



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board**  
**March 6, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Agriculture Classroom at Staunton River High School**  
**1095 Golden Eagle Drive, Moneta, VA 24121**

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

**Absent:** Beth Bays, Ronnie Gross

**Staff Present:** Pam Bailey, Scott Baker, Traci Blido, Robert Hiss

**Staff Absent:** None

**Transcriber:** Julia Peters

**Guests:** Charla Bansley - Board of Supervisors District 3; Dr. Cornett - SRHS Principal; Andy Dooley - Board of Supervisors District 6; Dr. Tony Francis - BCPS Director of Secondary Programs and CTE; John Graham - Graham Bass Farm; Brittany Lawyer - SRMS Ag Teacher; Heather McAndrew - SRHS Ag Teacher; Ken Palmer, former Ag Board member; Rebecca Pierce - SRHS Assistant Principal; Josh Powers - FFA Student; Brandon Strosnider - SRHS Ag Teacher; Andrew Tuck - FFA Student; Justin Tucker - SRMS Principal

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**(1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Powers called the meeting to order and thanked the Staunton River High School and Staunton River Middle School staff for hosting the Ag Board's meeting. He asked for a review of the March 6, 2019 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the March 6, 2019 agenda, as presented.

**Adopted Unanimously.**

**(2) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - February 6, 2019**

Chairman Powers asked for a review of the February 6, 2019 meeting minutes.



**Joy Powers**  
**Lindsay Thomlinson**

**Yes**  
**Yes**

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On the motion of Mr. Baumgardner, which carried by a vote of 12-0, the following was adopted:

## **A RESOLUTION**

### **Ag Board support for TRRC grant application for broadband buildout**

**WHEREAS**, On March 6, 2019, the Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board (Ag Board) of the County of Bedford met at its regular board meeting and discussed the opportunity for Bedford County to submit a Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (TRRC) Broadband grant due March 21, 2019 to assist in building out high speed Internet access to underserved or unserved areas of the county.

**WHEREAS**, Bedford County Ag Board supports the Broadband Authority's signed agreement with Roanoke-based Blue Ridge Towers (BRT) for an estimated \$3 million project to fulfill that mission; and recognizes that the county is in need of further funds to carry out that agreement.

**WHEREAS**, the Ag Board supports the County request for a grant from the TRRC and/or the DHCD to complete the buildout of the planned towers and project requirements to fulfill said mission.

**WHEREAS**, the Ag Board recognizes that this TRRC application supports the county's agriculture and forestry community through a strong rural broadband program.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Ag Board of the County of Bedford that we do hereby support the application to the Tobacco Commission for County-wide Broadband Buildout.

### **(5) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT**

Mr. Baker said there will be a USDA outreach meeting on March 26. The topic is "Direct Market Success Spotlighting Women in Ag in Bedford County" and he encouraged anyone to attend. They are closer to releasing the 2nd phase of the Producer Support Grant through the Tobacco Commission for hay barns, grain bins, cattle handling equipment, and cold storage. They are meeting with the grant team the middle of next month and will probably have public information meetings in May with applications being accepted in June. The Virginia Agritourism Conference will be held this year in Roanoke on April 3rd and 4th. The conference will have theme-based tours on April 3rd and he will be facilitating a tour to Bedford's Layman Farm and

Johnson's Orchard. The ag statistics of the county have been compiled from the Ag Census of 2012. He will compile the 2017 stats when they become available.

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

Mr. Sam Gardner reported that the legislative update meeting is coming up on March 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office. The Virginia Farm Bureau Federation will have government relations staff there to update everyone on the latest legislation regarding agriculture and answer questions. It is the most important meeting if anyone has concerns or issues to be addressed by the Farm Bureau for policy development in next year's General Assembly.

## **(7) COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

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

Ms. Tomlinson said the FFA was able to raise \$900 for the Appomattox barn. Smith Mt/Staunton River and Liberty went to a federation competition and brought home awards in public speaking and small engine and tractor troubleshooting. Mrs. Blido will put this information on the ag news webpage. This time of year is very busy and students are finalizing state degrees and chapter applications. The Farm bureau has their scholarship out and is accepting applications if anyone knows of a child of a Farm Bureau member, or a student who is planning to pursue a career in ag, or receive a college education in ag. The Farm Bureau Women's Committee is gearing up for Ag Literacy Week. Members of the FFA Chapter, Farm Bureau agents and Bedford County pageant queens will be going to the schools and reading a great book about ag to the students. The Governor's Ag Trade Conference was enjoyed by those that attended.

