



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board**  
**August 7, 2019 – 7:30 p.m.**  
**Peaks Conference Room at Falling Creek Complex**  
**1257 County Farm Road, Bedford, VA 24523**

**Present:** Matt Baumgardner, Don Gardner, Sam Gardner, Jeff Powers, Joy Powers, Lindsay Tomlinson, Pete Fellers, Ken Newman, Chuck Grove

**Absent:** Beth Bays, Pam Willoughby, Ronnie Gross

**Staff Present:** Scott Baker

**Staff Absent:** Traci Blido

**Transcriber:** Julia Peters

**Guests:** Erika McFaden - Bedford Farmers' Market Manager;  
John Graham - Graham Bass Farm

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**(1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Powers called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the August 7, 2019 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the August 7, 2019 agenda, as presented.  
**Adopted unanimously.**

**(2) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - June 5, 2019 and July 3, 2019**

Chairman Powers asked for a review of the June 5, 2019 and July 3, 2019 meeting minutes.

A motion and a second were made to approve the June 5, 2019 and July 3, 2019 meeting minutes, as presented.

**Adopted unanimously.**

**(3) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Chairman Powers said that Mrs. Blido notified him of a special announcement in Forest on Friday, August 9 at 2:00 pm. The Governor's office will make an official announcement regarding a grant award, and Bettina Ring, Secretary of Agriculture, will be there. Chairman Powers will be attending and he invited any of the Ag Board members to attend as well.

**(4) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT**

Mr. Baker is waiting to get some specs regarding the vegetation management program. He has contacted Matthew Miller, the agent in Wythe County, and will distribute the information when he receives it. The second cattle sale of the year was held on July 19. There were 400 cattle in the barn and one load in the field. Since both January and July sales have had 400 or more cows, we hope to keep the momentum up for the next sale on September 13 and continue on track for a sale in January 2020. The 4-H Camp went very well and the camp staff said our week was one of the best of the camps held.

**(5) BEDFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMER'S REPORT**

Mr. Baumgardner said the billboards to promote farm safety were discussed at the Farm Bureau meeting last night. The annual meeting is October 1 at Thaxton Baptist Church. Ms. Powers said she and Josh Powers attended the Summer Expo in the Winchester area and the event went well. Kaelyn Wright was recognized as one of the 2019 "Millennials on the Move" award and we appreciate Mrs. Blido for nominating her.

**(6) COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a. Education & Events**

**1. Upcoming Events**

Mr. Baker noted that the Sedalia Country Fair is scheduled for September 7. Mr. Graham said that VSU is having an Ag Open House on August 28.

**2. County Fair update**

Ms. Powers reported that the new web page is up and running and has received some positive feedback. The new web address is [bedfordcofair.org](http://bedfordcofair.org). The Midway will be similar to last year or a little bigger. The circus will be back with a new show and is free. The fireworks show on Saturday night will be bigger than last year. They will also have a car show, demo derby, antique farm equipment and the pageant. Further information can be found on the website.

Ms. Tomlinson said there will be a fundraiser called Friends of the Fair which will be a dinner with music for those who support the fair. She hopes it will grow in the future and will promote the fair well. The event is August 30 at Glenwood and posters are displayed throughout the county. It is a ticketed event and there are various stores and locations where tickets can be bought. Any questions can be answered by Ms. Tomlinson.

### **3. School Ag Programs Update**

Ms. Tomlinson said Liberty has its third Ag teacher and Staunton River has two new teachers. There was much success at State Convention with Liberty having a winning vet science team which is a big accomplishment because it is not an easy competition. There were many state degrees and Smith Mountain did extremely well in livestock and horse judging. It was a really great convention. Ms. Powers reported that some students went to FFA Leadership Camp and Josh Powers won a proficiency award for ag sales which was gold-rated at the national level and Andrew Tuck won a proficiency award for beef production that was silver-rated at the national level. Ms. Tomlinson took a group to a Virginia Tech camp and one girl, Britt Atkins, went to the University of Tennessee camp and finished second overall. Many kids have shown animals all summer. Ms. Powers reported that Smith Mountain FFA is hosting a donation/fundraiser Italian dinner on August 17 at the Chamblissburg Ruritan Club and Ms. Powers has further information if anyone is interested. Ms. Tomlinson noted that under the guidance of Bev from Eco-Friendly, three students are learning to raise chicken broilers as a Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE). She is impressed with how the community comes out to help the students. Ms. Powers went to Scotland and Ireland with Ethan Jackson who participated with the Virginia 4-H in the International Livestock Judging Competition where they placed second in both competitions. They also had many farm tours.

