the process of making switchgrass into bedding. He shared the video of the Roto Chopper at his farm to grind. They did almost twenty-five tons in three hours. Now that they have the grinding streamlined, they are working on the other parts of production to make them cost and time effective. He has his bedding product in several stores and also goes to a farmer market where education is his main focus.

A wonderful lunch was provided by Morgan Hills, and our business meeting followed.

Business meeting was called to order by Will Brandau. Will asked Judy Box to read the minutes and give the treasures report. The minutes from the annual meeting held July 17, 2021 were read and approved.

The treasures report:

Income: Dues \$150.00 from 19 members, \$50.00 from tee shirts and \$50.00 from bags.

Expenses: Morgan Hills \$100.00, Ag days 2021 \$257.84, Web site for two years \$120.00 and Domain name one year \$19.95. Check book balance \$ 5,574.37.

Old Business:

Will discussed the poultry bedding machine at Ag days. They were doing 10+ demos a day 2-3 bales through it each time. After Ag days Rodney took it to his place for a training, a representative of Lancaster Farmer was there and his article got great

response. The Harrisburg Farm Show wanted 40 bags of bedding, while processing them, the machine caught fire. The machine is now in Lancaster being fixed and Will and others will be going down to see his progress.

SARE grant has a budget of \$29,000.00 + and some adjustments are needed to cover what still needs to be done. We did purchase bags and have them for sale @ .50 each.

Ag Progress Days are August 9th through the 11th. We are booked and paid; our stand is adjacent to the switchgrass plots. We have all the paper supplies and are taking a 20x 40 tent this year. Suggested taking some bags of Bruce's bedding. A motion for Will to rent a U-Haul van to be able to get everything to Ag days was made by Larry Hartpence and seconded by Bruce Trumbower.

The sock machine has been put on hold. BEG Group is still producing socks. Kitty Davis will speak to Joe at BEG about calling Will to discuss a back haul of loose material.

New Business:

Market Status: A plant in Vanore, TN makes plates out of switchgrass and are selling them on line. Discussion of shipping by rail, checking to see if it is feasible on their end.

Andy Bater spoke on the Chesapeake Bay area and the CRP ground rental. It was suggested to allow the crops to be harvested and sold.

Lenny Reggie discussed a carbon market coming. \$1,000.00 per ton for C20.

Dues: Many have not paid their dues for this year. A discussion was held about dues and a motion was made by Judy Box to keep the dues as they are and seconded by Keith Bettleyon.

A thank you to Bruce Trumbower for setting up this meeting and asked if he would do it again next year. He agreed. A motion was made by Larry Hartpence to give a hundred-dollar tip. Seconded by Rodney Leighow.

Our first afternoon speaker was Kyle Bettleyon discussing biochar and his business Carbon Atlantic International LLC . He shared a power point presentation of his set up of biomass processing system/biochar production, while discussing some of the challenges and opportunities he has had. Using wood chips for his base material and he has a market for char in Northumberland County.

Joe James of Agri-Tech Producers, LLC was our first zoom speaker of the afternoon. He discussed combined remediation biomass and bio-product production (CRBBP). While they prefer Sorghum, switchgrass will work for the process of sequestering CO2. Agri-Tech Producers are involved in projects in several states including Pennsylvania working with utility companies. josephjames@southbell.net.

Our next zoom presentation was Genera Inc. Brad Valentine discussed the utilization of ag fibers for sustainable consumer products. He gave us an overview of the plant in Eastern Tennessee, their current focus and their plans for future growth. They currently use Switchgrass and Miscanthus and some others. They also have some in testing. We used plates from them for lunch and discussed how to get our product to them? Having product come in by rail is very work intense and they don't encourage it.

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Chris Lent gave a presentation for Lee Rinehart about Solar panels with agriculture around them. Using the land around or under for crops or animals. Solar farms are coming and will be destroying the landscape and using good farm land. www.ncat.org

Chris Lent then presented on Soil for Water. He showed a power point about how managing the soil is an investment in our water supply. Good soil can withstand floods and draughts, and temperature extremes. It also improves water cycles and increases crop and forage production. Soilforwater.org or chris@ncat.org NCAT National Center for Appropriate Technology.

Meeting adjourned by Will Brandau, first by Larry Hartpence and seconded by Rodney Leighow.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Box Secretary