

**Draft Minutes**  
**Virginia Sheep Industry Board**  
**January 12, 2018 - 3:00 PM**  
**Augusta County Government Center**  
**Verona, VA**

**Presiding:** Matthew Sponaugle, VDACS

**Roll Call:**

Matthew Sponaugle welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:12 pm. All present members and industry representatives introduced themselves.

**Members Present**

Rosalea Potter  
Mandy Fletcher  
Matthew Miller  
Larry Weeks  
Clinton Bell  
Lawson Roberts  
Alvin Thomas  
Mac Swortzel  
Sue Platts  
Pete Martens III  
Dan Hadacek  
James Hilleary

**Members Absent**

**Staff Present**

Matthew Sponaugle, Program Manager, VDACS, Harrisonburg  
Melissa Ball, VDACS, Richmond  
Scott Greiner, VT Sheep Specialist

**Others Presents**

John Benner, Augusta Extension	Scott Burtner
Barry Allen	Corey Childs
Loretta Bell	John Sponaugle
Naomi Smith	Chad Fox, USDA-APHIS
Martha Polkey	

This meeting was held in conjunction with the Virginia-North Carolina Shepherds Symposium.

**Election of New Officers**

With the expired term of past VSIB President, the floor was open to current board members to appoint a new president and vice president. The board unanimously passed the nominations of Rosalea Potter for president and Clinton Bell was for vice president.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the Jan. 13, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

## **Financial Report**

Rosalea Potter reviewed the FY 16-17 report which showed an ending balance of \$40,737.36, up \$2,289.53 from last year. Income for the FY 16-17 was \$12,020.50 up \$463.33 from the FY 15-16 and up \$665.33 from the FY 14-15. Total expenditures for the FY 16-17 were \$9,730.97 up \$2,061.72 from FY 15-16. Matthew Sponaugle explained that many of the FY 15-16 meeting expenses were processed in the FY 16-17, accounting for unusual high expense. He also explained that meeting expenses largely depend on how many board members attend and the location of the meeting.

## **USDA Wildlife Services Report – Chad Fox**

Chad reported that demand for USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services (WS) was steady this year. Their six-employee team allowed them to cover all Virginia counties, as coyote populations have been spreading into new areas of the state. Coyote numbers appear to have peaked. Twenty-Two educational programs were conducted to educate livestock producers and the public about coyote ecology and coyote damage management, reaching out to 738 people.

WS provided direct control services to 187 livestock farms in 52 counties in federal fiscal year (FY) 2017. These numbers were down by 21 farms and up by two counties from the FY2016. During FY2017, 298 sheep, 54 calves, and 34 goats were reported and verified killed by coyotes in Virginia on these 187 farms. In FY2017, the average number of sheep killed per farm by coyotes was 3.6. Preventative control was conducted on 71 livestock farms with historic coyote predation. WS removed coyotes on these farms before livestock depredation occurred, and these farms had no losses in FY2017. Corrective control was conducted on 116 livestock farms to remove coyotes killing livestock. In FY2017, WS removed 264 coyotes on farms to stop or prevent coyote predation on livestock. This was down by 207 head from the FY 2016.

State funding for the Virginia Cooperative Coyote Damage Control program (CWDMP) was \$192,525 for the FY2017. Currently, the state and federal funds provide an equivalent of 5.2 staff years. Eight employees stationed in Augusta, Franklin, Highland, Montgomery, Russell, Prince Edwards, Loudoun, and Culpeper counties work part-time to resolve coyote predation and work on other wildlife damage management projects as needed to maintain their positions. With heavy restrictions placed on the use of M44 sodium cyanide devices nationwide, the program has equipped each employee with the current technology in thermal and night vision equipment. These new tools have proven to be very effective for removing depredating coyotes when communication between the cooperators and WS was timely.

The anticipated demand for livestock protection services is anticipated to increase in FY 2018. The recent statewide availability of the program has increased awareness of, and demand for the program. Statewide and regional concerns over predation by black vultures may also contribute to increased demand for programs.

