

Draft Minutes
Virginia Cattle Industry Board
February 15, 2024 - 9:00 AM
The Virginian Hotel
Lynchburg, VA

Presiding: Bill Tucker, Chairman

Roll Call:

Members Present

Matthew Hill
Bill Tucker
Bob Threewitts
Richard Lloyd
Buddy Shelton
Nick McNeil
David Coleman
Cecilia Moyer
Perry Huffman
Julia Jones

Members Absent

Andy Smith

Staff Present

Matthew Sponaugle, VDACS Liaison
Melissa Ball, VDACS

Others Presents

Brandon Reeves – VCA
William Morris – VCA
John Beahm

Rebecca Webert - VCA
Eric Paulson – VSDA

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Grant Updates:

Representatives of the Virginia Agriculture Mobile Education Unit (operated through Virginia State University) addressed both the VCIB as well as the Virginia Beef Council (VBC) during an extended lunch hour. The VCIB awarded \$40,000 through grant 23-4B to design and install a special beef specific section in the unit as well as support the first year's operation cost. Overall, the unit cost over one million dollars to create and cost between \$30 - \$40 thousand dollars per year to operate. The unit has traveled over 18,000 miles and educated nearly 10,000 visitors since its inception. After the presentation, VCIB & VBC members split into smaller groups to tour the mobile unit.

Financial Report

Richard Lloyd reviewed the financial report as presented below:

The FY 23-24 budget was then presented as:

Summary:		
Cash Balance:	Jun 30, 2023	\$1,155,461.19
Receipts through:	December 31, 2023	\$140,219.82
Interest through:	December 31, 2023	\$12,099.22
Expenditures through:	December 31, 2023	-\$179,711.59
Cash Balance:	December 31, 2023	\$1,128,068.64
Committed / Unpaid (Grants):	December 31, 2023	\$351,209.72
Committed / Unpaid (Admin)	December 31, 2023	\$30629.90
Funds available for allocation:	December 31, 2023	\$746,229.02

A motion to approve the financial report was made by Lloyd, 2nd by Shelton. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Shelton moved to approve the draft minutes of the July 20, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Lloyd and the motion was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Action on Grant Proposals

The Board reviewed the following grant submissions:

NUMBER	TITLE	ORANIZATION	TYPE	AMOUNT REQUESTED
24-1B	2024 "Buckingham Cattlemen's Association BARN facility and Beef Hub Expansion"	Buckingham Cattlemen Association	Market Development	\$50,000.00
24-2B	Marketing and Promotion for Scott County Cattle Association, Inc. Premium Assured Heifer Sale 2024	Scott County Cattle Association	Market Development / Promotion	\$3,525.00
24-3B	International Travel Provides Education, Opportunity, and Networking Virginia 4-H All Star Livestock Judging Team - 2024 National Champions	Virginia Tech Extension	Youth Development / Education	\$15,000.00
24-4B	Building Knowledge and Confidence in BQA Youth Instructors via Hands-On Learning and Site Visits to Commercial Feed Yards and Processing Plants	Virginia Tech Extension	Youth Development / Education	\$10,000.00
24-5B	In Vitro Fate of Toxic Alkaloids When Digested With Different Tannin Sources	Virginia Tech	Research	\$33,112.00
24-6B	Furthering Adoption of Bulk Milk Dispensers In Virginia Schools	Virginia State Dairymen's Association	Market Development	\$14,000.00
24-7B	A Survey of Plant-Parasitic Nematodes Parasitizing Alfalfa With an Emphasis on Ditylenchus Dispsaci in Virginia	Virginia Tech	Research	\$23,000.00
24-8B	Virginia Beef Cattle Center of Excellence-Coordinator Position	Virginia Tech	Education	\$32,970.00
24-9B	Impact of Fescue Toxicosis on Animal Performance and Environmental Quality	Virginia Tech	Research	\$13,888.00
24-10B	Virginia Beef Cattle University	Virginia Tech, Virginia Extension, and Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Education, Promotion, Research, & Youth Development	\$50,000.00
24-11B	Confirmation of Genetic Variants to	Virginia Tech	Research	\$30,000.00

	Facilitate the Culling of Infertile Heifers in Cross-Bred Beef Cow-Calf Operations			
24-12B	Promoting VA's Cattle Industry 2024	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Promotion	\$15,000.00
24-13B	Virginia Cattle App Maintenance	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Promotion / Education / Market Development	\$60,000.00
24-14B	VQA Research	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Research / Youth Development	\$4,800.00
24-15B	Illinois and Iowa Promotional Trip	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Promotion / Education / Market Development	\$6,820.00
24-16B	Investigating the Culinary Needs to Highlight Beef as the Center of the Plate	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Amherst County		\$1,500.00
24-17B	Cattle Industry Education to Enhance VALOR Program Curriculum	VALOR	Education	\$3,000.00
24-18B	Enhanced Beef Industry Awareness, Literacy, and Advocacy through Livestock Evaluation and Competition at Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Education	\$15,000.00
24-19B	2024 Virginia 4-H/FFA Market Beef Ultrasound Carcass Contest	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Augusta County	Youth Development	\$3,000.00
24-20B	Optimizing Virginia Beef Industry Preparedness for Participation in Environmental Services Markets	Virginia Tech	Market Development	\$25,000.00
24-21B	Different sources of trace minerals during a preconditioning and feedlot receiving program of weaned calves	Virginia Tech	Research	\$25,020.00

