



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board**

**February 6, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Bedford County Administration Building – Second Floor Training Room**

**Present:** Matt Baumgardner, Pete Fellers, Don Gardner, Sam Gardner, Ronnie Gross, Ken Newman, Jeff Powers, Lindsay Tomlinson, Pam Willoughby

**Absent:** Beth Bays, Chuck Grove, Joy Powers

**Staff Present:** Scott Baker, Traci Blido

**Staff Absent:** None

**Transcriber:** Julia Peters

**Guests:** Dorothy McIntyre - Forest Farmer's Market; 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 February 6, 2019 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the February 6, 2019 agenda, as presented.  
**Adopted Unanimously.**

**(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes - January 2, 2019**

Chairman Powers asked for a review of the January 2, 2019 meeting minutes.

A motion and a second were made to approve the January 2, 2019 meeting minutes as presented.  
**Adopted unanimously.**

**(3) Economic Development Director's Report**

Mrs. Blido reported that the EDA has a new member. She is Kristy Milton under District 5 - Board of Supervisors member Tommy Scott's district. Mickey Johnson was reappointed for another term on the EDA. Mrs. Blido has been working on five grants with the Tobacco

Commission and assisting with a sixth one for broadband. The county's companies are expanding and she manages several Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund grants for those companies, as well as grants to help develop land and a shell building in the New London Business and Technology Center. She said the county has put in for a pre-grant for the broadband project. Comcast is building out the broadband around the Smith Mountain Lake area close to the water and the Broadband Authority had their meeting tonight related to the rest of the county buildout. If they voted on the contract, Blue Ridge Towers will begin putting up the nine towers. The county will own the towers and Blue Ridge Towers will manage the towers and market the service. The towers will be constructed in the underserved areas of the county as soon as is feasibly possible. The IT Director is working closely with the county attorney who is handling this project. Mrs. Blido said the construction of the towers will be done in waves and guesses that Huddleston and Big Island are the initial spots, but she is not sure where the actual priority will be for the first phase. She passed around the *Virginia Agriculture* magazine and Bedford County has advertised in it for three years and this year we were the only locality featured in it. She noticed the magazines are placed where the delegates and their assistants sit at the General Assembly and she is proud that our ads are in it. She shared laminated bookmarks of the ads with the Ag Board members. She hopes that the new County Administrator, Robert Hiss, will be able to attend next month's Ag Board meeting once he begins his job.

#### **(4) Cooperative Extension Report**

Mr. Baker said there will be two Tobacco Commission agriculture grants. One is the final round of the Information Technology Grant mostly based on recordkeeping; and the second grant is Phase 2 of the Pasture Crop and Livestock Systems Grant for hay barns, grain bins, cattle handling equipment, portable produce cooling equipment, and wells. He will send out information to the Ag Board members. The last weaned and vaccinated feeder calf sale was held on January 25 and 400 calves were in the barn and one load of field cattle was sold, totalling 460 head sold. Each calf netted on average \$90 after costs were deducted. The next sale will be mid to late July. The Bedford Beef Producers had a meeting regarding pasture and weed control which was one of their best attended meetings. Mr. Baumgardner suggested having the beef producers next meeting in April or May where Mr. Baker could speak about the grants available and reach a far greater number of people. Mr. Baker made a note to discuss this when planning for future meetings with the producers.

#### **(5) Bedford County Farm Bureau Young Farmer's Report**

Sam Gardner said the Young Farmers are in the planning phase for this year and hope to plan a trip to the Martinsville area and are also working on fundraising ideas to fund the trips. Mr. Baumgardner reported the Young Farmer Expo will take place later this month on February 22 through the 24th in Smithfield, VA. At the national Farm Bureau event in New Orleans, six states received awards of high honor and Virginia was one of the six, receiving two or three awards.