## **Virginia State Fair Lamb Carcass Contest Report**

Scott Greiner provided the report which indicated that over 3,000 lambs have been evaluated through the program since its inception in 1999. The program provides feedback to lamb exhibitors and breeders relative to the impact of their genetics and management on carcass performance. This report helps show improvements made by producers and feeders. In evaluation of the 5 year average, there has been an increase in the percentage of heavy lambs with heavy carcasses (>85 pounds), as well as an increased proportion of over finished, Yield Grade 4 lambs. The \$1,000 provided by the Board helps fund the \$2,500 + premiums that are

paid to participants, rewarding them for premium carcasses. The average carcass premium ranges from \$10 to \$50 per head dependent upon carcass ranking. Several board members expressed the value the program provides to lamb breeders, growers, and consignors.

### **Market Animal Show Carcass Contest**

Augusta County Extension Agent, John Benner provided the report on the Augusta County Market Animal Show (MAS) Carcass Contest. During the 2017 contest 86 lambs were scanned by Dr. Andy Meadows, providing carcass data on live animals. All information was put into an excel sheet, ranked, and distributed to the showers and families at their annual awards banquet along with the recognition of the winners. The carcass contest allows the MAS exhibitors to receive carcass data on their live show animals, giving them an indication of how they would rank from a commercial standpoint.

### **Make It With Wool Contest**

Martha Polkey reported that the re-instated Make It With Wool (MIWW) contest held in September 23, 2017 at the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival was a success. Though participation was low, the quality of the entries was high and with more contest exposure, the number of participants is expected to grow. Martha voiced the plans to send the 2018 youth winner to the ASI convention held in January 2019.

### **Review Budget**

The Budget Worksheet was discussed which showed FY2016-2017 actual expenditures, FY2016-2017 budget and spending requests, and FY2017-2018 spending to occur before the next board meeting.

An increase in meeting expenses to \$2,000 was agreed upon to help cover the added cost of all the board members in attendance as well as the planning of a second meeting in the FY 17-18.

\$600 was budgeted for lamb board promotional items to allow for the purchase of more items promoting lamb. Matthew Sponaule orders items that is put on display and handed out at the Sheep Symposium as well as given out as prizes for events and as advertisement at promotional events.

The \$500 for the Sheep Website is budgeted in case there are expenses, which have been minimal. VSIB has agreed to assist the VSPA with website expenses if needed. Larry Weeks explained that he had been in contact with VSPA web site representatives and was excited about the potential of expanding their website in 2018 to include more information of events and happenings of the Virginia sheep industry.

\$1,000 was budgeted for the VA State Fair Lamb Carcass Contest to help pay premiums paid to participants based on carcass merit. Board members expressed appreciation for the information that the contest provided to the showers and producers alike as well as the value of 19 years of data trends.

The board voiced their appreciation for the services that USDA-APHIS provided for livestock producers around the state in assistance in predator control. Matthew Miller recommended an increase in budgeted amount from \$5,000 to \$7,500 to help insure that their services continue.

The board discussed both line items: 'Lamb Marketing' & 'Festival Promotions' in hopes of clarifying their purposes. The board designates up to \$1,000 for each line item, to be used throughout the year (FY 17-18). 'Lamb Marketing' is to make funds available for lamb marketing promotional tools and workshops if needed. 'Festival Promotions' is to be used as

sponsorship for upcoming festivals around the state that plan to promote lamb and lamb products. To request funds, a proper request form needs to be submitted. After submission, the VSIB program manager, along with the current president or vice president will review the items, deciding on funding amounts. A maximum of \$250 will be granted to any one group seeking funds from these line items. The Bedford County fair was awarded a \$250 amount under the lamb marketing/promotion line item for the FY 17-18 to help promote a 'lamb day' at their county fair. Given the minimal historical response to these two line items in the past, the board agreed to reduce the amounts to \$500 each for the FY 18-19.

The board agreed to grant the Virginia FFA Foundation \$550 to help recognize the Virginia Sheep Proficiency Awards. Rosalea Potter explained that the Virginia FFA offers two sheep proficiency awards each year that include Entrepreneurship where the recipient has ownership in the enterprise and a placement award that recognizes individuals that work within or for someone in the industry that incorporates best management practices.

