

**Conference and Strategic Planning Meeting of the VA FFA Board of Directors/Advisory Board Council –**  
4:00PM – Tuesday, April 14, 2015 – Staunton Church of the Brethren - Staunton, VA

**Members in Attendance:** Alan Webb, Brian Alexander, Brian Fisher, Carly Woolfolk, Cindy Blaha, Dana Fisher, Darryl Holland, Edward McCann, Elizabeth Duncan, Jessica Jones, Katie Reames, Lane Woodward, Larry Case, Mitch Wallace, Rick Rudd, Ron Byrd, Ron Daughtry, Scott Massie, Sherry Heishmann, and Ted DeLano.

Brian Alexander called the meeting to order. This is a meeting of the advisory council and the different organizations that support the work of the body. Advisory Council does have voting members and voting members should know their roles and keep along with Roberts Rules as much as possible.

Brian Alexander distributed the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting.

Katie Reames moved to suspend the reading of the minutes. Cindy Blaha seconded. **Motion passed.**

**Old Business**

Brian Alexander asked Lane Woodward if there was any old business that she thought needed to be brought up. Woodward brought up the Turfgrass Management career development event being addressed from previous minutes. She stated she had received an email from John Borst about Nursery Landscaping and Special Needs Horticulture career development events and potentially there could be a committee that would look at what we had already done in the past. Cindy Blaha stated that the contest had been done away years ago because there was a lack of interest and wasn't deemed to be feasible because it was difficult to get an ex-officio and students who were involved. Carly Woolfolk asked if Woodward already had a committee in place. Woodward stated she didn't have a committee in place but was working on it and had already distributed an interest sheet to some of the individuals in the room. Woolfolk stated we no longer have a Specialty Horticulture class. Blaha asked what courses we would be looking at to address the needs of the career development event. Woodward stated that we would be integrating the course numbers that already existing and no reinventing the wheel.

**FFA Foundation Update**

Dana Fisher stated Foundation has hired Tonya Pruitt, a part-time assistant. She will have her first baby in June and will be out of the office and the position will be refilled soon. Fisher stated that the position is based in Blacksburg because the accounts are held there. Pruitt helped with funds coming in BOAC grants, getting reorganized and accounts (\$1.8 million in investment accounts). Last year with the Wic Coleman and Glenn Anderson Leave a Legacy fund cost. The Foundation reception will be at the German Club again this year and run on a similar schedule. Convention for us last year was about \$5000-\$7000 and will be similar this year. Most of the commodity boards came in like it has in the past as well as fruit money. Of the \$0.50 that goes to Foundation, \$0.10 goes to VAAE. Ron Byrd stated that the fruit checks have come in and were deposited. Working on the Turner Trice Leave a Legacy and get to the \$5000 mark before convention and get Trice at convention to be presented the Legacy. Blaha asked has there been any restitution for the Todd Mills issue. D. Fisher stated Mills paid \$60,000 the day he was sentenced and is now in prison and there will be no restitution while he is in jail, but once he is out in four years, the Foundation can pursue a portion of his salary. Larry Case noted that the Foundation is glad to take checks, but individuals can donate online. Case stated Foundation has started a campaign to get money flowing into Foundation. The campaign is a committee based campaign to get donations into the Foundation. Case stated at the last Foundation meeting, Ron Saacke challenged Agricultural Education teachers to state what they need, outside of awards, what are the true needs. Case stated

that the entire Foundation board is excited about this opportunity and funding more toward a vision and mission of an organization and that brings in more donors because they see that the organization is committed to a true benefit to students. Case stated that Foundation is working toward building its capacity to provide resources to suit the needs of the organization and the students, but the Foundation is not there and it will take several years to get there. Case stated that the Foundation passed a policy that says the structure is in place for donations flowing into the Foundation. Blaha asked were there a list of general talking points that Foundation could send out so there was a consistent message that would be stated. D. Fisher stated he has a draft, but Sarah Hanks will send that out once the Foundation has the chance.

### **National FFA Update**

Frank Saldana stated that MyFFA and MyJourney branding and resources will be coming down to the states in the coming months and he will be providing an update during Ag Teachers' Conference in the summer. Saldana stated that information had been sent to state staff and that as long as the logo is being used properly and is doing a great job to recognize the organization. Saldana stated the AgCN information has not gone away, but just merged into the new website. Saldana stated that the roster is cumbersome as it's only used once or twice a year and will be improved to make it more user-friendly.