## **(6) Committee Reports**

### **a. Education & Events**

#### **1. Upcoming Events**

Ms. Tomlinson announced the FFA will be kicking off FFA Week next Saturday at Southern States. They will be selling build-a-biscuits, baked goods, and hot dogs. All the proceeds will be going to Appomattox High School for their barn that burned down. That same week they will also be smoking a pork butt and selling take home meals to raise funds for Appomattox. A day at the Agape Center has been booked as well because the kids enjoy doing community service. They have some Federation contests that week and will be at William Campbell for them. On Friday, February 22, the Drive Your Tractor to School event has been planned. It is a lot of fun and reminds the community of the agricultural presence in the county. Livestock and horse judging competitions are coming up. The rally is in April and some good trips are planned. Liberty University has a growing zoology program and may be an option for some kids interested in animal science. In the Spring they will hold a workshop about the AKC Farm Dog Certification Program which might be of interest to a breeder or farm dog owner. Central Virginia Livestock Show (CVLS) is gearing up and most students are doing lambs since we can now raise sheep on campus. The Liberty Alumni will hold a shamrock pancake breakfast at Main St. Methodist Church the weekend of St. Patrick's Day and are sponsoring a show clinic at Glenwood Pavilion on April 6 and a Corn Hole Tournament at April 27 at Falling Creek Park. Chairman Powers noted Staunton River is competing at William Campbell also and the 4-H and FFA groups will participate in the Block and Bridle judging contest the first weekend in March.

#### **2. County Fair update**

A pancake breakfast is being held at Bedford Baptist Church this Saturday from 7-10 a.m. to raise funds for the pageant scholarships at the county fair.

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

Ms. Tomlinson reported the sixth grade program in Ag is moving forward.

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

#### **1. Farmer's Market Update**

Ms. McIntyre of the Forest Farmer's Market reported she was on WFXR this morning to promote the market. A Winter Indoor Market will be held this Saturday, February 9 at the Forest Parks & Rec building. The Bedford Market SNAP is closed out, but there are still some tokens for SNAP out there and the Lynchburg City Market and the Forest Farmer's Market will be accepting SNAP until the end of April when they will be closed out as well. Ms. McIntyre is seeing a lot of vendor interest right now in the indoor markets. An Eagle Scout did a project of

putting in iron picnic tables at her site and an anonymous customer funded this project. She is expecting a strong season again this year.

Mr. Gross said the Bedford Market has formed an LLC with the help of an attorney. The applications have been sent out and four have been received back. The Market is a member of both the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce and Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce. They are looking into carrying some type of food product liability insurance to protect the vendors. There will be a ribbon cutting on May 3 and the Bedford Market will be open on Tuesdays, Fridays, and the first Saturday of the month.

## **2. Coyote Lottery Update**

Dr. Gardner said the public awareness information has paid off because there are now 98 coyote checked in.

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

Mr. Fellers reported that this is the first year he can remember that the General Assembly have not made any cuts to land preservation.

### **(7) Informational Items**

Chairman Powers said the Appomattox High School's barn burnt down and they can use any donations of materials or money. More information can be obtained from the school's FFA Facebook page. Chairman Powers has also done some groundwork on what was discussed last month regarding the doe only hunting season and will continue to work on it.

Mrs. Blido reported that there is still money in the budget to cover expenses for some of the Ag Board members to attend the Governor's Ag Trade Conference on Tuesday, March 5, at the Richmond Marriott. Last year, Ms. Powers attended and brought a student who now is the President of the state FFA. Any member who is interested may can contact Mrs. Blido.

Mr. Baker reported that Virginians are learning about the process and legalities of growing hemp. He said you must be registered and in some kind of partnership with Virginia Tech or Virginia State University in order to grow it. He met with the owners of Peaks of Otter Hemp Company and they will be growing it experimentally and he invited them to come and speak to the Ag Board members sometime in the future. Discussion followed.

### **(8) ADJOURNMENT**

8:00 p.m.