



**Meeting Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board**

September 6, 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, Matt Baumgardner, Joy Powers

:Absent: Lindsay Tomlinson, Ronnie Gross, Beth Bays

Staff Present: Traci Blido, Scott Baker

Staff Absent: Reid Wodicka

:Guests: John Graham, Emily Sides, Edgar Tuck

(1) Approval of Agenda

Mr. Powers called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the September 6, 2017 agenda.

A motion and a second were made to approve the September 6, 2017 agenda, as presented.

Adopted Unanimously.

(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 5, 2017

Mr. Powers asked for a review of the July 5, 2017 meeting minutes. He said Ken Palmer needs to be removed as present - he was not at the July meeting. A motion and a second were made to approve the July 5, 2017 meeting minutes, as amended.

Adopted unanimously.

(3) County Administration Report

Mrs. Blido said that Mr. Wodicka was unable to be here tonight. County staff were working on their CIP requests and Mr. Wodicka had to prepare for this presentation to the BOS on September 11.

(4) Economic Development Director's Report

Mrs. Blido reported that last week 30 students and several adults toured Don Gardner's and Ken Newman's farms. Ms. Tomlinson was there with 20 of her Ag 1 middle school students who asked many good questions. Jefferson Forest High School had six students who were interested in agriculture to attend. Mrs. Blido thanked the board members for providing the Ag tours and she has learned many new things since first attending the tours. She stated that she has been busy with prospect visits this month. Many companies are excited about Liberty University's engineering school going in the New London Business and Technology Center. She also had visits from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, which involved tours of Teva. Bedford One tours are planned for every month in the semester with one taking place next week focused on technology manufacturing. These are at Smyth Companies and Blue Ridge Optics in Bedford.

(5) Cooperative Extension Report

Mr. Baker reported that the Ag technology grant still has money for about another month. This grant is a cost share incentive program for people wanting to buy farm recordkeeping and financial programs. Those interested can still apply so notify him if you know of someone who would like to apply. He also stated that Franklin County has a sheep and goat grant and have received approval to have Bedford join into this grant. The grant has a 33% cost share to make improvements to an existing business or start up a new business. It also has a youth component where 16 to 18 year olds can use the funds to start a sheep or goat business. The applicant must attend an informational meeting in Rustburg which is held on September 19. There is an upcoming meat marketing workshop being held in Campbell County beginning October 5. It is four sessions and he has more information if anyone is interested. Mrs. Blido stated the information is also listed on the "Ag News" page on the Economic Development website.

Mr. Baker said an Ag financial simulation will be held in October at CVCC in Lynchburg. This simulation will help people answer the question of what to do after they have bought some acreage and want to farm. Southern States, Farm Credit and Farm Bureau are offering support at this event and it will be interesting to see how it turns out.

The second feeder calf sale is scheduled at Springlake on September 15. Hopefully this sale will be a success and we can plan for future sales after the first of the year. Mr. Baker stated we continue to talk with CVCC about an Ag course certificate program, but it is important to have workforce development to make a program fly. He will be looking to the board members in the future for any employment prospects they might have.

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

Sam Gardner reported that we are hosting the local FFA leadership conference tomorrow. Ms. Powers said approximately 10 schools were coming. Mr. Gardner said the Farm Bureau's annual

meeting will be held on October 3. He also said the Young Farmer's are hosting a health and safety day at Southern States this Saturday and will have some giveaways if anyone can attend. He noted the summer tour went well and it was a huge success.

(7) Committee Reports

a. Education & Events

(1) Upcoming Events

Ms. Powers reported that they are busy on the Bedford County Fair events, which starts September 28 and runs for four days. The pageant will run on Thursday at 5:30 pm. This will be the second year that Liberty has given two \$18,000 scholarships for the oldest girls. She was excited to see a reinforcement of the agricultural backbone of the pageant through several judges including Mrs. Blido. She also mentioned that there are Ag topics on the applications and they will be asking some Ag related questions to keep the pageant Ag focused. The fairgrounds close at 9 p.m., but the midway will stay open until 10 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday and everything will close at 6 p.m. on Sunday. On Friday, 420 Bedford County fourth graders have signed up for the educational tours. They are also excited about the Old McDonald tent and will be able to give teachers packets of agricultural materials that can be used in their classrooms. Ken Palmer will be heading up Equine Day and has 16 breeds of horses and five demonstrations. Saturday is the Youth Livestock show and there will be a jackpot showmanship show and a Pee Wee program also. A community worship service in partnership with Liberty is scheduled for Sunday and at 12 noon the midway will open and there will be an antique car show and also an antique tractor/farm equipment show. Entries for canned goods are due by Sept. 15. There are a couple vendor spots left if anyone is interested. Live music is every day and an Ag magician will perform. Mr. Powers appreciated all the work everyone has done for the fair.

(2) County Fair update

See **Upcoming Events** listed above.

(3) Middle School Ag Program Update

Ms. Powers said all is going well in both schools. The students are practicing for a career development event in forestry with two middle school teams from Staunton River. Ms. Tomlinson is working on updating the program of studies to give students the most opportunity to attend agricultural classes.

Four 4-H boys went to Baltimore/Timonium and Shenandoah Valley for exercises and are getting ready for their October contest. An all you can eat breakfast will be held on the 23rd and we'd appreciate your support for the event. Proceeds will go to the judging teams. On Monday night, the BOS will recognize the accomplishments of these four boys. They also will be attending the Keystone International Contest in October and will be competing with teams from all over the United States and a couple of international teams.

Mr. Graham has another Liberty intern and is pleased to have him. Ms. Powers and Mr. Powers have employed three interns as well. Ms. Powers will be glad to talk with anyone who may be interested in an internship program and also share her experiences in Malawi.

The FFA alumni group at Liberty has officially launched. They are running a raffle to generate funds. They were at Sedalia and will be at Centerfest and at the Fair selling tea. The FFA chapter will be selling corn.

b. Marketing & Production

(1) Coyote Lottery

Dr. Gardner reported seven coyotes were killed so far.

(2) Farmer's Market Report

Dr. Gardner spoke of a produce wholesale auction he saw in Charlotte County. A couple places in the state have them where farmers could have their own little store and buy shares to participate or sell as a percentage. He thought that if there was enough participation, it may work for Bedford.

Mrs. Blido stated that Andy Dooley will be meeting with Dorothy McIntyre to get information about starting a Farmer's Market in Montvale.

John Graham said the Town of Boones Mill is going to put in a farm market store in a building that they have a grant to restore. Hopefully if it works out it will be open in January.

Mrs. Blido and Mr. Powers reminded everyone to spread the word about the SNAP money worth double at our farmer's markets. Discussion followed about how that might be best communicated, ie; through Social Services, school backpack programs, or elementary school Tuesday folders. The market is open until Oct. 7 and have extended their hours for Fridays through October 27.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Pete Fellers said Colorado is known for land preservation programs and had traveled throughout the state and saw quite a few cluster subdivisions and open land. He was glad to have the opportunity to go.

(8) Informational Items

In response to a question about the status of the livestock ordinance, Mr. Powers said he reached out to Josiah Tillet of the Planning Commission, but has received no response. When he does speak with him, he will encourage him to have it come to a vote.

In response to a question about the progress of rural internet, Mrs. Blido said that a consultant is meeting with people and gathering information about applying for a grant through the Tobacco Commission. A broadband meeting is scheduled for next week so it is moving forward.

Mr. Powers introduced Guest Edgar Tuck who is running for District 2 BOS as an Independent. He appreciated Mr. Tuck attending the meeting.

(9) Adjournment

-8:20 p.m.