



Meeting Notes – No Quorum

**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board
Peaks Conference Room at Falling Creek
1257 County Farm Rd., Bedford, VA 24523**

July 6, 2022 – 7:30 p.m.

Present: Jeff Powers, Don Gardner, Ethan Tanner, Pete Fellers, Lindsay Tomlinson, Dorothy McIntyre

Absent: Joy Powers, Chuck Grove, Pam Willoughby, Matt Baumgardner, Sam Gardner, Ken Newman

Staff Present: Scott Baker and Pam Bailey

Staff Absent: Holley Scheffel

Guests: Supervisor Mickey Johnson and Josh Powers

Chairman Powers indicated that the Ag Board did not have a quorum tonight and therefore the meeting would be for informational purposes only and no votes nor official minutes would be taken.

(1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No vote was taken to approve the agenda due to not having a quorum.

(2) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – April 6, 2022

Approval of April 6, 2022, meeting minutes will be postponed until the next scheduled Ag Board meeting.

(3) ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Chairman Powers noted that Amanda Kaufman is no longer the Deputy Administrator for the County. That position is currently available.

(4) LAND PROTECTION & CONSERVATION – Mr. Fellers stated that he watched the webinar on solar.

(5) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Ms. Bailey noted that Bramble Hollow Farm, located in Montvale, received an AFID grant for \$9,000 which the county will match. This farm will use the grant money to purchase a commercial tilt kettle to help produce broth. She also mentioned three Bedford businesses that were recognized for their participation in The Gauntlet Program. Lastly, Apocalypse Cidery and Winery opened in June, and they were also recipients of an AFID grant.

(6) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT

Mr. Baker shared that the Extension Office, in partnership with Virginia Tech, recently rolled out the well water testing kits for Bedford County residents. Testing commenced in June; results will be available in 6-8 weeks. There were approximately 50 customers who participated in this service.

The Spotted Lantern Fly is still considered a nuisance insect in Virginia. Mr. Baker shared that he has not seen any of these insects yet in Bedford, but he has seen several in Lynchburg. Lynchburg is also included in the commerce quarantine which is intended to aid in the reduction of the spread of the Spotted Lantern Fly.

Applications were received in May for the Tobacco Grant and the first round of applicants, who have been approved, have been notified. They will have six months to commence their practice.

The Bedford Beef Producer Association is holding its summer meeting at the Tanner farm on August 2.

Campbell County will be holding an informational meeting on the Virginia Poultry Transport Incentive Program on August 10 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

The next cattle sale will be held on July 29; cattle will be received on July 28.

The extension office will hold weekly segments on gardening with a reporter from WFXR. This will air on Thursdays during the noon newscast.

(7) BEDFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU/YOUNG FARMERS REPORT

Nothing to report

(8) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Education & Events

1. Upcoming Events – Chairman Powers reminded the group that the Horse and Hound Wine Festival is this upcoming Saturday. Ms. Tomlinson noted that FFA will have a booth at the event.

2. County Fair Update – Chairman Powers noted that the County Fair will be placed on pause for 2022. This is due to not having a suitable location with adequate parking and volunteers not having enough time to coordinate such a large-scale event.

3. School Ag Programs Update – Ms. Tomlinson shared that 4-H has several camps going on this month and all of them are at capacity. The 4-H club has participated in several trips

including a peach orchard, The Eclectic Flower Farm, and the state convention. For the state convention, many awards were presented to students. Several BCPS students were acknowledged for being elected to state office positions. There was a brief conversation about making sure the information about state officer appointments makes it to several media sources to promote the program and share information about BCPS students who serve (or have served) as officers. She also shared that the state dairy competition will be held in August and 4-H is going to participate in that event.

Josh Powers stated that at the state contest there were three students who qualified for the state team. He also shared that the Laurel Akenhead of the 4-H shooting team was just accepted to the USA Team and will be competing in France.

Chairman Powers indicated that a letter was sent to the school superintendent, Dr. Bergin, requesting that middle school Ag teachers be offered an extended teacher contract. At the time of this meeting, Chairman Powers had not received a reply.

b. Marketing & Production -

Farmers' Markets Updates – Ms. McIntyre said she has 45 vendors per week at the Forest market. She shared that the first weekend in August is designated as National Farmer's Market week. She also mentioned seeing an extensive solar farm that stretched for several miles along Climax Road in Pittsylvania County. There was a brief discussion held about the board is comfortable with their position on not bringing solar to Bedford County at this time.

Mrs. McIntyre also asked about the possibility of participating in a farm tour. Mr. Baker indicated that he would explore some options for this.

Don Gardner mentioned a book entitled, *Power Hungry: The Myths of "Green" Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future* by author Robert Bryce. Mr. Gardner stated that the book contains data on various energy sources and data sources. One takeaway from his read was that solar and wind energy were deemed unreliable and need to be backed up with a secondary energy source.

(10) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS – It was shared that one board member was unable to make the meeting tonight due to a family member being hospitalized. Chairman Powers also noted that Mrs. Willoughby was stepping down from her role as an Ag Board member for District 6. Chairman Powers has already spoken with Supervisor Davis about the vacancy. Chairman Powers asked that the county recognize Mrs. Willoughby in some way for her many years of service on the board.

(11) ADJOURNMENT

8:47 PM