



Meeting Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board

April 4, 2018 – 7:30 p.m.

Present: Jeff Powers, Joy Powers, Pete Fellers, Ken Newman, Don Gardner, Sam Gardner, Matt Baumgardner, Beth Bays

Absent: Chuck Grove, Pam Willoughby, Lindsay Tomlinson, Ronnie Gross

Staff Present: Traci Blido, Scott Baker

Staff Absent: Reid Wodicka

Transcriber: Julia Peters

Guest: John Graham, Jana Fedele - Bedford Farmer's Market

(1) Approval of Agenda

Mr. Powers called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the April 4, 2018 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the April 4, 2018 agenda, as presented.

Adopted Unanimously.

(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes - March 7, 2018

Mr. Powers asked for a review of the March 7, 2018 meeting minutes.

A motion and a second were made to approve the March 7, 2018 meeting minutes as presented.

Adopted unanimously.

(3) County Administration Report

Mr. Wodicka was not available to give a report. Mrs. Blido said that the budget is going well and no taxes will be raised this year.

(4) Economic Development Director's Report

Mrs. Blido reported that the Innovairre ribbon cutting is set for May 10 at 11:00 am and the Governor's office will be participating. The New London Tech Trails in New London Business and Technology Park will have a ribbon cutting on April 26 at 10:00 am. There are 6.4 miles of biking, walking and running trails there. The Parks and Recreation Department will be launching the Taste of the Trails, a four part series on all the trails of the county with the first part at the New London Tech Trails on April 28. There will be a fun run or bike run at 10:00 am and Beale's is involved and will have an open house type event at 1:30 pm. Further information can be seen on the Parks and Recreation website. She spoke with Ben Bowman from the Workforce Development Board and he told her that the medical marijuana bill was passed by the senate recently. Mr. Baumgardner said the state is looking for five people to grow it. Mrs. Blido was not sure how it has to be grown to be considered for medical use, but maybe Mr. Baker would be able to find out.

(5) Cooperative Extension Report

Mr. Baker reported that the 4-H agent position is currently open. It will be advertised for a couple weeks and he anticipates it will be filled by this summer. If anyone knows of someone who is interested, he can provide the computer link or they can look on the Virginia Tech website. He reminded the board members that the Central Virginia Livestock Show is the first weekend in May at Lynchburg Livestock Market. It gets tremendous support from businesses and the community and he encouraged all to come out and support the effort. They are trying to reenergize and reorganize the local Bedford Beef Producers Association. He met with the interim board of directors and they are developing an online survey to get a sense of what beef producers would like to see in terms of activities. Work continues on the development of a career studies certificate program at CVCC. There will be another meeting this month and the survey that will go out to potential employers is almost completed.

(6) Bedford County Farm Bureau Young Farmer's Report

Mr. Sam Gardner reported the State Your Issue event turned out well with identifying issues for the Farm Bureau to highlight. At the county level the issue was maintaining a friendly land use tax and at the state level, it was water use where farms compete with residential usage. On the federal level, the big issue was the electronic logging device they want to put on all cattle trucks which would be a logistical nightmare for the driver and affect animal welfare and bio-security. Mr. Baumgardner noted another concern at the county level was possibly taxing farm equipment and at the state level was continuing support for Cooperative Extension. He also reported the Farm Bureau is taking scholarship applications if anyone knows of a young person graduating. Farm Bureau Women's Committee of Bedford won an award and Amy Johnson of Chamblisburg also won an award and this information should be shared on the Farm Bureau Facebook page.

They are also trying to set up a local meeting regarding the electronic logging issues and have a state trooper speak at the meeting.

(7) Committee Reports

a. Education & Events

Mr. Powers stated that members of all committees will stay the same, but he has appointed co-chairs for the Education & Events committee. The co-chairs for this committee will be Lindsay Tomlinson and Joy Powers. Ms. Powers reported that at the last livestock show meeting, there were 160 animals registered which is up 30 animals from last year with 75 exhibitors. Both FFA chapters have been working on their proficiency and state degree applications which are about 20 pages long. Liberty won the federation dairy cattle judging contest held in Rustburg and Smith Mountain came in second. Liberty also participated in the cattleworking contest in Blackstone last week. April is a very busy time with several contests coming up. Diane Poole came out of retirement to fill an opening for a half year at Staunton River and they have found another person for that position for next year. The Ag Board's input and suggestions were very well received by Dr. Tony Francis and the school administration and we are excited to see additions to the program and the diversity of instruction. The 4-H members are preparing for the livestock show and they still have animals for purchase. There are also other options for supporting the members if anyone is interested in doing so. Practice for livestock judging begins next week. The June contest will be the last one for the seniors. Eight kids will be going to Augusta County to a camp on the weekend after CVLS. Three seniors are going to Oklahoma State in June.