### **National FFA Alumni Update**

Larry Case stated that National FFA is allowing 100% affiliation (pay \$100 or the equivalent to \$10 per 10 members, and you would be able to add as many names to the roster as you would like). Case stated the advantage is that you get a 501(c)3 and you would need to report to the IRS. There is a request on behalf of national and you can put it online once you have your charter: 1. Number of volunteers that you have utilized throughout the year; 2. An estimate of volunteer hours in the name of agricultural education; and 3. A general idea of the number of dollars raised in the name of agricultural education. You should be able to show that you have the number of volunteers that were able to log a particular number of hours in a particular effort in the name of agricultural education at the local level. Recently approved at the Council level where the state of Virginia can charter or approve non-traditional affiliates (i.e. Southern States would want to go statewide with some kind of affiliate where they would want to have their employees join). The idea that would be great for Virginia would be past state officers be the training core for the volunteers that need to know more about how to support agricultural education teachers and trainers in filling out proficiency applications and state degrees.

### **Virginia FFA Alumni Update**

Ron Byrd stated that for Virginia FFA Alumni has Highland County and Dinwiddie County as two new charters to the affiliation program. Byrd stated that if anyone needs help organizing, he is willing to travel and assist where needed. Byrd stated there is a new system with alumni just like that with FFA. Byrd stated we're back to where if you have alumni, send dues to him and he would verify them at the state level. Also at the Alumni, there will be plans to have the store at state convention. Case stated Tony Small has decided to leave the Executive Director of National Alumni and he would be a good speaker to have at their meetings on building relationships. Ron Byrd recognized that Larry Case is the President-Elect of the National FFA Alumni.

### **Virginia Young Farmers Update**

Ron Byrd stated that the tractor got leased back for auction at the conference back in January. Byrd stated that if you or if you know anyone who is interested in an affiliate membership, please have them contact him. Byrd stated Young Farmers has two big activities that the group organizes, and one of them includes tours in the summer and Jane McDonald is the president and is from Rockbridge County and is working on convention in Charlottesville area for the Young Farmers convention in January 2016.

### **Virginia Tech Update**

Rick Rudd stated we have a new undergraduate program in Teaching and Learning and making sure that everyone knows all the paths to achieve licensure. They can still do certification through CTE and get provisionally certified and pick up a Master's elsewhere. Hannah has moved to an extension appointment and has lost her research appointment. Donna is still working on the innovations program and going to advisory meetings. The T & L option is a mix of transfers, with the first set of graduates in 2016. Has Ellen Thompson talked to you about STAR (States Teach for Ag Ed Results) – program for states to focus on teacher shortages and what are the barriers to getting individuals into the teaching profession.

### **VDOE Update**

Carly Woolfolk stated the curriculum revisions have gone well so far. Woolfolk stated the last course that is task list only is the Agricultural Structural Systems and Agricultural Emerging Technologies and those will be done first in the fall. The thought on that would be doing a face-to-face with a follow-up. Katie Reames asked if agricultural education was at risk of losing any courses. Woolfolk stated the only course would be Land use and conservation management (six students enrolled in one school system). Woolfolk's recommendation would be to look at that course when the Introduction to Wildlife course is reviewed and see if the two could be merged together.

### **VAAE Update**

Katie Reames stated VAAE is working on the conference schedule and getting everything prepared for the summer.

### **VA FFA Financial Update**

Profit and Loss: Can see the expenses and dues accounts. Expenses for travel have all moved with Tech and should be filed underneath the grant. All of the travel that appears was built up from July to January before my arrival; saw the problem and had it moved. The money has been transferred back in Banner and Lane verified. The account manager is working to streamline entries and recode them (i.e. Office supplies are state officer supplies and rename will reflect that). There is a beginning balance of \$72,389.92 as of June 30, 2014 and as of March 31, 2015, the ending balance is \$39,787.59. On the balance sheet, as of April 14, 2015 when the account was pulled into Quick Books, the balance was \$42,959.59. The QuickBooks is fast on the deposit and slow on the debit. The expenses that are occurring in April 2015, there were National FFA Dues, partly reimbursements, and deposit for Belle of Louisville at National Convention.