The board decided to increase the budget amount for the Sheep Symposium to \$750 for the FY 17-18 and to \$1,000 for the FY 18-19. Traditionally, the board has budgeted \$500 and the money has been used to purchase the lamb served during the Symposium. Board members expressed that the extra funds available could be used to help cover other expenses of the symposium such as advertisement or program speakers.

A request for funding was made on behalf of the Augusta County Market Animal Show to help continue a youth lamb ultrasound & carcass merit contest. The board agreed to allocate funds at \$5 /head, up to a maximum of \$500, for FY 17-18. The show represents around 250 lambs each year and occurs in the first part of May.

Martha Polkey talked about the Make It With Wool competition that the Wool Outreach Committee of the VSPA held in 2017. Started in 1947, the competition is a youth-centered sewing competition to promote the beauty and versatility of wool fabrics, yarns, and fibers. The 2018 contest will once again be held in September at the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival. The MIWW was allocated \$500 in FY 17-18 to use as they saw fit in putting on the contest. The board decided to allocate \$1,000 for the FY 18-19 to the MIWW contest to specifically help assist in the cost of sending the youth winner to the National ASI Convention in January 2019.

This past year (November 2017), the Virginia State 4-H Livestock Judging team competed in the national contest in Louisville, KY. The board agreed to provide \$500 annually for the Virginia State 4-H livestock judging team's expenses, as well as an additional \$500 for international travel when the team wins the national contest. The state FFA judging teams were included in the discussion, deciding the VSIB should also provide \$500 for international travel, if they were to win the national FFA livestock judging contest.

VSIB decided to budget money towards a new line item, titled 'Carcass Evaluation Support'. Corey Childs, a northern Virginia Extension agent, explained that many livestock shows in the state have historically held carcass contest to accompany their youth livestock shows. Unfortunately, an increase in cost have caused many to decrease. The Augusta MAS contest was brought up as a successful contest the past two years. After much discussion, the VSIB allocated \$500 in FY 17-18 and \$1,500 in FY 18-19. Formal written request for this money must be made to the board by the January 2019 meeting explaining the details of the contest. The board will then determine how to and where to grant funds under this line item. For contest occurring before January 2019, a formal written request to Rosalea Potter, VSIB President, or Matthew Sponaugle, VSIB Program Manager must be made and Rosalea Potter and Matthew Miller will review and decide on funding. Request will be reviewed on a first come first serve basis.

## Action on Spending Requests

A motion was made by Larry Weeks and seconded by Alvin Thomas to approve the FY2017-2018 as well as FY2018-2019 Budget with the following project spending requests.

### FY 2017-2018

Meeting Expense	\$2,000.00
Agency Service Charge	\$ 175.00
Lamb Board Promotional Items	\$ 600.00
Sheep Website	\$ 500.00
State Fair Lamb Carcass Contest	\$1,000.00
USDA Wildlife Services	\$7,500.00
Festival Promotion	\$1,000.00
Lamb Marketing/Promotion	\$1,000.00
Virginia FFA Foundation	\$ 550.00
Shepherd's Symposium	\$ 750.00
MAS lamb carcass contest	\$ 500.00
Make It With Wool Contest (MIWW)	\$ 500.00
VA 4-H Judging team (annual)	\$ 500.00
VA 4-H Judging team (international travel)	\$ 00.00
VA FFA Judging team (international travel)	\$ 00.00
Carcass Educational Support	\$ 500.00

### FY 2018-2019

State Fair Lamb Carcass Contest	\$1,000.00
Festival Promotions	\$ 500.00
Lamb Marketing / Promotional	\$ 500.00
Shepherd Symposium	\$1,000.00
Make It With Wool Contest (MIWW)	\$1,000.00
VA 4-H Judging team (annual)	\$ 500.00
Carcass Educational Support	\$1,500.00

The motion passed unanimously.

**Other Business** - none

**Public Comment** - none

### Future Meeting Date

Two future meetings were set. One to be held in conjunction with the Steels Tavern Ram Test in Raphine, VA and the next will be planned to be held in conjunction with the next Shepherds Symposium.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Sponaule, Secretary