#### **b. Marketing & Production**

##### **1. Farmers' Market Update**

Chairman Powers introduced Erika McFaden as one of the new Bedford Farmer's Market managers. Mrs. McFaden reported how Friday, August 2 was a great day and she was happy to see many vendors that were at the market at the pavilion come back and sell at the traditional farmers' market and that there were over 300 people visiting the market that day with 13 vendors. She apologized for the confusion over where the market would be located and answered the Ag Board members' questions. She noted that the market is still located at the pavilion in Centertown and that Tamara Witt who managed the market previously has moved on and has a splinter market under her own LLC, Bedford Farmer Managed Market, that will use part of Tractor Supply's parking lot. Mr. and Mrs. McFaden were asked to step in as managers of the traditional market at the pavilion and they were happy to do so. Ms. Witt's market is her own venture separate from the original Farmer's Market. The food trucks will continue to park and serve the community at the pavilion site on Fridays.

Ms. McIntyre and Ms. Witt emailed summary reports of their Farmers' Markets to the Ag Board members.

## **2. Coyote Lottery Update**

Dr. Gardner was hoping to get \$1,000 in funds from the Farm Bureau which is used to provide rewards for the lottery. Mr. Baumgardner said that it is allocated in their budget and he would be happy to make the request at their next meeting.

### **c. Land Protection & Conservation**

Nothing new to report.

## **(7) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

Dr. Gardner addressed an issue that was brought up during the September 2018 Ag Board meeting regarding the difficulty in getting a local large animal veterinarian to come to farms. He distributed a handout and spoke about the State Veterinarian's process to acquire a food animal vet to practice in an underserved locality such as Bedford. The locality must have a group of producers who are supported and apply for the underserved designation to the State Veterinarian who will submit the application to a review board or committee. If the designation is approved, a newly graduated vet or any other vet who is willing to set up practice in the underserved area and commit around 50% of their practice to food animals for at least three years; will receive a \$25,000 stipend each year for the first three years to defray the educational costs/loans the vet had incurred as a student. The average graduating vet is indebted to about \$150,000 which drives many vets to practice in larger cities and specialize in small animal care where they can make the most money. Once the underserved area receives the designation, it must still be able to recruit a vet to come to that area and the locality must provide enough business for the vet to make a living. Ms. Blido noted that the Tobacco Commission just started paying off student loans for those individuals entering high-demand professions and thinks large animal veterinarians are included. She will check on the specific professions and report back to the Ag Board. Because the beef cattle industry is the area most underserved, Dr. Gardner suggested that the Bedford Beef Producers Association take this project as their own and begin the necessary work to move the process along. Mr. Baker said he would bring it up at the next cattle association meeting and also speak to the Campbell County Agent, Todd Scott, because we would be more successful if a couple of counties can work together to make the case.

Ms. Powers noted that Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary Medicine in Lee County is the newest vet school in the country, giving Virginia students another alternative. Discussion followed.

Mr. Baumgardner reported that the Bedford educational farm tour group went on its annual farm tour this past month to southwestern Virginia and eastern Tennessee and visited about 17 farms.

They have been doing this for the past 57 years and thirty people went this year. It was a very successful event.

Ms. Powers said she was contacted by the Turkish ag group that was in the area in July. They wanted her to be a speaker but she was unable to participate due to other trip plans.

Dr. Gardner spoke about a podcast he heard regarding the difference in the expense of fish protein for fish and plant-based feed and the genetic modification of canola that could provide the same needed properties of fish protein. Discussion followed and he thought it was a good example of how science can improve the efficiency of food production for the world.

**(8) ADJOURNMENT**

8:40 p.m.