



Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board
Peaks Conference Room at Falling Creek
1257 County Farm Rd. Bedford, VA 24523
Wednesday, November 2, 2022
7:00 p.m.

Agricultural Board

Present: Jeff Powers (District 1), Joy Powers (District 2), Don Gardner (District 3), Pete Fellers (District 7), Matt Baumgardner (At-Large), Sam Gardner (At-Large), Dorothy McIntyre (At-Large), Ken Newman (At-Large), Lindsay Tomlinson (At-Large), Melody Divers (District 6)

Absent: Chuck Grove (District 4), Ethan Tanner (District 5)

Staff Present: Pam Bailey, Scott Baker, Robert Hiss, Justin Stauder, Trish Luger

Staff Absent: Holly Scheffel

Guests: Supervisor Mickey Johnson, Josh Powers

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Powers called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

(2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

Mr. Newman moved, seconded by Mr. Baumgardner to approve November 2, 2022, meeting agenda

Adopted unanimously

(3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a. October 5, 2022

Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the October 5, 2022, minutes.

Mr. Newman moved, seconded by Mr. Baumgardner to approve the October 5, 2022, meeting minutes.

Adopted Unanimously

(4) ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Ms. Bailey welcomed Trish Luger as Administrative Assistant supporting County administration and the Economic Development Authority. Mr. Hiss welcomed Justin Stauder as the new Deputy County Administrator.

Mr. Hiss mentioned a follow up to the Agricultural Village Zone. A joint public hearing/meeting is scheduled Nov 28, between the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Meeting is to introduce an ordinance amendment from a permitted use to special use for retail sales.

Mr. Hiss discussed the upcoming Bedford County meeting Thursday, Nov 3 regarding Personal Property Tax and the higher assessment for vehicles resulting in higher taxes. A large public gathering is anticipated. A rebate program is being discussed.

(5) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Ms. Bailey had a virtual site visit on October 28 with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership regarding the Virginia Business Ready Sites grant application for surveying at New London Tech park. A status update is expected in two weeks. A week was spent in Louisville, KY taking economic classes including credit analysis and managing economic development organizations. Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) meetings were held at WexcoUSA, Moore & Giles & Custom Truck One Source. Bedford ONE tours with Bedford County Public School students are going well and the number of attendees is growing. Franklin County requested information to model the program.

(6) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT

Mr. Baker mentioned the current Director, Dr. Ed Jones, retired November 1. The new Extension Director is Dr. Michael Gutter.

A Joint meeting between Campbell County Cattleman's Association and Bedford Beef Producers was held on October 26 at Spring Lake. A vet gave an update on the Asian Longhorn tick. A significant outbreak in Pittsylvania County/Chatham affected 10 adult cows and 20 stillborn. The first positive case has been confirmed here. USDA recently informed that the government will pay for any losses.

A VDACS public hearing regarding changes in livestock labs is scheduled for November 15 at the Liberty Mountain Conference Center in Lynchburg.

(7) BEDFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS REPORT

No report

(8) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Education & Events

Ms. Tomlinson reported that on November 16 students are traveling to Olde Dominion Ag Complex in Chatham for a public speaking workshop. On Friday, November 4 at 4 p.m. the SML Christian Academy will hold a Federation Tractor Driving Contest.

A horse judging contest is scheduled for January 2023.

- 1. County Fair update** – Mr. Hiss & Ms. Powers are continuing to explore options once things slow down for Mr. Hiss (current personal property taxes).
- 2. School Ag Programs update** – Ms. Tomlinson stated the National Convention with Smith Mountain Chapter/Liberty Chapter had 37 kids attending and received National Chapter ratings. Two girls ranked gold but disappointed that the math practicum was no longer part of the competition. Emma Jackson represented well for Bedford and Virginia in Louisville, KY finishing 5th in the multi-state contest.

b. Marketing & Production

- 1. Farmer's Market updates** - Ms. McIntyre reported the last regular season market was October and it started slow, but members had good sales. Monthly markets will begin on November 19 from 9 a.m. - noon, with 45 vendors and a waiting list.

Mr. Newman inquired about a letter to be written regarding Farm Use vehicles, as stated in last meeting. Mr. Powers & Supervisor Johnson have had conversations and are currently working on this.

Ms. Bailey mentioned Bedford Grown signs/brochures are available

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Solar companies are talking to landowners with hope that minds will be changed. Contracts have been given with payments as high as \$10,000.

(9) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Scott Baker has been appointed to the Peaks of Otter Soil & Water Conservation District board. Keith Tuck is retiring at end of the year and Stacy Simmons has been nominated to be appointed beginning January 2023.

Regarding Virginia Tech's \$80 million Climate Smart Commodity grant, Mr. Powers suggested Mr. Baker reach out to the Peaks of Otter Soil & Water Conservation District to determine if Bedford County may be a recipient of some of the funds.

Melody and Johnny Divers were asked to be on the Bedford County Parks Master Plan Steering Committee. The Divers welcome ideas to share with the committee.

(10) ADJOURNMENT

8:12 pm