Ms. Powers noted that students went to the Youth Swine Day at Virginia Tech. Some of the kids were able to be certified in animal care and there was a swine workshop and competition and our 4-H kids won the contest. The Block and Bridle Livestock weekend was also held at Virginia Tech where students participated in the stockman's contest which is good practice for the state competitions and gives students a good grasp of what is involved in the livestock industry. All of our teams did very well at the competition and placed in the top five teams in the state. Students in 4-H will be going to a judging contest in April at Potomac State in West Virginia where they are offering scholarship money and in May, the students are going to a judging camp in Augusta County. The state judging contest is held in June for both the FFA and 4-H kids. The Ruritan Club is sponsoring a buffet breakfast on March 23 where a portion of the proceeds will be going to the livestock judging program and 4-H program.

FFA students Josh Powers and Andrew Tuck reported on the Governor's Conference on Ag Trade they attended in Richmond. There were 11 key speakers and over 15 countries were represented there. They were able to go to the Governor's Mansion and speak with the Governor.

They talked about FFA, broadband, Malawi, and their future plans for college. The students found the conference very interesting and a lot of fun and really enjoyed speaking with the Governor. Ms. Powers thanked the EDA for making it possible for the students to go to the conference.

## **2. County Fair update**

Ms. Powers said the 2019 County Fair is scheduled for September 26-29 and they are planning their education tours for Friday the 27th. The midway will be a combined midway with two providers and they are booking other entertainment. Contact Ms. Powers if anyone has suggestions or questions.

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

Mr. Strosnider thanked the Ag Board members for visiting his school and introduced the school staff in attendance. Ms. McAndrew spoke about how the kids truly make a difference in their community with their service projects and what they do every day while learning in their ag classes. She reminded the attendees that the ag students have a Facebook page that anyone can look at and see what the kids are working on in class and in the community. Ms. Lawyer spoke about her middle school classes for 7th and 8th graders and noted she will also have 6th graders next year and is excited about the interest she sees in the ag classes.

Mr. Strosnider, Ms. McAndrew, and Ms. Lawyer gave an overview presentation about what the ag classes are doing now and how they plan to grow the program for the future. They reviewed the current course offerings and also the proposed plan of study for 2020. The teachers answered questions and the attendees commended the teachers and administrators for what they provide to the students.

Chairman Powers reported he was notified of the Virginia Western Community College (VWCC) open house on March 28. They are beginning an ag curriculum and most credits will transfer to Virginia Tech and Virginia State for further education. Ms. Tomlinson said that Liberty University has a zoology program which is another good option for kids who want to study animal science.

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

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

Mrs. Blido said there are 13 vendors for the Bedford market this year. Ms. McIntyre from the Forest Market is at a vendor meeting tonight, but told Mrs. Blido that she is talking to at least two potential new vendors each week. The winter markets have been very successful with 25 vendors every month. Ms. McIntyre will be speaking at the USDA event and wanted to thank Mr. W.P. Johnson for inviting her. This Saturday is the March market.

## **2. Coyote Lottery Update**

Dr. Gardner reviewed the history of the coyote lottery to bring Mr. Hiss up to date. There were 112 coyotes that were harvested in this lottery. The first prize of \$2,000 was won by Woody Burnette. Josh Roop won the second prize of \$750 and John Keesey won the third prize of \$250.

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

Nothing to report.

### **(8) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

Mr. Powers reported Danny Johnson received the 100 year Century Award and was recognized at the state level.

Mr. Dooley said that there is money in the budget to preserve the barn on Falling Creek Road Complex and he asked the Ag Board to suggest possible uses for the barn so they can use the space for whatever the community wants. Mr. Powers said he will put the subject on the future meeting's agenda. Mr. Powers also reminded the attendees that the next Ag Board meeting will be tentatively at the Cooperative Extension Office in the conference room at 7:30 p.m. unless notified otherwise. The annual report will be presented on March 25th at 7:00 p.m.

### **(9) ADJOURNMENT**

9:04 p.m.