

## **Augusta County Agriculture Industry Board Minutes**

*Thursday, December, 2024 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM*

*Augusta County Extension Office*

Members in Attendance: *Jeremy Shifflett, Cole Heizer, Kevin Phillips, Keith Phillips, Doug Horn, John Benner*

Members Absent: *Sonny Balsley, Andrew Crummett*

John Benner opened the meeting at 6 pm. John stated that Sonny was unable to make the meeting. John welcomed Kevin Phillips on the board as the Middle River Representative.

### **Old Business:**

Drought Declaration. John stated that Augusta County was declared a drought disaster area on Oct. 30 after 8 straight weeks at D2 drought. Augusta County did request a drought declaration in September. The USDA Farm Service Agency does have the Livestock Forage Disaster program in effect. Producers should call FSA to inquire about the program.

Due to the Drought Declaration and low response with the NAP and Livestock Indemnity program information session, it has been postponed to a TBD after the first of the year.

Augusta County Ag Appreciation Gala: The Augusta County Ag Appreciation Gala will be held March 23, 2024, then will move to a every other year schedule. This year's event will feature Robert Mills, 2017 Southeast Ag Expo farmer of the year. The Augusta County Ag Appreciation Event committee has established several sponsor levels for support this year: Barn Raising=\$1,000 – includes 6 gala tickets with table signage with logo, event recognition, vendor table and recognition in all event materials; Harvester=\$500 3 gala tickets, table signage with logo, event recognition, and recognition in all event materials; Cultivator=\$250 2 gala tickets, event recognition and recognition in all event materials.

John asked the board if they would consider being a sponsor at the same level again as last year (\$1,000).

The Board elected to consider all budget items before determining the sponsorship level.

Aerial Cover Crop Seeding Event: John reviewed participation in the Aerial Cover Crop Seeding by Drone event. The event was held on Oct. 20 and was attended by 35 people, with the majority of them agency folks and agricultural technical service providers. Doug Horn gave a presentation on the event, reviewing the seeding rate, weather conditions and growing conditions for the project. Doug also was able to show some videos of the drone in action. The Ag Industry Board was able to make the program possible by covering the cost of the drone operation. Additional sponsors included Farm Credit, the VANTAGE No-Till Alliance, First Bank and Trust, and Virginia Seed Company. The progress of the cover crop will be followed throughout the fall.

### **New Business**

Virginia Legislative Steak Fry –John provided an overview of the Virginia Cattlemen's Association Legislative State Fry. Virginia Cattlemen's Association hosts a legislative steak fry every winter, usually in January and February, in Richmond for the Virginia General Assembly. Virginia Cattlemen's Association needs sponsors for the event, which will be held on February 8. Jeff Slaven requested that the Ag Industry Board consider sponsoring this event in the amount of \$500. Mr. Slaven has also asked several Augusta County businesses in the cattle markets, including Staunton Union to help as well.

Kevin Phillips mentioned that the steak fry is a good event. The Virginia State Dairyman's Association has participated in the event as well.

2024 Augusta County 4-H/FFA Market Animal Show & Sale Fundraiser January 13, 2024. The Market Animal Show fundraiser has traditionally been an event that the Ag Industry Board has sponsored. The board sponsored the Lamb Tent this past year, bidding \$4,500 in support. Sonny Balsley is planning to be there to carry out the board's sponsorship. The Ag Industry Board received a banner to be displayed on the Lamb Tent in 2023, and has their logo displayed during the show, as well as announced during the show's events. The board received a banner that went over the sale and announcer's block when the board was the sponsor of the sale and show ring in previous years.

Available Budget. – John reviewed that the available budget is \$\$6,260. Expenses so far this year have included the drone aerial seeding at \$500. Cole Heizer stated that it would be prudent to continue the sponsorship for the David Fiske Recordbook award at its current level of \$750 as it does reward youth that are working hard to develop recordkeeping skills and economic analysis as part of their livestock show project. After a brief discussion, the board determined to set the support for the Market Animal Show Fundraiser at \$4,000. The board then determined to support the Ag Appreciation Gala at \$1,000 Barn Raiser level sponsor and support the Virginia Cattlemen's Association Legislative steak fry at \$500.

These actions would constitute \$6750 of the total \$6760 of the budget, leaving \$10 after all expenditures.

With no further business the board decided to tentatively meet again on January 25 or February 1<sup>st</sup>.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 pm.