



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

**July 11, 2018 – 7:30 p.m.**

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

**Absent:** Chuck Grove, Ronnie Gross, Lindsay Tomlinson

**Staff Present:** Traci Blido

**Staff Absent:** Scott Baker

**Transcriber:** Julia Peters

**Guests:** John Graham, Graham Bass Farm; Brandon Strosnider, Ag Teacher, Staunton River High School

---

**(1) Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Powers called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the July 11, 2018 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the July 11, 2018 agenda, as presented.

**Adopted Unanimously.**

**(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes - June 6, 2018**

Mr. Powers asked for a review of the June 6, 2018 meeting minutes.

A motion and a second were made to approve the June 6, 2018 meeting minutes as presented.

**Adopted unanimously.**

**(3) County Administration Report**

Mrs. Blido had nothing to report.

#### **(4) Economic Development Director's Report**

Mrs. Blido reported that the Governor will announce that Smyth is adding \$6.5 million in new presses. This addition will add to the county tax base and 28 employees will retain their jobs and get new training. When the Virginia Jobs Investment Program is utilized, the Governor announces the good news so it gets extra attention for the company. There is interest in all three of the county's business parks and it is an exciting time with a lot of movement and interest in Bedford County.

#### **(5) Cooperative Extension Report**

Mr. Baker was unable to attend the meeting, but provided the Ag Board members with a written report and included a page about the Beef Cattle Grading Workshop on July 24 at the Springlake Stockyard. The feeder calf sale will be held on July 27 at the Springlake Stockyard also. Any producers that are interested in the sale can contact Mr. Baker. Maribeth Martin has been hired as the new 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent. She has sent out an email introducing herself and looks forward to working with the community youth.

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

Mr. Sam Gardner said some of the young farmers are going to Tangier Island to meet with Chesapeake Bay Foundation members and discuss what farmers can do to protect the Bay. A legislative tour is scheduled for August 11. They will tour the Ackenhead's lamb and sheep operation, the Martin's farm, and Johnson's Orchard. Ms. Bays said at least six or seven legislators are coming and discussion will focus on tethering and water usage issues.

#### **(7) Committee Reports**

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

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

Ms. Powers reported that in June, Staunton River and Liberty students went to the state FFA convention in Blacksburg and it was their best year's performance. Smith Mountain members placed first in the junior livestock judging team with all members in the top ten individually. They also placed first in the junior horse team and second in horse judging. They will now attend and compete in Massachusetts at the "Big E" fair. Ms. Tomlinson's vet science team won second in the state which is a very difficult contest and they also will be competing in Massachusetts. Ethan Jackson has been elected as the FFA state president and is the first person from Bedford County to serve as president. He will represent 9,000 FFA members and 32,000 ag ed students in Virginia. Students in 4-H participated in livestock judging and the seniors all placed in every division. Ms. Powers also noted that two Bedford students, Kaylee Green and Josh Powers will be going to the leadership conference in Washington, D.C. this month.

Mr. Powers stated the Horse and Hound event will be held this Saturday at Johnson's Orchard and Gross's Orchard Peach Festival is set for July 28.

## **2. County Fair update**

Ms. Powers reported that plans are moving forward for the county fair. They are working to make the entertainment affordable. A large corporate advertising package has been acquired. The fair will be held on the last weekend in September.

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

Ms. Powers introduced Brandon Strosnider who is the new ag teacher and FFA advisor at Staunton River High School. A teacher has been located for the Staunton River Middle School position as well. Cymber Stanley will be teaching at Liberty Middle School. She is a former student of Ms. Tomlinson's at Liberty High School and is excited to be teaching at the middle school. The Virginia Ag Teacher's Conference is next week and Mr. Strosnider, Ms. Tomlinson, and Ms. Stanley will attend although they are not paid for their time worked during the summer. Currently, there are no ag teachers on a 12 month contract with the school system so the goal is to have at least one 12 month teacher per high school. Dr. Francis is continuing to work on ag programs in the schools including a new program for Forest Middle School.

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

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

Mr. Graham reported that the Bedford online market has good participation so far. Mrs. Blido said the Saturday event at the Bedford market was well attended and the Forest market is doing well.

#### **2. Coyote Lottery Update**

Dr. Gardner is looking for new sponsors. Interested parties can contact him for further information.

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

Mr. Fellers stated that the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy in Roanoke announced today that they have 60 conservation easements.

## **(8) Informational Items**

Mr. Baumgardner noted that on Friday there will be a Dairy Expo at Homestead Creamery in Franklin County.

Mr. Powers received an email from Claytor Nature Center. Mr. Baker is going to visit the center and report back to the Ag Board if they can assist.

Mr. Powers reported the killing livestock ordinance was approved unanimously by the Board of Supervisors (BOS). The BOS are also asking for input regarding farm use tags and the abuse thereof. They are working with a group in Richmond to clean up the laws and stop the abuse. Mr. Powers suggested to Bill Thomasson that he contact the local farm bureau to get opinions of local farmers as well.

Mrs. Blido will email Gregg Zody regarding the solar farm ordinance. Mr. Zody was going to provide a copy of the ordinance to the Ag Board members.

**(9) ADJOURNMENT**

8:20 pm