

Draft Minutes
Virginia Agricultural Council
WebEx Virtual Meeting
March 23, 2021

The Virginia Agricultural Council (VAC) met virtually on March 23, 2021. The meeting's purpose was to act upon new grant proposals submitted to the Council and to act upon second year funding for current projects.

View a recording of the meeting at
[VAC Grant Project Funding-20210323 1305-1](#) Passcode xTMAQAC6

Chairman T.D. Watkins asked Kendra Shifflett to review the virtual meeting requirements with the Board members. Kendra Shifflett shared the virtual meeting requirement with the group and informed the Council the meeting will be recorded. Chairman Watkins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He welcomed the members to meeting and Kendra Shifflett took a verbal roll call. There was a quorum.

Members present were:

Cathy Coffee	Travis Croxton
Philip Glaize	Gil Grattan
Ashley Hardesty	Sonny Meyerhoeffer
Justin Minor	Mark Newbill
Lynn St. Clair	Tia Walbridge
T.D. Watkins, III, Chairman	
Kendra Shifflett, Executive Director, VAC	

Members Absent:

Jason Bush
Kimberly Nixon
Dr. Alan Grant

Ex-officio members in attendance:

Jewel Bronaugh, Commissioner, VDACS
Dr. M. Ray McKinnie, Virginia State University

Guests in attendance included the following:

VDACS: Carol Brown
Dr. Saied Mostaghimi, VPI & SU

Chairman Watkins asked Dr. Bronaugh if she had any comments. Dr. Bronaugh thanked the Council for their work. She shared that she is preparing for her confirmation hearings as she received the nomination to serve as Deputy Secretary for the United States Department of Agriculture. Dr. Bronaugh assured the Council that the leadership at the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) will be left in good hands when she departs. She thanked the VDACS staff for their support. Chairman Watkins offered Dr. Bronaugh best wishes as she moves forward.

Chairman Watkins asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 4, 2020 virtual meeting. Sonny Meyerhoeffer motioned to adopt the minutes as presented, and Cathy Coffee seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous verbal votes of yes by all present Council members.

Chairman Watkins asked Kendra Shifflett to review the financial reports. Mrs. Shifflett reported the current revenues and expenditures as of June 30, 2021. The cash balance as of June 30, 2020, was \$562,733.56. Total balance and receipts are \$891,990.36. Expenses totaled \$236,783.57. Total expenditures are \$236,783.57. The cash balance as March 10, 2021 was \$655,207.26. Ms. Shifflett shared that expenditures are down due to COVID-19. Mr. Meyerhoeffer asked about the expenditure total. It was discovered that the total did not include the \$15,000 administrative expenses because it was not processed prior to March 10th. Mr. Minor asked how the funds will be managed for researchers during COVID. Ms. Shifflett explained that researchers will receive extensions to allow for completion of projects.

Current Financial Statement for			
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021			
Revenue and Expenditures			
Cash balance - June 30, 2020		\$	562,733.56
Add: Revenues			
Feed Tonnage	\$	230,385.22	
Seed		30,395.70	
Fertilizer Tonnage		45,020.48	
Lime Tonnage		21,258.75	
Motor Fuel		0.00	
Interest		2,197.22	
Miscellaneous		0.00	
		<u>329,257.37</u>	
Total Balance and Receipts		\$	891,990.93
Less - Expenses			
Administration		15,000.00	
Miscellaneous	\$	1,482.96	
Travel		0.00	
Grant Expenditures		<u>235,300.61</u>	
	\$	<u>236,783.57</u>	
Cash Balance - March 10, 2021		\$	655,207.36

Ms. Shifflett explained the Revenue Summary. The spreadsheet showed the revenue trends, revenue estimation and the five-year average of revenue coming in from the various funding sources. The estimates are consistent, and in general, revenue has been stable. Ms. Shifflett informed the Council that only half of the seed revenue has been received by the date of the meeting and that revenue will increase. The five year average is used to project the revenue for the next fiscal year and determine how much will be awarded for research projects. The revenue should be consistent with last fiscal year.

REVENUE SUMMARY 2016 - 2021							
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	5 YR AVERAGE	Difference
Feed Tonnage	\$ 191,504.19	\$ 263,455.18	271,020.90	278,111.79	230,385.22	246,895.46	(47,726.57)
Fertilizer Tonnage	\$ 41,670.56	\$ 41,310.49	42,673.69	41,031.55	45,020.48	42,341.35	3,988.93
Lime Tonnage	\$ 22,357.84	\$ 23,100.67	21,876.07	15,300.50	21,258.75	20,778.77	5,958.25
Motor Fuel/Interest/Misc.	\$ 1,943.10	\$ 745.44	14,709.32	7,895.44	2,197.22	5,498.10	(5,698.22)
NON SEED TOTAL	\$ 257,475.69	\$ 328,611.78	350,279.98	342,339.28	298,861.67	315,513.68	(43,477.61)
Seed	\$ 58,652.60	\$ 58,239.59	60,646.62	67,342.72	30,395.70	55,055.45	(36,947.02)
TOTAL	\$ 316,128.29	\$ 386,851.37	410,926.60	409,682.00	329,257.37	370,569.13	(80,424.63)

