



Meeting Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board

July 5, 2017 – 7:30 p.m.

Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board:

:Present:

Jeffrey Powers, Don Gardner, Chuck Grove, Pete Fellers, Ken Newman, Sam Gardner, Pam Willoughby, Lindsay Tomlinson, Matt Baumgardner, Ronnie Gross, Joy Powers

:Absent: Beth Bays

Staff Present: Scott Baker, Jessica Hupp, Reid Wodicka

Staff Absent: Traci Blido

:Guests: none

(1) Approval of Agenda

Mr. Powers called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the July 5, 2017 agenda.

A motion and a second were made to approve the July 5, 2017 agenda, as amended.

Adopted Unanimously.

(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 7, 2017

Mr. Powers asked for a review of the June 7, 2017 meeting minutes. A motion and a second were made to approve the meeting minutes, as presented.

Adopted unanimously.

(3) County Administration Report

Mr. Wodicka noted there was to be a choice on an engineer to help us design a broadband internet network for the county, but there was a setback. The Board of Supervisors wanted us to go back and consider alternative project strategies which is what we are doing. We are also losing Jessica Hupp which is a huge loss for this organization and we will miss having her.

(4) Economic Development Director's Report

Ms. Hupp thanked everyone for attending the business appreciation event at Beales. They officially opened on June 23rd. The event was attended by 133 people with 30 local businesses represented, 22 employees were hired so far and a \$2.5 million investment for redevelopment. Sampson Bladen Oil company received a special use permit to locate in the Montvale Center for Commerce. They will be building on a graded lot on the end of the cul de sac which is exciting to see. The project has been well received by other business owners in the park.

Bedford County announced that Mid-Atlantic Broadband and Adaptrum will partner to create a Southern Virginia Innovation Center for TV white space R&D deployment. They will be located in Bedford County and will address broadband issues.

Bedford One has begun planning for fall tours and our first will be at Gardner Heifers and Royal Oak Farm. The committee wants to organize tours in advance so they can inform teachers, administrators, and parents that their kids can go on these tours and pique their interest in future careers. Mrs. Blido is giving a presentation on July 26 at the School Administration Conference promoting different industry sectors where we need careers.

A question was asked regarding how this broadband compares to what was talked about earlier. Mr. Wodicka said the white space technology is not ready for mass distribution. Ms. Hupp said there is a pilot project in Halifax County and they will see how this pilot works and how to deploy it in other places.

In response to a question, Mr. Wodicka stated that the BOS are committed to broadband, but did not pass the broadband consultant deal. They did not agree with the strategy we performed so we will need to come up with another strategy. If anyone has an opportunity to speak with their board member, please do so and let them know how much we need broadband.

An e-mail was received from John Graham. His daughter was involved in a bad car accident and he had hoped to be here, but she is still in the hospital. Thoughts and prayers are appreciated.

(5) Cooperative Extension Report

Mr. Baker reported they are continuing to work on the cooperative marketing cattle sale for July 28. The next step is to field grade the cattle so they can be advertised ahead of the sale. It is not too late for anyone who has weaned calves that were weaned on or about June 1, unless they have not done any vaccinating so help us spread the word.

The traditional Tobacco Commission grant has maxed out, but does have a waiting list. The Ag technology grant has opened up round two and Mr. Baker has applications tonight if anyone needs one. There was a good response from the community on both grants.

He received notification from the Halifax County Agricultural Development about a meeting with Harris Teeter grocery stores regarding local producers and sourcing local product. The meeting is scheduled for tomorrow night at the Halifax Ag Marketing Center. Connecting with grocery stores is the next step moving beyond farmers markets and we want to be open to these opportunities.

Camp was good two weeks ago. The weather was wonderful and had relatively few discipline problems.

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

The summer cookout is this coming weekend. A tour is also coming up for the first week of August. We will be going to Southwest Virginia to see dairy farms, spring houses, beef farms and tobacco farms. The Summer Expo is scheduled for July 28-30 in Roanoke.