Total = \$434,635.00

The Board discussed and voted on each grant submission individually. After minimal discussion, the following grants were passed as written with a unanimous vote:

Grant# 24-6B: *“Furthering Adoption of Bulk Milk Dispensers in Virginia Schools”* (motion by Moyer; Lloyd 2nd)

Grant# 24-11B: *“Confirmation of Genetic Variants to Facilitate the Culling of Infertile Heifers in Cross-Bred Beef Cow-Calf Operations”* (motion by McNeil, Shelton 2nd)

Grant# 24-14B: *“VQA Research”* (Motion by McNeil; Jones 2nd)

Grant# 24-15B *“Illinois and Iowa Promotional Trip”* (motion by Jones; McNeil 2nd)

Other Grant Proposal discussion included:

Grant# 24-1B *“2024 - Buckingham Cattlemen’s Association BARN facility and Beef Hub Expansion”*

After review, the Board voted against the funding of Grant 24-1B as VCIB policy prevents the usage of funds for capital improvements, including the purchase of and/or building of infrastructure. Lloyd made a motion to deny the grant request, Huffman 2nd and the motion passed unanimously.

Grant# 24-2B *“Marketing and Promotion for Scott County Cattle Association, Inc. Premium Assured Heifer Sale 2024”*

Shelton made a motion to award \$2,500 to the Scott County Cattle Association as a local feeder cattle promo grant. Huffman 2nd and motion passed. Hill sustained from the voting.

Grant# 24-3B: *“International Travel Provides Education, Opportunity, and Networking Virginia 4-H All Star Livestock Judging Team – 2024 National Champions”*

After some discussion about preferred level of funding, McNeil made a motion to fund grant 24-3B at \$10,000. Jones 2nd and motion passed unanimously.

Grant# 24-4B: *“Building Knowledge and Confidence in BQA Youth Instructors via Hands-On Learning and Site Visits to Commercial Feed Yards and Processing Plants”*

Grant 24-4B was submitted as a continuation of Grant 23-19B, which was unable to be carried out within the original term limits due to unforeseen circumstances. Shelton made a motion to grant a one year extension (through February 29, 2025) for grant 23-19B, Threewitts 2nd and motion passed. With the term extension on grant 23-19B, grant 24-4B request was then dissolved.

Grant# 24-5B: *“In Vitro Fate of Toxic Alkaloids When Digested with Different Tannin Sources”*

Huffman made a motion to remove personnel and fringe benefits from grant 24-5B and fund at \$14,600. Included in this amount was full funding for travel, materials, and contractual line items. McNeil 2nd and motion passed unanimously.

Grant# 24-7B: *“A Survey of Plant-Parasitic Nematodes Parasitizing Alfalfa with an Emphasis on Ditylenchus Dipsaci in Virginia”*

Discussing this grant request, the Board raised question of the value that the research would return to Virginia cattle producers. Coleman made a motion to deny grant 24-7B on the basis of value of that the grant would have to the Virginia cattle industry. McNeil 2nd and motion passed unanimously.

Grant# 24-8B: *“Virginia Beef Cattle Center of Excellence – Coordinator Position”*

Lloyd made a motion to approve grant 24-8B, Jones 2nd and motion passed. While discussing the grant, the Board requested that it be written into the letter of agreement that Virginia Tech demonstrate how this project will become self-sustaining in the future.

Grant# 24-9B: *“Impact of Fescue Toxicosis on Animal Performance and Environmental Quality”*

The Board raised concerns about type of fence being built as well expected cost of some fencing items within the budget. Lloyd made a motion to cut the supplies line item in the budget in half (fund at the new amount of \$4,000) and fund grant 24-9B at a new total of \$9,888. Threewitts 2nd and motion passed. In addition to reduced funding amount, the Board noted that funding is only to be used for temporary fencing and not permanent .