Ms. Shifflett continued with review of the Estimated Financial Status for Non-Seed. As of June 30, 2021, the cash balance was \$445,204.89. Revenue to date totals \$298,861.67 for a total of \$744,066.56. Expected expenses total \$567,829.48. Available funding for non-seed projects is estimated at \$491,750.76 and requests total \$332,298.00. Second year requests of previously funded projects total \$117,428.00. The total of requests for consideration total \$450,410.00. Chairman Watkins asked if Council can fully fund all project requests. Ms. Shifflett responded yes. Mr. Glaize asked if second year funding requests are for included in the projected outstanding grant expenditures. Ms. Shifflett explained that the second year funding request were submitted by researchers for projects needing two years for completion, and are not included in the outstand grant expenditures.

Projected Financial Statement for Non-Seed Grants			
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021			
Revenue and Expenditures			
Cash balance - June 30, 2020		\$	445,204.89
Add: Revenues (to date)			
Feed Tonnage	\$230,385.22		
Fertilizer Tonnage	\$45,020.48		
Lime Tonnage	\$21,258.75		
Interest/motor fuel/misc	\$2,197.22		
	<u>\$ 298,861.67</u>		
Total Balance and Receipts		\$	744,066.56
Less: Projected Expenses			
Administrative expense	\$ 10,000.00		
Miscellaneous	\$3,000.00		
Travel	\$0.00		
Grant payments to date (FY21)	\$208,509.99		
Outstanding Grant Expenditures	346,319.49		
	<u>\$ 567,829.48</u>		
Estimated Cash Balance June 30, 2021		\$	176,237.08
Estimated FY 2022 Revenue			315,513.68
Funds available for Approved Projects		\$	491,750.76
First Year New Requests		\$	332,982.00
Second Year Requests		\$	117,428.00
Total Requests		\$	450,410.00

Ms. Shifflett presented an overview of the Seed Grants. As of June 30, 2021, the cash balance was \$117,528.67. The total funds available from the seed fund this fiscal year will be \$133,952.42. Projected expenses total \$93,678.15. The first year requests from the seed fund are \$42,000. Second year requests of previously funded seed projects total \$22,830.00. The total of requests for consideration total \$58,380.00

Projected Financial Statement for Seed Grants			
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021			
Revenue and Expenditures			
Cash balance - June 30, 2020		\$	117,528.67
<i>Add: Projected Revenues (FY21)</i>			
	\$	55,055.45	
		\$	172,584.12
<i>Less: Projected Expenses</i>			
Administrative expense	\$	5,000.00	
Grant payments (to date)		26,790.62	
Outstanding Grant Expenditures		61,896.53	
	\$	93,687.15	
Estimated Cash Balance June 30, 2021		\$	78,896.97
Estimated FY 2022 Revenue		\$	55,055.45
Funds Available for Approved Projects		\$	133,952.42
First Year New Requests			36,000.00
Second Year Requests		\$	22,830.00
Total Requests		\$	58,830.00

Chairman Watkins moved to review the second year projects. The Council members reviewed the requests for second year funding. Tia Walbridge motioned to approve all of the second year projects. Phil Glaize seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous verbal votes of yes by all Council members present.

Projects Requesting Second Year Funding 2021-2022			
Last Name	Project Number	Project Title	Amount
Booher	752	Virtual Fencing to Enable Stream Exclusion Without a Physical Fence	\$ 2,000.00
Derr	755	Control of New Invasive Weed Species in Cool- and Warm-season Turfgrass	\$ 11,830.00
Ferreira	754	Assessing the Growing-degree-days to Optimize Harvesting Time of Small Grains and to Maximize Digestibility of Silage to Feed Dairy and Beef Cattle	\$ 9,000.00
Rideout	763	Maximizing Virginia Pumpkin Production Through Increased Understanding of Disease and Heat Tolerance	\$ 16,250.00
Shortridge	765	Improving Water and Nutrient Use Efficiency in Virginia Cropping Systems	\$ 10,000.00
Snyder	768	Seaside Aquaculture: Improving Hard Clam Broodstock	\$ 21,546.00
Stewart, R	770	Should Virginia Vineyards Bulldoze their Topsoil?	\$ 6,065.00
Williams	772	Determine The Growth Promoting Potential of Previously Undescribed Bacterial and Fungal Helpers to Support Soybean Yield; & Resilience to Environmental Variation	\$ 11,541.00
Yin	774	Innovative Packaging for Virginia Hops: Strategies to Preserve Premier Flavor and Physical Characteristics	\$ 7,000.00
Zhang, B.	775	Continue Developing Public, Roundup Ready® Soybean Varieties	\$ 12,181.00
Zhang, X	776	Land Application of Exceptional Quality (EQ) biosolids for Improved Soil Health and Drought Resistance of Tall Fescue Lawn	\$ 11,000.00
Zumbaugh	753	Determining the rate of ergot alkaloid degradation in ensiled toxic endophyte infected tall fescue during long-term storage	\$ 11,845.00
Total of Requests			\$ 130,258.00

Chairman Watkins asked that Council began discussing new proposed grant requests for fiscal year 2021-2022. Chairman Watkins directed the Council to look at the scoring sheets. He explained that the staff has entered the individual score sheet totals submitted by Council members into a primary score file. The projects are ranked from highest to lowest based on an average of the scores submitted by the VAC members. The primary score sheet has been divided into seed and main fund projects.