(7) Committee Reports

a. Education & Events

(1) Upcoming Events

Ms. Tomlinson reported that through the 21st century grant offered through Liberty High School and Staunton River Middle School, students attended an Ag camp. The emphasis was on environmental resources. Tracy Cupperson was sick and could not attend, but John Graham's intern met them at Claytor Nature Center and did a stream study with the kids. They also spent some time with Mr. Creedy, a former forester. At the state convention, both Smith Mountain and Liberty did awesome. The Smith Mountain junior horse judging team placed 1st and the senior team took 4th. Liberty brought in an ag mechanics team. A livestock judging camp is coming up and we are sending some Bedford kids. In regards to state degrees, we have three from Smith Mountain and one from Liberty. We have a handful of American degree candidates going to the national convention in Indianapolis in October. We continue to work on the Ag Expo for the County Fair.

Ms. Powers reported that at the state convention, our teams worked very hard and did very well. Our junior team finished 3rd in the 4-H livestock judging contest. Our senior team finished 2nd in the state and now will compete in either the National Western in Denver or the American Royal in Kansas City. We had four seniors try out for the state all-star teams, as well as 4-H livestock judging contest.

(2) County Fair update

Ms. Powers reported that they continued to finalize everything for the County Fair. The competition book was published yesterday and is officially on the website. She will get an e-mail out soon. Racing Pace got the dates wrong and will not be coming, but we are talking with other companies. We are moving forward with the fair and continue to accept sponsors and vendors.

(3) Middle School Ag Program Update

Ms. Tomlinson stated there will be two classes each at Staunton River and Liberty middle schools. She also met with the principal at Bedford Middle and they have textbooks ordered. The plan is to put in a request for a 6th and 7th grade class in October. Once offered, then we can ask the school board and the BOS regarding a full-time teacher. Trisha Flora was hired at Smith Mountain to replace Diane Poole who retired. Ms. Tomlinson has a retirement card for Diane Poole if anyone wants to sign. She did a lot for the county and was well loved.

(4)Other

Tomorrow in Franklin County there is a farm transition workshop and all are invited to attend. Also, in Halifax County on the 22nd, there will be a goat workshop.

b. Marketing & Production

(1) Farmers Markets

Mr. Baker said there was nothing new to report. The Bedford and Forest markets are both doing well. This year they have double the SNAP money so please promote people to go to the market so it doesn't go to waste.

(2) Coyote Lottery

Dr. Gardner said there's not much going on. Hot weather and hunting do not go together so he does not know how year round hunting will do.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Pete Fellers has nothing to report.

(8) Informational Items

a. Livestock Ordinance

The latest draft was passed out. Mr. Baker stated the process started late fall or early this year and there were several drafts. A lot would have to be two acres of open land to trigger the ability to have livestock. Stocking density would be one animal unit per two acres. Mr. Baker reviewed other details with the members noting potential issues with adjacent landowners such as noise and odors were addressed. The last clause is an umbrella statement from Animal Control noting that animals must be provided with adequate care according to the State of Virginia. This is a county wide ordinance for residential areas and the town has its own ordinance. Discussion followed regarding how this will affect moving livestock within the same farm when passing through small tracts that are zoned residential.

Mr. Wodicka stated that it sounds like legal non-conforming use that could be grandfathered in. He felt this is a fair point and they should be able to come up with a clause that will take care of the situation.

Various questions were answered regarding the ordinance and it was noted to vote on adopting the ordinance with the addition of the clause discussed. Then it can be presented to the Planning Commission.

A motion and a second were made to approve the ordinance as written, but with the addition of the clause as discussed.

Adopted unanimously.

b. Other Items

The Horse and Hound Wine Festival is this weekend and if anyone needs a ticket, let them know. Joy is headed to Africa for Restore the Harvest and will be gone for two weeks to Malawi.

(9) Adjournment

-8:27 p.m.