



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board**  
**November 5, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board:**

**:Present:**

Ken Palmer, Sam Gardner, Pete Fellers, Spencer Tinsley, Daniel Layman, Ken Newman, Matt Baumgardner, W.P. Johnson, Ronnie Gross

**:Absent:**

Jeffrey Powers, Chuck Grove, Pam Willoughby

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

**Staff Absent:** Mark Reeter

**Guests:** John Graham

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**(1) Approval of Agenda**

Ken Palmer called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the November 5, 2014 agenda.

A motion and a second were made to approve the November 5, 2014 agenda, as presented.

**Adopted Unanimously.**

**(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 1, 2014**

Mr. Palmer asked for a review of the October 1, 2014 meeting minutes.

A motion and a second were made to approve the meeting minutes of October 1, 2014, as presented.

**Adopted unanimously.**

**(3) County Administrator's Report**

There was no report for this month.

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

Mrs. Blido reported that a company in the Town of Bedford, Blue Ridge Optics, won Technology Company of the Year at the Region 2000 TechEdge awards this past month. Mrs. Blido reported that the county has hired a new Community Development Director, Greg Zody to replace Tim Wilson.

Mrs. Blido reported that the Broadband Advisory Board has started meeting again and are going to be presenting options to the Board of Supervisors at a work session Dec. 8 for building out the “last mile” of broadband.

Mrs. Blido stated that Jim Lusk was re-appointed to the EDA for another four years. The EDA also has a new appointed member, Mickey Johnson, who will replace Raymond Sellers who has served on the Authority for 16 years. She also stated that the Chairman, Craig Coker, will be resigning at the end of December because he and his wife will be moving to Botetourt County where she is heading the Botetourt Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Blido reported that Appomattox County had announced today that a Chinese company called Lindenburg will be locating into the old Thomasville Furniture building and will be manufacturing catalytic converters. This is a major announcement for Virginia and Appomattox as the company will invest \$113 million and hire up to 350 employees within three years.

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

Mr. Baker reported that the Cattle Grading workshop exceeded everyone’s expectations, with 140 people in attendance. Mr. Baker stated there is a clear interest in the industry and many opportunities may arise as a result.

Mr. Baker reported that The Farm Bureau, in partnership with Scott Garrett, has arranged for the Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Todd Haymore to speak at an open meeting on Monday, November 17 from 8-9 a.m. at Liberty Station Restaurant.

#### **(6) Bedford County Farm Bureau Young Farmers Report**

W.P. Johnson reported that tomorrow night Farm Bureau will have speakers talk about the new Farm Bureau programs and how they will affect the organization. On December 2-4, the Young Farmers will be going to the State Farm Bureau Convention in Bath County, and will stay at the Homestead. On February 6-8, they will be attending a farm program in Pittsylvania County. The Young Farmers will also be attending the American Young Farmer and Rancher Conference in Nashville from February 13-16. Finally, the young farmers will be attending a tour in Hyland County on February 21, which will include a tour of a turkey house and a trout facility.

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

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

##### **(1) Ag Complex**

Mr. Palmer reported that there is no new news except that he is continuing to search for Ag complex locations.

### **(3) Upcoming Events**

#### **a. Coyote Lottery**

Mr. Gardner said the lottery has begun, and the prize fund amounted to \$4,000. Mr. Gardner stated that he was hoping Phillips Equipment would sponsor, so the board may need to work on them a bit for next year's lottery.

Mr. Baker stated he would like for board members to take some of the flyers to distribute, and the rest can be mailed by Staff. Mr. Baker stated he already took flyers to Farm Bureau, Southern States, Springlake Stockyard, and Boone Tractor. Various board members volunteered to disperse the flyers at contributor locations.

Mr. Gross asked how we identify whether a coyote was killed in Bedford County. Mr. Gardner stated that they have to mark down the location of the kill, and if there is a question about whether or not the winner killed the coyote in the county, they may be subject to a lie detector test.

#### **b. Virginia Tech Dept. of Crop & Soil Sciences Biosolids webinars**

Mr. Baker reported that the Crop & Soil Sciences Department is doing a series on biosolids. Since the topic came up in the past, these webinars may be of interest to the board. Mr. Baker stated that you are not required to view each session, and you can choose the ones you find most interesting. The series will be recorded so that if you are unable to attend you can listen to them at your leisure.

