



Minutes

**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board
Peaks Conference Room at Falling Creek
1257 County Farm Rd. Bedford, VA 24523
Wednesday, December 6, 2023
7:00 p.m.**

Agricultural Board

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

Absent: Ethan Tanner (District 5), Sam Gardner, (At-Large)

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

Guests: Mickey Johnson, Josh Powers, Johnny Divers, Carol Fellers

- (1) **CALL TO ORDER**
Chairman Powers called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
- (2) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Baumgardner moved, seconded by Mr. Newman to approve the agenda.
Adopted Unanimously
- (3) **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**
 - a. **November 1, 2023**
Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the November 1, 2023, meeting minutes. Mr. Newman moved, seconded by Mr. Baumgardner to approve the meeting minutes.
Adopted Unanimously
- (4) **ADMINISTRATION REPORT**
Mr. Stauder spoke about the bylaws and the meeting time change in November. Currently, days and times are not listed. Chairman Powers stated that changes were not needed at this time.
The Public Relations Committee will be added to the bylaws along with Education & Events, Marketing & Production, and Land Protection and Conservation. A draft will be presented at the January meeting.
- (5) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT**
Ms. Bailey thanked the Divers for hosting the Bedford One Ag-tour. Students learned information about their beef cattle business and watched the cider press in action. The tour ended at Little Otter Flower Farm where the students participated in hands-on farm tasks and learned the importance of preserving the integrity of the land.
- (6) **COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT**
The Bedford Beef Producers Association will have its winter educational meeting on January 9 at the Stockyard. Dr. Taylor Young is one of the featured speakers.
The Virginia Forage & Grassland Council winter conference is January 23-26. The Old Dominion Agricultural Complex in Chatham will host the conference on January 24.
The Board of Supervisors meeting was attended to initiate the process of designating Bedford as a primary disaster due to drought.

Mr. Baker is meeting with Kent Robey, Director of Emergency Management, and Alicia with Springlake Stockyard to discuss preparedness for moving livestock in the event of a disaster. Dr. Gardner mentioned that a state organization already has this process in place and that Mr. Baker could benefit. Pittsylvania, Rockbridge, Augusta, Bedford, and Franklin Counties are in the new TMDL-Total Maximum Daily Load.

(7) BEDFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS REPORT

Mr. Baumgardner spoke about the recent state convention that included Commissioner Guthrie and Governor Youngkin among the speakers. Farm Bureau will attend the legislative meeting on January 23 - 26 at the Capitol to visit local legislators and promote agriculture in our local communities.

(8) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Education & Events

- 1. Upcoming events**
- 2. School Ag Programs update**

The schools are currently selling fruit and poinsettias.

Liberty and Staunton High Schools participated in collecting field-dressed deer for Hunters for the Hungry.

Ms. Tomlinson traveled to Phoenix, AZ for the National Ag-Ed Conference, which coincides with the American CTE conference.

Kelsey Weston, VA FFA President, will represent VA FFA in Australia in January 2024.

3. County Fair Report

The fair is on track to be in place for August 2024 at the Falling Creek location of the Central Garage and Water Authority.

The committee added Mrs. Divers and Mr. Josh Powers to the Fair board.

b. Marketing & Production

1. Farmer's Market updates

Fifty-seven vendors will be at the Forest Market on Saturday, December 9.

Next season, the Forest market will be extended through the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

The Moneta market will open on May 1 and run through the end of August.

2. Coyote Lottery

Sixty-three coyotes have been recorded to date.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

Mr. Fellers will speak at an upcoming meeting regarding landowners saving their land without using a conservation easement.

d. Public Relations

Ms. Divers, Ms. Bailey, Ms. Powers, Ms. Basinger & Ms. McIntyre gathered at the Cider Barn in November to establish the following:

1. Bedford agriculture is accurately, regularly, and fairly represented in various forms of media.
2. Promote with consistency and accuracy various Ag aspects already in place.
3. Create a centralized user-friendly hub for events, educational opportunities, meetings, and community agriculture notices.
4. Familiarity and security while building relationships with those not in the farming community.

(9) OTHER BUSINESS

a. Informational items

Dr. Gardner spoke about meeting meteorologist George Flickinger at the Channel 13 studio. He expressed concern about Mr. Flickinger's continual mention of an urban yard when discussing rain, without any mention of crop, grass, or hay land. Dr. Gardner offered his services for segments and believes it is beneficial to connect with all three stations to promote agricultural content.

Mr. Grove has retired from the American Angus Association. The article can be viewed here:
<https://www.angusjournal.net/post/q-a-president-s-perspective-1>

(10) ADJOURNMENT
7:58 p.m.