Alexander asked about profit and loss, and national convention and what the entries aren't matching properly. Woodward stated that Jessica Tussing created a notebook of national convention items and must be combed because there's several discrepancies and issues need to be addressed as there are

several invoices still open as they weren't sent out correctly to recipients the first time. Woodward stated for example, Jessica Jones (Chatham Middle) received an invoice for national convention that included another school and that school wasn't invoiced, so, she will need to go back through the list of names and decipher who stayed in which rooms and assign the invoices correctly.

Sherry Heishmann wants to know specifically what the employee training conference is specifically. Woodward stated the employee training conference was an expense that occurred between July and January. Woodward stated that NLSCO isn't listed, so, unfortunately between Woodward and the account manager may be coding items that are not clearly indicated. Elizabeth Duncan stated when she worked in the state office that all items were categorized by event. Woodward stated that it still may be that way but when she ran the report, it may have excluded the categories. Woodward stated that Rick Rudd stated Virginia Tech will eat any of the travel that is not covered by the grant as it was three traveling before Woodward arrived. Mitch Wallace asked where did the money raised for the 2013-2014 state officers to travel to South Africa? B. Alexander stated he would check into and report back to Woodward.

The items that were moved was an Enterprise rental van for National Convention, an Enterprise rental car for Ron, FFA staff lodging, other lodging from National Convention, staff lodging from State Fair, B. Fisher stated that during the board meeting, Woodward indicated that there was \$180,000 in the account. Woodward stated that she was looking at the wrong report and asked the group to forgive her for the misrepresentation. Case asked if she knew how old the accounts are and Woodward stated that some go back to 2012 and there needs to be a sit down and cleanup process. Alexander stated that Andy Seibel came and spoke to the group in September 2014, and the only items he had receivable were still open were for some schools. All Virginia FFA bills had been paid. Edward McCann stated that schools/chapters used to get a summary/statement of account to reflect what credits and debits had come through Virginia Tech and that may help recoup some of the costs.

Woodward discussed the day to serve with she, Kim Black, and Daniel Black attending the Day to Serve training. Woodward stated the training was beneficial and is in the works in preparing for a Day of Service during state convention, like a Volleyball tournament. The theme would be to "Spike Out Hunger," and FFA members would be encouraged to enter their chapters to participate. Woodward stated that the focus would be on the YMCA and the community garden as the first Day of Service project and that would be limited to 50 students as it is a trial run.

The Day of Service grant is only available to the states that participate. 19 states are participating. Grant funds cannot be used for t-shirts or supplies, such as bottled water to give participants to drink. A or B options (A= 9-10; b=11-12) for schools that will be close to the Blacksburg area. Registration will be opened earlier and Woodward is entertaining the option of early registration. Darryl Holland mentioned that the Volleyball activity could be very extensive if every chapter participates, then it may be better suited if it goes by federation. Woodward said verbiage of writing the grant should be flexible to allow those who may have 20 students in their chapter who want to compete can do so, whereas, if chapters want to combine and be represented as a federation, that they would be able to do so. Woodward stated the hunger workshop will be offered three times as that is stipulated by the grant. Daniel Black has received the facilitators training and he will train this year's state officers and next year's states officers to receive the training. One workshop will be housed at Camp and the other at AES held at VSU/VT in the fall of 2015. It's a trunk load of chicken that will be donated by Tyson's to the state that raises the most pounds. Kim Black as the teacher coordinator of the project.

Woodward stated the room costs would remain the same as they have in the past, but the meals increased by 3%. There is an additional training that advisors and chaperones will need to perform. On school letterhead, the advisor will need to submit a background check letter to the state office in addition to the online training that Virginia Tech is having all volunteers complete as this is a new regulation starting this year. Anyone who works with students must go through the training and the training will need to be completed prior to coming to state convention.

The two dorms that will be used for state convention are Lee (female) and Pritchard (male) is under construction as they are putting in new elevators on the one half. Kenneth (VT Housing Coordinator) has not indicated the overflow dorm yet, but should be doing so in the near future. Woodward stated that as soon as she finds out she will communicate that to the teachers via the listserv.