Grant# 24-10B: *“Virginia Beef Cattle University”*

Dr. Scott Griener, Dr John Currin, and Lisa McCormick joined the Board via Zoom to give a brief overlay of the project and answer questions that the Board. Many questions were asked pertaining to the goals of the event as well as expected expenses and budget. Lloyd made a motion to fund grant 24-10B with a \$50,000 level sponsorship. Shelton 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 24-12B: *“Promoting VA’s Cattle Industry 2024”*

Brandon Reeves of VCA, reported to the Board that earlier articles written have been well received. Moyer followed up with support of the grant request while adding that articles should also be published in The Virginia Dairyman Journal that is distributed to dairymen throughout the area. Hill made a motion to fund grant 24-12B at \$7,500 with \$3,000 designated for articles to be published in the VCA Newsletter and the Virginia Dairymen Journal and the

remaining \$4,500 designated for contractual items pertaining to promotional and marketing efforts. Those efforts outside the creation of monthly articles are to be approved at the discretion of the chair and vice chair of the Board. Lloyd 2nd and motion passed. Grant 24-12B is to be revisited at the summer meeting to assess the status of the grant and up the funding level if needed.

Grant# 24-13B *“VA Cattle App Maintenance”*

Brandon Reeves and Rebecca Webert, both from VCA, gave the Board an update on the status of the VA Cattle App. The App has been live for a few months and approximately 500 people have downloaded to date. Shelton made a motion to remove the \$12,000 for Wiesemeyer’s daily report and fund the ‘app maintenance and support’ (\$42,000) section at 75% for a total funded amount of \$31,500. The Bar Chart subscription would be funded in full at \$6,000 for a total funded amount of \$37,500. Lloyd 2nd and motion passed. Further, the Board discussed that they plan to reduce their support for operating maintenance cost of the app by 25% per year over the next 4 years. They expect VCA to make the app self sustaining as the usage grows.

Grant# 24-16B *“Investigating the Culinary Needs to Highlight Beef as the Center of the Plate”*

Tucker shared insight with the group about grant 24-16B and explained the vision that the group had for a chefs’ workshop built around the responses received from the focus groups and research conducted. After discussion, the Board liked the potential it held and agreed that the idea behind the grant could turn into a good project with a high potential return for Virginia’s beef industry. They felt that if anything, the presented grant plan was underbudgeted in order to properly compile and assess all the data needed to build an effective pilot workshop off of. Huffman made a motion to fund grant 24-16B at \$2,500. Lloyd 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 24-17B: *“Cattle Industry Education to Enhance VALOR Program Curriculum”*

Many Board members shared stories of previous students that had went through Virginia’s VALOR program, speaking with high regards of the education and experiences that it provided for its students and the professionalism that it was conducted with. Moyer expressed the desire to also provide funding for the VALOR students to visit and tour dairy farms and businesses tied to the dairy industry during their time in the program. Threewitts made a motion to up the funding amount to \$6,000 to provide additional support for on-site visits to businesses pertaining to the beef and dairy industry. Moyer 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 24-18B: *“Enhanced Beef Industry Awareness, Literacy, and Advocacy through Livestock Evaluation and Competition at Virginia Tech”*

Jones made a motion to fund grant 24-18B at \$10,000 to match the external funding coming from the Virginia Tech School of Animal Sciences. Huffman 2nd and motion passed with a vote of 9-1.

Grant# 24-19B: *“2024 Virginia 4-H/FFA Market Beef Ultrasound Carcass Contest”*

Lloyd made a motion to approve grant 24-19B, with the understanding that they also make the services available to the Virginia State Fair. Threewitts 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 24-20B: *“Optimizing Virginia Beef Industry Preparedness for Participation in Environmental Services Markets”*

After reviewing grant 24-20B, Board members had many questions about the scope of the project. Huffman made a motion to table the grant request until the July meeting and extend an invitation to the project lead to give a short presentation to the Board and answer any questions the Board still had. Lloyd 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 24-21B: “Different Sources of Trace Minerals During a Preconditioning and Feedlot Receiving Program of Weaned Calves”

Some Board members expressed their support of mineral research and talked about the impact they felt that mineral deficiency has on the health of Virginia feeder cattle during times of stress. Huffman made a motion to fund grant 24-21B in full and Colman 2nd. During discussion, Threewitts made a motion to table the grant until the July meeting in order to gather more information about the research project and ensure the grant request was not designed to benefit a single private entity. McNeil 2nd and motion to table passed.