#### **c. Virginia Farm-to-Table Conference**

Mr. Baker stated the Virginia Farm-to-Table Conference (Dec. 2-3 in Weyers Cave, VA) is a multi-agency collaboration event focused on community food systems. There is always great information, and a large variety of speakers and topics. Mr. Baker reported they are bringing in a nationally known soils consultant, Elaine Ingram, who will be giving an intensive lesson on soil management.

#### **d. Ag Conference**

Mr. Baker reported that the Bedford Ag Expo will be held on March 14, 2015 at Bedford CVCC with a theme of Agricultural Safety. There will be a committee that will be working on the planning of this event, which includes Daniel Hale, the extension intern, Joy Powers, Scott Baker, W.P. Johnson, Jeff Powers, and Ken Palmer.

## **b. Marketing & Production**

### **(1) Farmers Markets**

Mr. Gross reported the Bedford Market had a busy year. This past year, the market was only operating on Fridays, however this seemed to have concentrated buyers and it stayed pretty busy throughout the day. Mr. Gross stated he was also involved in The Forest Farmers Market and that it is booming. Mr. Gross stated that Dorothy McIntyre has done a great job there with advertising and working with the vendors, and has turned the Forest Market into a customer-driven market.

Mr. Gross reported there is now a farmers market at Liberty University outside of Doc's Diner on Friday nights, which he heard was very successful so far.

Mrs. Blido reported that there are two Holiday Markets planned at The Forest Market, one on November 22 and the other on December 6. The Bedford YMCA Farmers Market will be held inside the aerobics room every third Tuesday of the month from 2:30 – 5:00 pm during the winter months.

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

Mr. Fellers stated there was nothing to report for Bedford County.

### **(8) Other Business**

#### **a. Region 2000 Agriculture and Forestry Strategic plan discussion**

Ms. Hupp reported that the Board of Supervisors has invited the Ag Board to attend their next work session on November 12 to discuss the Region 2000 Agriculture and Forestry Strategic plan.

Mr. Baker stated the meeting will take place in the ground floor training room from 5:00-6:45 p.m. The Commissioner of the Revenue will speak first, and the Ag Board will have a chance for open discussion for the rest of the work session.

Mr. Baker reported that Appomattox and Lynchburg had approved the plan to move forward. Amherst had similar concerns to what our board has discussed, and ultimately decided they supported the plan, but hope that moving forward the plan will continue to be discussed and evaluated in order to meet the region's needs. The plan was just recently presented to Campbell County last night.

Mr. Baker stated it is important that as many Ag Board members attend the work session as possible because they don't get to meet with the supervisors very often.

### **(9) Informational Items**

Sam Gardner reported he and his brother attended the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors meeting concerning interest in the location of a poultry integrator to the area. Mr. Gardner explained that the meeting was meant to gauge farmers' interest in raising poultry. The center would most likely be located in Gretna, and they are considering Pittsylvania County because of the highway, gas line, and rail line that run through it. Their Board of Supervisors have hired consultants to feel out different suppliers, and plan to meet at a later date with county residents to see if the community would support this initiative. Mr. Gardner stated the location would create a low stress environment for the chickens because they wouldn't be hauling them far distances to be processed. He believes this would be good for no-hormone, no-antibiotic chicken companies, and that it could be beneficial to our area because of our nutrient deficiencies.

Mr. Gross reported they will be hosting a benefit auction on November 15 at 10:00 a.m. at Gross' Orchard. They want to raise \$5,000 to help Bedford County Social Services and will be taking donations or any items available to be auctioned off. Once all the toys and goods are collected, the Sheriff's Department will distribute them. Any additional money will be used for greater needs such as food for those families in need.

Mr. Baker reported that one of the immediate goals of the Regional Agriculture and Forestry Strategic Plan was the implementation of a regional ag website. The Bedford Agriculture website would be linked to the regional site. Mr. Baker stated he would like a letter of recommendation from the Board in order to move this initiative forward. A motion was made and seconded to write a letter in support of the regional ag website, with help from Traci and Scott to compose the letter.

**(10) Adjournment**  
**7:58 p.m.**