After a review of the seed funding requests, Gil Grattan motioned to approve all of the first year seed projects. Sonny Meyerhoeffer seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous verbal votes of yes by all Council members present.

Seed Funding Requests 2021-2022		
Presenter	Project Name	Amount Requested
Askew	Characterization of Targeted Weed Control Technologies in Managed Turf	\$ 14,000.00
Del-Pozo	Monitoring Annual Bluegrass Weevil (ABW) and the Use of Remote Sensing in Virginia Turfgrass Golf Courses	\$ 14,000.00
McCall	Evaluation of Blue Grama Cultivars as a Warm-Season Option for Low-Input Turfgrass in Virginia	\$ 14,000.00
	Total	\$ 42,000.00

After a review and discussion of non-seed funding requests, it was decided to fund requests that scored six or above. Mark Newbill motioned to approve funding for the first year projects ranked one through 18. Phil Glaize seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous verbal votes of yes by all Council members present.

Non-Seed General Funding Requests		
Presenter	Title	Amount Requested
Persia	Evaluation of Dietary Particle Size on the Growth Performance and Litter Moisture of Turkey Hens Raised without Antibiotics	\$ 20,000.00
Maroof	Development of High protein with Desirable Oil Soybean Cultivars	\$ 12,000.00

	Non-Seed General Funding Requests	
Zhao	Genetic Characterization of Cantaloupe Germplasm that Produces Fruits Without	\$ 8,000.00
Ovissipour	Enhancing Soybean Meal Demand and Market by Developing Soy Meal Based Aquafeeds	\$ 23,000.00
Oakes	Validating the Use of Aerial Imagery to Apply Nitrogen in Winter Wheat	\$ 15,000.00
Li	Developing GreenTram, a Low-Cost, Autonomous Device for Monitoring Crop Health in the Greenhouse	\$ 16,000.00
Dias	Exploring Vaginal Microbiome and pH Fertility Markers for Beef Cattle	\$ 15,500.00
Estienne	Mitigating the Negative Effects of Heat Stress on Reproductive and Lactation Performance in Sows	\$ 13,000.00
Wilson	Supplementation of Tannin-Rich Peanut Skins to Alleviate Fescue Toxicosis in Grazing Beef Cattle	\$ 11,446.00
Haines	The Hunt for a Bull Fertility Marker: Characterization of Phosphatidylserine (PS) in Bovine Sperm and its Role on Fertilization	\$ 14,500.00
Pancini	Impact of Early Life Nutrition and Supplementation of a Yeast Deprived Product in Beef Calves' Stress Response, Growth and Development	\$ 16,000.00
Ferreira	Comparing the Nutritional Effects When Feeding Virginia-Grown Grass Hay or Alfalfa Hay within the Rumen of Dairy Cattle	\$ 18,500.00
Balota	Helping Wheat and Soybean Breeding with More Accurate Selection Technologies	\$ 15,000.00
Stewart	Development of a Novel Technique to Synchronize and Breed Ewes Using Ram Seminal Plasma	\$ 15,000.00
Taghavi	Identify the Beneficial Endophytes from Turmeric Plants	\$ 20,000.00
Welbaum	Using natural Medicinal Plant-based Supplements to Maintain Animal Health to Reduce Reliance on Antibiotics	\$ 22,000.00
Cockrum	Single Use Bio-Based Plastics: Impact on Rumen Function and Feed Efficiency In Dairy Heifers	\$ 19,000.00

	Non-Seed General Funding Requests	
Abaye	Introducing Mungbean as an Alternative of Rotation Crop to Tobacco in Virginia	\$ 17,000.00
	Projects Approved for Funding Total	\$ 290,946.00
Bhardadwaj	Establishment of White Lupin as Winter Legume in Virginia as a Source of Protein	\$ 26,148.00
Hamlin	Evaluating the Potential Dual Use of Hemp Produced for Phytoremediation Purposes	\$ 15,888.00
	Grand Total for Proposals Submitted	\$ 332,982.00

Business Session

There were no public comments.

Chairman Watkins opened the floor for discussion for the August 2021 meetings. After discussion, it was decided that the August meeting will be held on Thursday, August 26, 2021 at 9 a.m. and the meeting will be held virtually.

Sonny Meyerhoeffer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Cathy Coffee seconded. By unanimous vote of the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Approved:

Tscharner D. Watkins, III,
Chairman

Cecil W. Meyerhoeffer
Vice-Chairman