



Meeting Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board

November 7, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

Bedford County Administration Building – Ground Floor Training Room

Present: Beth Bays, Pete Fellers, Don Gardner, Sam Gardner, Ronnie Gross, Chuck Grove, Ken Newman, Jeff Powers, Joy Powers, Lindsay Tomlinson, Pam Willoughby

Absent: Matt Baumgardner

Staff Present: Pam Bailey, Scott Baker

Staff Absent: Traci Blido

Transcriber: Julia Peters

Guests: Mary Jo Boone - CEO, YMCA; Jana Fedele - Bedford Farmer's Market; Dorothy McIntyre - Forest Farmer's Market; Brandon Strosnider - Ag Teacher, Staunton River High School; Brittany Lawyer - Ag Teacher, Staunton River Middle School; and five local residents in attendance.

(1) Approval of Agenda

Dr. Gardner called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the Nov. 7, 2018 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the Nov 7, 2018 agenda, as presented.

Adopted Unanimously.

(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes - October 6, 2018

Chairman Powers asked for a review of the October 6, 2018 meeting minutes. A name correction was made under Agenda Item **(8) Informational Items**.

A motion and a second were made to approve the October 6, 2018 meeting minutes as amended.
Adopted unanimously.

(3) County Administration Report

Pam Bailey reported that the County Administrator position is still open. The Board of Supervisors is still in the process of recruiting and will hopefully do some interviews soon.

(4) Economic Development Director's Report

Ms. Bailey reported that the shell building contract was awarded to Price Buildings out of Rocky Mount. They should break ground early next year and completion is expected by the end of 2019. The 40,000 square foot shell building will then be up for sale and would be finished by the acquiring company to suit their needs. There will be a groundbreaking ceremony at KMR Aviation in Forest tomorrow morning. They are an internationally recognized airplane component repair center and will be breaking ground on a new 10,000 square foot building adjacent to their current building. She thanked Ms. Powers and Mr. Baker for helping her with a career/technical exploration event at the Bedford Science and Technology Center (BSTC). They spoke to the county's seventh graders and the event went well. Due to weather conditions, the Bedford One program could not tour the farms as planned, but were able to tour the BSTC as planned. Their facilities were very impressive. A picture is needed of the Ag Advisory Board members and it will be taken at next month's meeting. Ms. Bailey gave Chairman Powers a draft of the meeting schedule for 2019 and he will review it and notify her with any corrections.

(5) Cooperative Extension Report

Mr. Baker stated that a couple programs are coming up. The Bedford Beef Producers Association will do a pasture walk at Tuck Farms on Saturday, November 17 at 10:00 a.m. Tomorrow night, November 8 at 6:00 p.m., there will be a dinner meeting at the Old Dominion Ag Complex and coordinated by the Pittsylvania Cattlemen's Association and Extension. They are looking to start a new cattle marketing venture using the center as a co-mingling hub and utilizing teleauctions. They stressed that this would be complimentary to what is already being done such as the Springlake Stockyard special sales. They received a grant from the Tobacco Commission to upgrade facilities and maybe build a barn and new pens. If anyone would like to attend, they can e-mail Mr. Baker. The Extension Office will be moving sometime in December and there is a meeting room at the new site if the board members would like to use it. The office will be at the Falling Creek Complex and it includes a new kitchen for nutrition programs. The Extension Office is doing a formal needs assessment/situation analysis and Mr. Baker may reach out to some of the Ag Board members with a quick survey or questions on the needs in Bedford County and ways the Extension Office may assist.

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

Sam Gardner reported that the annual dinner was held last month. The Farm Bureau recognized Dr. Susan Gardner for her contribution to agriculture in the county. They also recognized the

Ackenheads for their endeavors in agriculture. Chairman Powers stated that last night the Farm Bureau voted to fund the coyote lottery again this year.

(7) Committee Reports

a. Education & Events

1. Upcoming Events

Ms. Powers attended the Governor's Summit on Rural Prosperity which gave a comprehensive look at the Governor's plan for rural Virginia. He wants to focus on CTE and workforce development and have broadband statewide within 10 years. She will share her notes with the other Ag Board members.

Ms. Powers reported that Samantha Holdren is participating in the national 4-H Youth in Action program where she has created an online video blog and is raising public awareness for agriculture. Ethan Jackson will be livestock judging at the North American Contest representing the Commonwealth of Virginia. He was elected State President of the FFA and will represent Virginia on a trip to South Africa with the national FFA. Ms. Tomlinson said Charlie Moser was selected for the Teen Excellence Leadership Institute in Virginia. He will be attending weekend workshops and online interactive workshops throughout the year. Ms. Tomlinson also noted that there is opportunity for a Bedford student to attend the Virginia Governor's School of Agriculture for one month in the summer at Virginia Tech. If anyone knows of a student that would be a 10th or 11th grader next year and is interested, please let her know.

2. County Fair update

Ms. Powers reported that next year's fair will be held on the same weekend as this year and will have the same midway.

3. School Ag Programs Update

Mr. Strosnider, Ag Teacher at SRHS, introduced himself to the Ag Board members and said he enjoys teaching in Bedford County. He noted that he recently took an officer team to the national convention and enjoys giving students new opportunities.

Ms. Lawyer, Ag Teacher at SRMS, introduced herself to the Ag Board members and told them this is her first year in Virginia and she enjoys teaching at the middle school and bringing ag opportunities to the students. She hopes they can offer an ag class to sixth graders next year so the students will have a well-rounded middle school experience and be better prepared to take an ag pathway/specialty when they enter high school.

Ms. Tomlinson thanked the Extension Office for their program for younger children during teacher workdays this week. The children learned so much. Both chapters went to the national convention and everyone had an exceptional time. There will be a tractor driving contest at SRHS at 4:00 p.m. tomorrow. The public schools have set up an awesome mentor program this year to make sure the new teachers get what they need. They are working on getting the 6th graders involved in the ag program for next year so all middle schoolers will be engaged. The interest is still there for Forest Middle School to have an ag program, so the time is now to push for next year, especially since they are renovating Forest Middle School this year. Liberty High School had two American FFA Degree recipients which is the highest honor received at National FFA Convention and Expo.

b. Marketing & Production

1. Farmer's Market Update

Ms. Fedele reported that the market did over \$70,000 in sales this year. The average SNAP purchase was up to \$12-\$13 this year. Last year's average was \$11. Facebook followers have grown from 1,000 last year to 2,000 this year. The Instagram account has 500 followers. The Google site gets 600 hits per month. The businesses at the market are 70% women-owned and 14% minority-owned. It provides for 30 jobs and the headcount this year was 7% higher than last year.

Ms. McIntyre reported on the Forest Farmer's Market. She stated that she had an increase in full-time vendors this year, totaling 25 with seven guest vendors each week. The Bedford County Parks & Rec department will be working with the Boy Scouts to put in five tables at the market. The indoor markets held once a month will begin on November 17 in the Parks and Recreation building in Forest. She received \$238 in SNAP dollars this year. She noted that she advertises for the market through the newspaper, magazines, and postcards, as well as the county website, and on Facebook.

2. Coyote Lottery Update

Dr. Gardner said the lottery is up and running. All but three of the past donors have sent in checks.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Mr. Fellers reported the IRS wants to change the laws regarding conservation easements. They want to reduce the federal deduction by the amount of the state tax credit. The American Farm Bureau and the Virginia Farm Bureau are in the process of discussion with the IRS.

(8) Informational Items

The next Ag Board meeting will be the Christmas meeting with snacks and punch and all are invited to attend.

(9) ADJOURNMENT

7:50 p.m.