

**Virginia Apple Board
December 14, 2015
Mrs. Rowe's Restaurant Staunton
FINAL Minutes**

Present

Lynn Graves
Steve Ginn
Marshall Saunders

Shannon Showalter
Dudley Rinker
John Bruguere

Heather McKay
Bethany Hill

Absent

Tommy Williams

Guest

Melissa Ball

David Robishaw

Call to Order

Chairman Graves called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM and welcomed members and guests.

Approve the minutes from December 15, 2014

John Bruguere moved to approve the minutes as presented. Dudley Rinker seconded the motion, and with no further discussion, the motion passed.

Financials

Prior to the meeting, the financials were distributed to all the Board members. Lynn reviewed cost codes 646, 647, 648. Lynn also reviewed the financials from the Virginia Apple Growers Association (VAGA). The Board noted that cost code 647 (reserve) was nearing its limit.

U. S. Apple Export Council

Prior to the meeting, the U.S. Apple Export Council (USAEC) bill was sent to the Board, along with recent export data and notes of support from Virginia shippers. The Board discussed the benefits of exporting for Virginia shippers and the work done by the current administration promoting exports. Dudley Rinker moved to fund the USAEC, Shannon Showalter seconded, and with no further discussion, the motion passed.

Distribution of Money

Every year, the Board decides the percentage distribution for US Apple, the Horticultural Society, Virginia Agricultural Research Program, and the funds for reserve and administration. After discussion, John Bruguere moved to fund US Apple at 20%, Horticultural Society 20%, VARP 20%, reserve fund 10%, and administration 10%. Based on collections, if the 10% set aside for the reserve funds exceeds the \$125,000 limit, any excess will remain in cost code 646. Heather McKay seconded the motion, and with no further discussion, the motion passed.

Potential Modification to the Apple Code

Chairman Graves reviewed the meeting between Virginia Agribusiness Council and VDACS that took place this summer. There is an effort to make all commodity boards uniform in the way they operate. The main changes for the Apple Board will be to reduce the number of members from 6 to 9, add Campbell County to District 3, and extend member terms from 3 to 4 years. After discussion, Dudley Rinker moved to support the changes to the Apple Code as outlined by the Virginia Agribusiness Council. John Bruguere seconded the motion, and with no further discussion, the motion passed.

Web Site

Chairman Graves updated the Board with the current status of the web site. There has not been much work on the web site because the current administrator has not completed the micro business certification. After a lengthy discussion, Steve Ginn moved to do what is necessary to source a provider to manage and maintain the web site, not to exceed \$4,500 annually. Heather McKay seconded, and with no other discussion, the motion passed.

Sponsorship Request

The Board got a request from an elementary school in Charlottesville for \$100 to use for cutting apples for the school kids. After a brief discussion, John Bruguere moved to fund this request, Bethany Hill seconded, and with no further discussion, the motion passed.

Pollinator update

Chairman Graves gave the Board on update on pollinators (bees), something Farm Bureau, Virginia Agribusiness Council, and the Board of Agriculture are working on. There will be legislation introduced in the General Assembly regarding pollinators that will have an impact on apple growers. The Board suggested the industry pay attention and follow the situation in the coming months.

Comments

John Bruguere mentioned the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) will be implemented in 2016 and it could have a major impact on growers, depending on your sales and whether you wholesale or retail. It may require growers to earn Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification and complete more paperwork, which is another cost and burden to the growers.

Next meeting and Adjourn

The next meeting date was not set, but it will be held in December. With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Lynn Graves, Chairman

David Robishaw, Secretary

