

FINAL MINUTES
VIRGINIA SOYBEAN BOARD MEETING

Richmond, Virginia
August 22, 2023

I. **Attendance**

Board Members Present

Craig H. Giese, ***Chairman***
Bill Nelson, ***Vice Chairman***
Colin Whittington
Susan Watkins
Linda Smith
Ray Keating
Lynn Gayle
Robert White
Harrison Moody
Ronnie Russell
Phil Hickman, Program Director

Board Members Absent

Tom Taliaferro

Guests

Rachel Gresham, Virginia Soybean Association, Goochland, Virginia
Gayle Terry, Virginia Soybean Association, