



Meeting Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board

December 7, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.

Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board:

:Present:

Pete Fellers, Don Gardner, Ronnie Gross, Ken Newman, Lindsay Tomlinson, Chuck Grove, Matt Baumgardner, Pam Willoughby, Ken Palmer

:Absent: Jeffrey Powers, Keith Tuck, W.P. Johnson

Staff Present: Jessica Hupp, Scott Baker

Staff Absent: Traci Blido, Reid Wodicka

:Guests: None

(1) Approval of Agenda

Dr. Gardner called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the December 7, 2016 agenda.

A motion and a second were made to approve the December 7, 2016 agenda, as presented.

Adopted Unanimously.

(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 2, 2016

Mr. Powers asked for a review of the November 2, 2016 meeting minutes.

Mr. Baumgardner stated he was accidentally listed as absent at the last two meetings in a row, and he was in attendance. Mr. Baumgardner also stated that Lindsey had reported Stewart Byrd, who used to be a member of the Ag Board, was recognized at the national convention as Honorary American Farmer.

A motion and a second were made to approve the November 2, 2016 meeting minutes, as amended.

Adopted unanimously.

(3) County Administration Report

Ms. Hupp stated she wasn't given a report from the administration office.

(4) Economic Development Director's Report

Ms. Hupp reported two businesses this month celebrated milestones, including Valtim which celebrated its 30th anniversary in Bedford County and Nanotouch which was awarded at the ISSA conference at Chicago for its cleaning agents.

Ms. Hupp reported that the Town of Bedford saw two new businesses open this month, including Blue Ridge Overland Gear and Art & Soul. Both businesses are located within the Main Street corridor.

Ms. Hupp stated that staff looked at what machinery and tools tax was collected this year versus last year to compare how businesses have grown. In 2016, we collected 20% more, or \$600,000 more than in 2015, which means companies are expanding and adding new equipment and jobs.

Ms. Hupp received an invitation for the Agribusiness Banquet going on January 12, 2017 in Richmond at the Old Dominion building. She will send the information to Jeff if he is feeling better then and would like to attend.

Ms. Hupp reported that staff is beginning to work on ag brochures and Bedford Grown directories, as well as their own departmental marketing materials.

(5) Cooperative Extension Report

Mr. Baker reported they held the forage tour at Keith's farm and had a very nice turnout including producers from four different counties. The forage tour discussed the use of stockpile fescue to reduce production costs. Mr. Baker stated the American Forage and Grassland Council annual meeting will be in Roanoke this January. The national meetings are not usually close to here, so this may be our best opportunity to attend. Virginia has negotiated a reduced fee or \$125 for attending the producer day of that event..

Mr. Baker stated the current Forage Extension Agent for Blacksburg is leaving in February, as he got hired by Kentucky's extension program. Mr. Baker expects it may take a while to fill the position due to budget shortfalls.

Mr. Baker stated that extension for the state will meet budget restraints by offering early retirement, and many positions will likely get backfilled.

Mr. Baker reported that the organic egg company that was going to do more producer meetings this month changed its mind, and instead is going to focus on its existing growers and contracts.

(6) FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS REPORT

Mr. Baumgardner stated they are doing a trip to Pittsylvania farm show in January.

(7) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Education & Events

(1) Upcoming Events

Mr. Palmer stated Saturday is the Sedalia Country Christmas Fair, and Mountain Run Farm's festival. The fair meeting was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts.

b. Marketing & Production

(1) Farmers Markets

Mr. Gross reported this Saturday is the winter indoor market at the Forest Rec Center from 8 a.m. to noon. The indoor market takes place twice a month this winter. Mr. Baker reported that next Monday will be the Bedford Farmers Market planning committee meeting to talk about next season.

Mr. Gross asked Mr. Baker if Paul Stern was going to be heading up the market again this year, as he thought Paul did a really great job. If not, the committee really needs to find someone on par with him to take over.

(2) Coyote Lottery

Dr. Gardner reported that as of today, only 23 coyotes have been checked in, so the odds of winning this season are pretty good. Dr. Gardner would like everyone's help in spreading the word, and asked Jessica if she can get copies to all the sponsor locations.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

1. Farm Transition Workshop update

Mr. Fellers stated the workshop went very well, with about 25 people in attendance. He spoke with a man that attended Campbell County's workshop and he said it was also received well there. Mr. Feller's stated the Vinton Women's Club provided the food for the events, which they appreciated. Mr. Baker reported he did evaluations on the meeting and received very positive feedback, especially on the local attorney that spoke to the group. She is located in Roanoke and at the Lake, and opened a new office in Botetourt County recently. Mr. Baker stated the attorney left information for anyone interested.

(8) Other Business

A. County livestock ordinances in residential zones

Dr. Gardner asked what the status was of the livestock ordinance. Mr. Baker said the board voted last month to accept the amended version, which included a question regarding setbacks. The setback will be 50 feet, which is the same as private stables. Mr. Baker passed around a final draft of the ordinance. Mr. Baker stated they added providing proper animal care to the

ordinance, which is spelled out in the Code of Virginia, and was suggested by Jonathan to be referenced. Both changes can be seen at the bottom of the page.

The board agreed it looked good to them, and Mr. Palmer made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Grove, to approve the ordinance as written. It was approved unanimously.

Dr. Gardner asked what the timeline might be for the ordinance to be passed. Mr. Baker stated that he thinks they are reviewed as they're presented, so Josiah will likely bring it to them soon.

(9) Informational Items

Mr. Baker stated he created a brochure Dr. Gardner had asked to be created that would explain how the Central Virginia Livestock Show works, and how they can help students in raising animals for the show. It's a couple pages long, but explains how the buying process works, including what it is, what the participants learn, and how to financially support their efforts. Dr. Gardner asked if there was a form included to be filled out by people looking to donate. Mr. Baker said he would have to look into different ways to create forms since there are several different options to choose from in order to support the students. Mr. Baker stated he gave some to a few parents to look at and asked them to read it as someone who doesn't understand the process, which can get complicated. Mr. Baker said he will come up with a form to add.

Mr. Palmer suggested Scott separate each option and give them titles. Lindsay said this is great when you're managing several different kids, trying to introduce it to some and grow others in the program. The board will look at it again next month and offer suggestions.

Mr. Gross asked if anyone had ever videotaped the auction. He believes that would be a great marketing piece to add to the website so people can see how it works. Mr. Baker stated it would be interesting to see the process from beginning to end.

Dr. Gardner asked if there'd been a push or discussion to create an updated strategic plan for the Ag Board. Mr. Baker stated the February meeting has been earmarked to have further discussions about that. The County administration thought it would be helpful to the board and its new staff members.

Dr. Gardner asked about the middle school ag program progress. Lindsay stated they've spent some time walking that property to get an idea of what they might do with it. She and the other ag teacher have proposed Bedford Middle to have ag classes taught next year, just to get things going so it is considered once they begin construction on the building. Lindsay stated she had several community members reach out with different ideas, and has had students attending school board meetings to gently remind the board of its importance. From an ag instructor standpoint, she believes they're doing as much as they can at this point. Lindsay stated if the ag board members would like to help, they're welcome to go talk to school board members as well. She is hoping they consider having an ag facility for both the high school and middle school,

which could include greenhouses, a barn, and so on.

Lindsay stated fruit sales are going on right now. The orders have been smaller this year than normal in the amount people are purchasing, but sales have been steady. Lindsay stated that SML and Liberty FFA prices are nowhere near what other FFA's are asking for.

(10) Adjournment

-7:48 p.m.