(2) County Fair update

Ms. Powers stated that there is a meeting next week and they are accepting vendor applications now. A preliminary schedule should be available after the next meeting and she will share it with the Ag Board members.

(3) School Ag Programs Update

Ms. Powers said they are working to keep ag programs in the schools, but budget season is tough and they are hoping for good funding. Ms. Powers and Ms. Tomlinson are putting together something for the school administration to show how important the ag programs are.

b. Marketing & Production

(1) Farmer's Market Update

Ms. Fedele said the schedule for the market will remain the same as last year beginning May 1. Tuesdays will be from 3:00 to 6:00 pm, Friday from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm and the first Saturday of the month which will be more of a community market with "Chef at the Market" and local vineyards doing a wine tasting. Entertainment is getting lined up, and a food truck as well. Last year's headcount was 9,161 and a total EBT of 2,124. She received grant money last year from

the Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP) and the Bedford Community Health Foundation to supplement SNAP in the region. They have applied for a state grant this year, but won't know until the middle of May if the grant is awarded. She may be strapped for money to match the SNAP funds this year. She is trying to do an online market. Sixty out of 64 people surveyed want an online market. The fee charged for the online market will be \$5 per market day, or \$15 for four weeks, or \$75 for the full season which will provide some income for the market to stay open. Tuesdays will be a good market day to start this program because of the afternoon times. The online market is currently not able to take SNAP. The online market will be provided by LuLus Local Foods, which is a Virginia-based company. There will be a vendor meeting next Wednesday at 6:00 pm at the Bedford Library if anyone is interested in attending. There are new producers this year providing herbs, beef, and pork and a food truck will be at the market on Fridays. Ms. Fedele is going to the state Farmer Market Manager Certification Class. The Forest indoor market will be held on April 14 from 8:00 am to 12 noon with a Thai cooking demonstration. The Forest outdoor market starts on April 28.

(2) Coyote Lottery Update

Dr. Gardner reported there were seven winners of the lottery prizes and he wrote an article for the Bedford paper. Mr. Powers made a presentation to the Board of Supervisors and there was a lot of appreciation shown the Ag Board for handling the lottery. Dr. Gardner generated a letter to send to all the sponsors thanking them for participating year after year and the Board of Supervisors sent a letter also. The next coyote lottery will start September 1 and run through March 31, 2019.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Mr. Fellers had nothing to report.

(8) Informational Items

Mr. Fellers is having a faster internet service installed by a new company called InfoSky. He will let everyone know how the service compares to Verizon. Discussion followed about internet services.

Mr. Baumgardner stated that a class will be held in Franklin county for dairy farmers regarding how to better sell their milk. If anyone is interested, they can contact the extension office. He also read an article about Tysons Foods where they will in the future begin buying beef only from Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certified individuals.

Mr. Powers said Gregg Zody will be here next month to talk about solar farms. Mr. Powers, Mrs. Blido and several others went to Senator Warner's town hall meeting. He made some good points about Facebook and identity theft. Mr. Powers gave the report to the Board of Supervisors (BOS)

and there will be a recognition of the work of Brandy Ferguson from Springlake Stockyard on Monday, April 9, 2018 at 7:00 pm at the BOS meeting.

The Beef Expo is April 20 and 21.

Update on Bedford County Code for Dogs Killing Livestock Review

Mr. Powers said the Ag Board can give an opinion, but it is not capable of saying who will pay the money or saying how much the county should pay. A meeting will need to be scheduled for county personnel, the Board of Supervisors, Captain Miller from the Sheriff's Office, and the Ag Board to brainstorm how to handle this situation and who and how much should be paid and how to certify that the kill was by a dog and not a coyote. Discussion followed and consensus was this payment causes more problems than it helps farmers.

A motion and a second were made to request the Board of Supervisors amend the county ordinance regarding dogs killing livestock and remove the monetary payment up to \$400 to those owners that suspect a dog killing of livestock.

Adopted unanimously

Mr. Graham spoke about the Veteran Farmer Coalition which helps veterans who want to farm with small loans, education programs, etc. Virginia has its own program now. Virginia State University hired a coordinator to help veterans transition into farming.

Mr. Newman said Royal Oak Farm will begin bagging compost and potting soils under their own label by the end of this year or spring of next year. Mrs. Blido will help with a press release. Mr. Newman's Lynchburg project will be delayed because he cannot get a steel building until November or December and the price of a compactor has increased due to the new steel tariffs.

Ms. Powers said Mr. Gross had reported about a farm death in a prior meeting and there has been an increase in farm deaths and injuries in Virginia. Ms. Powers suggested the Ag Board consider some type of training or presentation regarding workplace safety on the farm.

(9) ADJOURNMENT

9:10 pm