



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

**October 4, 2017 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Present:**

Don Gardner, Ken Newman, Pam Willoughby, Lindsay Tomlinson, Matt Baumgardner, Beth Bays

**Absent:** Pete Fellers, Sam Gardner, Ronnie Gross, Chuck Grove, Jeffrey Powers, Joy Powers

**Staff Present:** Traci Blido, Scott Baker, Reid Wodicka

**Staff Absent:** None

**Transcriber:** Julia Peters

**Guests:** John Graham, Ken Palmer

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**(1) Approval of Agenda**

Vice Chairman Dr. Don Gardner called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the October 4, 2017 agenda. There were no objections.

A motion and a second were made to approve the October 4, 2017 agenda, as presented.

**Adopted Unanimously.**

**(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes - August 2, 2017 and September 6, 2017**

Dr. Gardner asked for a review of the August 2, 2017 and September 6, 2017 meeting minutes. A motion and second were made to approve the August 2, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. A correction was made to the name of a speaker listed in the Farmer's Market Report of the September 6, 2017 minutes. A motion and second were made to approve the September 6, 2017 meeting minutes, as amended.

**Adopted unanimously.**

### **(3) County Administration Report**

Reid Wodicka congratulated everyone on the good work at the fair. He also stated that a grant was being submitted to the Tobacco Commission within the next couple weeks regarding Broadband.

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

Mrs. Blido said she will be at the state fair tomorrow, October 5, 2017, working the Ag booth. She noted that while judging the Bedford County Fair Pageant, the contestants were asked an Ag question regarding the many Ag career opportunities and how we could better communicate this with high schoolers and there were some interesting responses. One girl thought we should start in middle school and one said we needed a stronger FFA and 4H. Another girl thought more livestock shows were important and one knew that the county has 44% Ag land and agriculture is our number one industry. Discussion followed regarding how to better instruct the guidance counselors regarding various careers in agriculture and how we might facilitate more awareness. Ms. Tomlinson stated that Forest will have an Ag program very soon and the Ag Board may want to plan and host some type of professional development for guidance counselors and administrators to present in the summer. Mrs. Blido said we could talk to Dr. Tony Francis and get some input. She also suggested that farm tours may be more impactful than just instruction in a room and she will talk with school officials to find out what they might like to do.

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

Mr. Baker reported the second feeder calf sale was held on September 15 at Springlake and we had fewer cattle, about 275 premium versus 325 at the first sale, but it was still a successful effort, netting the producers about \$45-\$50. January is favored for the next cattle sale and he will let everyone know of the exact date within the next couple weeks.

The sheep and goat cost share grant from the Tobacco Commission will run in Bedford for all of 2018. If anyone is interested, they should see Mr. Baker. He said there are three educational programs that some may be interested in attending. A direct meat marketing workshop starts in Campbell County tomorrow night, October 5; a Master Beekeeper will teach a beekeeping 101-type workshop on Monday Oct. 30, 2017 from 6 - 8 p.m. in the Administration Building; and also well water testing will be offered this fall.

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

Ms. Bays worked with the Liberty FFA at the fair and there was excellent response. The highlight was the duck slide which was very entertaining. They also cooked for an FFA event, the Southridge Area Chapter Officer Leadership Training for 140 kids. They are running a gun raffle and tickets are \$10 each if anyone is interested.

Mr. Baumgardner reported that the annual meeting for the Farm Bureau was held last night and was widely attended. The Young Farmer of the Year was Glen Maxey and Bill Nance received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

**(7) Committee Reports**

**a. Education & Events**

**(1) Upcoming Events**

Bedford County will have cattle showing at the State Fair on Friday, Oct. 6 and Sunday, Oct. 8.

**(2) County Fair update**

Ms. Tomlinson stated that the FFA corn sales went well and they sold about 400 ears and also sold quite a bit of sweet tea. Many raffle tickets were sold and the alumni group will use the money to support FFA activities. Ken Palmer said 20,000 people showed up at the fair and it was very successful. The vendors were happy and satisfied and want to come back in the future.

Ms. Bays said the livestock show was a huge success and bigger than last year. People came from surrounding areas and had fun and received experience in showmanship. Ms. Tomlinson said our livestock show was very impressive and well organized compared to others she has attended.

Ms. Tomlinson reported 487 kids came for the school tours on Friday. Students from all school zones came and there were many different booths for them to see. The Smith Mountain FFA had a good activity for kids to take home. The farm magician was excellent and received great reviews. Literature was sent home with teachers and there was good news coverage as well.

**(3) Middle School Ag Program Update**

Ms. Tomlinson proposed changes to the course of studies in agriculture. Ag classes would be offered for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades at Staunton River and Liberty. Horticulture and Environmental Science are the two new pathways proposed for the school board to review. The Director for Instruction informed her that Forest Middle School is setting up an agriculture program also. She was also contacted by New London Elementary about having her students help the elementary students once a week before school.

Mr. Baker said after meeting with Dr. Lemons, Dean of Science and Math at CVCC, a certificate of study program is being pursued. It is easier to get up and running because it is a one year program. He will meet again with Dr. Lemons later this month to see what the next steps will be.

Ms. Tomlinson reported she is taking both middle and high school students to VA Tech for a leadership conference on October 12. They are going to the national convention in Indianapolis in a couple weeks. Mrs. Blido offered to help her write a press release about the convention.

**b. Marketing & Production**

**(1) Coyote Lottery Update**

Dr. Gardner said 11 have been turned in and if anyone knows of a possible candidate for sponsoring, he will send them a letter of introduction and a sponsorship form.

**(2) Farmer's Market Report**

Mr. Graham stated this is the last month for the markets to be opened. Forest will have an indoor market and a holiday market once a month beginning in November.

**c. Land Protection & Conservation**

Nothing to report.

**(8) Informational Items**

Mr. Graham said Virginia State University's annual Field Day is Oct. 19.

Mr. Palmer noted that Ronnie Gross' Apple Festival is Oct. 21.

Ms. Tomlinson said the FFA is selling Virginia Tech sausage. It is being sold for \$3.75 per pound if anyone is interested.

**(9) Adjournment**

**-8:42 p.m.**