



Minutes
Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board
Peaks Conference Room at Falling Creek
1257 County Farm Rd. Bedford, VA 24523

Wednesday, April 5, 2023
7:30 p.m.

Present: Jeff Powers (District 1), Joy Powers (District 2), Don Gardner (District 3), Chuck Grove (District 4), Ethan Tanner (District 5), Melody Divers (District 6), Pete Fellers (District 7), Matt Baumgardner (At-Large), Sam Gardner (At-Large), Dorothy McIntyre (At-Large) Ken Newman (At-Large)

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

Absent: Lindsay Tomlinson (At-Large)

Guests: Charla Bansley, Mickey Johnson, Josh Powers, Logan Morris, Bob Davis, Carolyn Fellers

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Powers called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

(2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Mr. Newman moved, seconded by Mr. Baumgardner, to approve the April 5, 2023, agenda.

Adopted Unanimously

(3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a. March 1, 2023

Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the corrected March 1, 2023, meeting minutes.

Mr. Newman moved, seconded by Mr. Baumgardner to approve the March 1, 2023, minutes.

Adopted Unanimously

(4) ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Mr. Stauder stated a tax rate hearing will be held April 24. The Board is currently developing the budget process, and this rate will drive the final budget to adopt for the next fiscal year.

Ms. Bansley stated she is working to equalize the rate.

(5) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Ms. Bailey is awaiting paperwork from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to complete the contract with the state for the grant regarding phase 2 due diligence in New London Business & Technology Center. Other grant opportunities include smart scale projects along the 460 corridor in relation to New London. With public interest and anticipated growth, this could impact that intersection. Ms. Bailey is currently working with Erik Smedley and VDOT.

Ms. Bailey recently attended the VEDA conference in Newport News. The most important aspect emphasized was site readiness.

The Building Capacity & Community Conference in Blacksburg was beneficial. This agritourism conference was a reminder that Bedford County has been successfully doing agritourism for many years.

(6) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT

Two pesticide recertifications have been completed.

Steven Orange inquired about possible leads for the Montvale Farmers Market, which will run the first and third Saturdays in the morning beginning April 29 at the Montvale school/library area.

Upcoming events include fencing school, and the Livestock show. Mr. Davis inquired about local restauranters purchasing product at the show, but it was noted that they do not. Many businesses purchase product and then donate to organizations or food banks.

Bedford Beef Producers chose to combine their July and September feeder calf sales to one sale in August.

Asian longhorn tick has been identified in Bedford County and a suspect tick has been submitted for evaluation. It is unknown how widespread the insect is and there is concern of transmission of Theileria to animals. Spotted Lanternfly is hatching later this month and is also being monitored.

(7) BEDFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS REPORT

Mr. Sam Gardner was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Josh Powers stated that members are being recruited and a trip to the Purina Plant in St. Louis, MO is scheduled later this year.

(8) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Education & Events

1. Upcoming events

2. School Ag Programs update

In the absence of Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Powers shared Bedford Eclectic 4-H Club was named Horse 4-H Club of the Year for the state.

Ag Literacy Week – This year's book *I Love Strawberries*, provided by Farm Bureau, was read to classrooms all over the country.

Students attended Southbridge FFA Rally, which included Ag Mechanics, Vet Science, Public Speaking, Tractor Operators, Truck and Tractor Troubleshooting, Small Engines & Floriculture.

Two young men attended the Livestock Skillathon Contest and had a top 10 finish across the state.

Five Liberty FFA members and one 4-H member attended Beef Day at Virginia Tech.

Liberty FFA has 3 students attending Youth Cattle Working hosted at Carter Elliott's dairy in April.

Five Ag fabrication students are attending Welding Wars.

Liberty FFA thanks Mr. Davis for donating a Big Green Egg for raffle, and a spring hanging basket sale will be held in time for Mother's Day. Their annual FFA banquet will be held May 12 at 6:30 p.m. at Mayhew Farm with a formal invitation for all to attend.

Liberty received their CNC Plasma for metal and router for wood and the greenhouse project is complete; a crop of fall plants will be coming soon. They thank Wipledale Farm Greenhouse for donating bales of premix, Gardner Bros having worked with the Ag Structures class to build a section of cross fencing and Premiere Concrete scheduling to help construct a concrete ramp at the barn shed door. A swine housing project may be in the future.

Smith Mountain FFA had a very successful Southbridge Rally with 24 members competing in various contests. This Friday, 4th graders from Huddleston, Moneta & Goodview will be attending Food for America. They will view twenty-three educational stations; each being led by a different high school student.

Ms. Powers presented Mr. Stauder with a report on the county fair, listing concerns, considerations, and requirements. Ms. Powers will email the report to all this evening and welcomes feedback.

b. Marketing & Production

No new updates currently.

1. Farmer's Market updates

Forest Farmer's Market will be held Saturday, April 8 with forty-two vendors participating. Cutting boards, compliments of EDA, along with rack cards will be given out the first day of the Spring market.

A meeting two weeks ago for the Moneta Farmer's Market brought 30 interested participants. There are currently 3 full time vendors and 4 guest vendors scheduled and hoping for a critical mass of ten vendors and various product to proceed. The market will run Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Ms. McIntyre will be attending an online class regarding market preparations for adverse weather.

A food safety course attended a couple weeks ago will bring about some changes to both markets.

Interviews with News & Advance and The Current-SML will be debuting soon.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Mr. Fellers stated that Amherst County Planning Commission said no to the solar project. It goes before their Board of Supervisors April 18.

The Central Virginia Land Conservancy fundraiser will be held April 22 at the Claytor Nature Center.

(9) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Chairman Powers spoke about the email he sent earlier in the day regarding farm use tags.

Tim Overstreet has been hired as an Assistant Superintendent for Franklin County.

VDACS is looking into working with different vet colleges, including Virginia Tech, regarding lab work should lab facilities close.

(10) ADJOURNMENT

8:17 pm