



Minutes

**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board
Peaks Conference Room at Falling Creek
1257 County Farm Rd. Bedford, VA 24523
Wednesday, November 6, 2024
7:00 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); Dorothy McIntyre (At-Large)

Absent: Matt Baumgardner (At-Large); Ken Newman (At-Large); Sam Gardner (At-Large); Lindsay Tomlinson (At-Large)

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

Guests: Mickey Johnson, Johnny Divers, Carolyn Fellers

(1) CALL TO ORDER

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

(2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Grove moved, seconded by Ms. Powers to approve the agenda.

Adopted Unanimously

(3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES, October 2, 2024

Chairman Powers called for a motion to approve the October 2, 2024, meeting minutes. Mr. Tanner moved, seconded by Ms. Powers to approve the meeting minutes.

Adopted Unanimously

(4) ADMINISTRATION REPORT

County Administration and Vice Chairs from the Board of Supervisors met with Delegate Zehr, Senator Peake, and Mr. Griffin's assistant to speak about solar farms. If you have questions about legislation or local control, please get in touch with the County for assistance.

Mr. Stauder will provide email updates on the progress of Broadband and how Dispatch determines locations during emergencies.

(5) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Agricultural Disaster Microloan Program offered by VSBFA aims to assist Virginia agricultural and forestry small businesses affected by Hurricane Helene 2024.

Ms. Armstrong attended the 2024 Governors Summit on Rural Prosperity in Wytheville, Virginia.

(6) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION REPORT

Individuals who can donate hay bales to the Western region should contact Scott Baker to arrange transportation.

Dr. Gardner has been informed of an Angus breeder in Campbell County who needs hay due to insufficient rainfall. If anyone can assist with hauling 4-5 bales, please get in touch with Dr. Gardner.

4-H Extension Agent Mary Beth Martin has accepted a position at Virginia Tech and will be leaving at the end of November.

(7) BEDFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS REPORT

According to Chairman Powers, several resolutions were passed, and Mr. Baumgardner will discuss them next month.

(8) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Education & Events

1. Upcoming events

Creative Kids' Christmas Market is November 30 at Virginia Cooperative Extension from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. A canned good or \$2 entrance fee will benefit the Bedford Community Christmas Station.

2. School Ag Programs Update

Several students attended National at State Convention and competed successfully, earning approximately six American Degrees.

Ms. Tomlinson has the students engaged in a variety of activities.

A recent meeting regarding the County Fair was successful. The County staff and Board of Supervisors will vote on using the same grounds again next year. The Fair Board intends to find a suitable location for long-term use.

The FFA Chapters are selling citrus fruit and Liberty FFA is hosting a Christmas market.

b. Marketing & Production

Montvale's season has concluded, and a holiday market is planned for November 30th.

The Forest Market will be on site until November 23 from 9 a.m. to noon, with participation from over fifty vendors.

The Bedford Market will host evening Holiday Markets, on November 16, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., and December 7, 5-9 p.m.

Ms. McIntyre will attend the Mid-Atlantic Farmers Market Conference.

Nine coyotes have been killed to date.

2023 - 710 deer were donated during the entire season

2023 - September 2 to November 5, a total of 131 deer were harvested, resulting in 3,954 pounds of meat.

2024 - September 7 to November 5, a total of 291 deer were harvested, resulting in 8,289 pounds of meat. Of these

291 deer, 190 were deer without antlers.

c. Land Protection & Conservation

There are no updates to currently share.

d. Public Relations

Media Squatch continues its partnership with the PR Board and will continue monthly podcasts through 2025. Mr. Miles from Dancing Hill Christmas Tree Farm will be featured next on the podcast focusing on shopping from a local producer.

WDBJ will produce two stories about the Ag Board, which will air within the next week or two.

(9) OTHER BUSINESS

a. Informational items

Join us for our annual Christmas holiday gathering next month, hosted by Karen. Feel free to bring a snack to share as we meet at 6:30 p.m.

(10) ADJOURNMENT

7:57 pm