Woodward stated for dining, VT Conference Services has expressed issues of too many people coming in at the same time and it's causing too many backups. Conference Services wants to have staggered times, so Woodward would need a recommendation from the group to have staggered times for 6:00AM and 6:15AM as a start to breakfast, which should alleviate the problem and still allow for an easier transition through the lines. The same would apply for dinner with a 5:00PM and 5:15PM start time.

Woodward stated convention committee assignments need to be cleaned up as there are teachers that are on the list that no longer teach, there are emails from committee chairs that have said they have too much help and need to have people removed, and there are people that have contacted Woodward that have said they want to be removed from their convention assignments. Woodward stated this document would be better off going on to teachers on a spreadsheet type format where they can pick and choose their committee assignments. Woodward stated she will do updates on the teacher's assignment list and will send out the revised list to advisory council by Friday, April 17 for review and feedback. The advisory council will give feedback and then Woodward will send the list out to the state by the first of May.

Jessica Jones stated that many teachers are not having difficulty with receiving information from the listserv, but accessing it from the Virginia FFA website. Jones stated the website platform Wix hosts pornography sites and school systems internet filters are blocking VA FFA content because of the Wix rating. Jones suggested changing the Wix platform to one more school and user friendly because teachers will be accessing the site for convention information and the site issues need to be addressed. Ed McCann stated other advisors had commented about the same issue and thought VA FFA was working to fix the problem. Woodward stated she would look into it and get the website repaired before state convention.

Jones stated that previous advisory council minutes and the council structure/representatives were posted on the website to make sure Ag teachers were kept informed and to maintain regulations with the Freedom of Information Act. Jones stated that when the website platform was changed to Wix, all advisory council/governing board information and minutes were removed. Woodward stated she was unaware of that and would work on getting the information back up on the website where it belongs so FOIA wasn't being violated.

Woodward stated that another change to convention would possibly have a carnival. It wouldn't be a circus type carnival, but a carnival where there would be inflatables and lip syncing for karaoke and chapters would get tokens for their kids. The cost would be \$3000 but there would be a fee for

electricity but not cost for the space as she is a Virginia Tech employee. Darryl Holland asked what about having an FFA dance as it has been in the past. Woodward stated she didn't research the avenue for a dance because teacher feedback wasn't favorable of having a dance. Ted DeLano asked what about a concert like what is done at National FFA. DeLano stated that VA FFA was going to have a concert last year, but it fell through. Woodward stated she had researched and found there is a company that does concerts and they cost \$3000-\$5000 up to \$8000. Alan Webb stated there had been discussion about having something different like a rodeo to switch things up for the kids. Alexander stated that the last time there was a rodeo it was held in Pulaski, but not sure of whom they would get to do the rodeo at this point. Jones stated she could contact Daniel Lanier, the owner and operator of True Grit Rodeo, who is a former FFA member and is always hosting rodeos at the Olde Dominion Ag Complex in Chatham specifically geared toward FFA members. Woodward stated it would be great to contact him and see what he says. Jones stated she would contact Lanier and would send the information to the council once she spoke with him. Woodward stated she would like to form a committee to help with logistics, such as facilities and transportation. She asked Jones, DeLano, and Heishmann to help out on the committee and that she would contact the committee by April 17 with more direction.

Woodward stated the state officers would like to have Greg Peterson once reviewing the other options from the first night. Woodward stated Greg Peterson for Monday night would for a \$2000 fee with air ticket from Wichita, KS be invited instead of the concert or carnival if that's what the group wanted to do.

## **Area Concerns**

**Eastern Area:** None

**Central Area:** Curious as to why GPS fee is so expensive, it seems like an event that more students could be brought to that is so cost prohibitive as it is \$17 per student. Woodward stated that going with Brandon Monk and his company "Name Your Brand" was the best fit as the project needed to get done in a short timeframe. Rick Rudd stated that there was an increase over last year. Woodward stated that it would be creative if the state officers could

**Southside Area:** None

**Appalachian Area:** None

**Northern:** If a student is not at Convention on Monday to register when can they register if they are competing in an event later in the week? This poses a problem for students who are coming up for single events that aren't held on Monday.

Ed McCann moved to adjourn the meeting. Brian Fisher seconded. ***Motion passed.***

Minutes of the meeting will be archived with previous minutes at [www.vaffa.org/abouts/advisory/html](http://www.vaffa.org/abouts/advisory/html).

Meeting adjourned at 6:35PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica M. Jones