A summary of grant approvals below:

NUMBER	TITLE	ORANIZATION	TYPE	AMOUNT FUNDED
24-1B	2024 “Buckingham Cattlemen’s Association BARN facility and Beef Hub Expansion”	Buckingham Cattlemen Association	Market Development	\$0.00
24-2B	Marketing and Promotion for Scott County Cattle Association, Inc. Premium Assured Heifer Sale 2024	Scott County Cattle Association	Market Development / Promotion	\$2,500.00
24-3B	International Travel Provides Education, Opportunity, and Networking Virginia 4-H All Star Livestock Judging Team - 2024 National Champions	Virginia Tech Extension	Youth Development / Education	\$10,000.00
24-4B	Building Knowledge and Confidence in BQA Youth Instructors via Hands-On Learning and Site Visits to Commercial Feed Yards and Processing Plants	Virginia Tech Extension	Youth Development / Education	\$0.00
24-5B	In Vitro Fate of Toxic Alkaloids When Digested With Different Tannin Sources	Virginia Tech	Research	\$14,600.00
24-6B	Furthering Adoption of Bulk Milk Dispensers In Virginia Schools	Virginia State Dairymen's Association	Market Development	\$14,000.00
24-7B	A Survey of Plant-Parasitic Nematodes Parasitizing Alfalfa With an Emphasis on Ditylenchus Dispsaci in Virginia	Virginia Tech	Research	\$0.00
24-8B	Virginia Beef Cattle Center of Excellence-Coordinator Position	Virginia Tech	Education	\$32,970.00
24-9B	Impact of Fescue Toxicosis on Animal Performance and Environmental Quality	Virginia Tech	Research	\$9,888.00
24-10B	Virginia Beef Cattle University	Virginia Tech, Virginia Extension, and Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Education, Promotion, Research, & Youth Development	\$50,000.00
24-11B	Confirmation of Genetic Variants to Facilitate the Culling of Infertile Heifers in Cross-Bred Beef Cow-Calf Operations	Virginia Tech	Research	\$30,000.00
24-12B	Promoting VA's Cattle Industry 2024	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Promotion	\$7,500.00
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24-16B	Investigating the Culinary Needs to Highlight Beef as the Center of the Plate	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Amherst County		\$1,500.00
24-17B	Cattle Industry Education to Enhance VALOR Program Curriculum	VALOR	Education	\$6,000.00
24-18B	Enhanced Beef Industry Awareness, Literacy, and Advocacy through Livestock Evaluation and Competition at Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Education	\$10,000.00

24-19B	2024 Virginia 4-H/FFA Market Beef Ultrasound Carcass Contest	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Augusta County	Youth Development	\$3,000.00
24-20B	Optimizing Virginia Beef Industry Preparedness for Participation in Environmental Services Markets	Virginia Tech	Market Development	Tabled
24-21B	Different sources of trace minerals during a preconditioning and feedlot receiving program of weaned calves	Virginia Tech	Research	Tabled

Total: \$241,078.00

OLD BUSINESS:

Website

No discussion took place pertaining the website.

Other Business

Electronic Meeting Policy

Matthew Sponagle presented a draft policy pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3708.3 that would allow the Board to conduct electronic meetings. Following the code, this policy will allow the Board to have up to two electronic meetings per year considering all criteria are met. Hybrid meetings and/or voting via remote participation for in person meetings will not to be utilized. Lloyd made a motion to adopt the draft policy as presented and add it to the VCIB Handbook. Moyer 2nd and motion passed.

Four grant amendments were presented to the Board pertaining to budget changes and term extensions. McNeil made a motion to approve all amendment request as presented below. Huffman 2nd and motion passed.

- 1) A budget change was requested for Grant 23-1, allowing \$7,000 of funds to be moved from personal and other, and into the supplies and materials budget line. Justification included the fact that cost of fat cattle rose significantly post grant request and the inefficiencies of harvesting the cattle in a classroom setting took away from the returned margins on retail sales. Personal cost was covered by the University. No additional funds were requested.
- 2) For grant 23-15B, it was requested that all remaining funds be moved from travel and materials cost to salary / benefits and contractual services. Justification included that materials came in under budget and money from other programs was used to cover much of the anticipated travel cost. State requirements for salary adjustments resulted in higher salary and fringe rates than budgeted when the grant was submitted. A short-term extension through May 30 was also requested in order to complete needed work after the approved budget change. No additional funds were requested.
- 3) A request that grant 23-9A be extended to cover development cost that were billed after the grant deadline was made by VCA. An extension of terms was extended through May30. No additional funds were requested.
- 4) The VCA requested that they be able to cover 8 participants for grant 24-15. Originally, it was approved for 5 individuals, representing the different areas of the state be selected to travel to the convention. With travel cost coming in under budget and the convention waiving registration fees, they were able to take additional people on the trip while remaining within the original budgeted amount of \$12,275. This request includes no

additional funding, only the ability to help cover the travel cost of additional attendees who participated on the trip.

The Board reviewed the previous Statement of Needs written up for a VCIB part time contractor. After a few minor updates, the Board decided to re-submit it to procurement who felt they could have it ready to post by the end of March. Tucker and Ball reviewed the hiring process and the Board agreed to use a 5-person panel to interview candidates including two board members, the VDACS Liaison, and two industry representatives.

Future Meeting Date

The next meeting date is tentatively set for July 16, 2024 in Blacksburg, VA.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Sponaule, VDACS Liaison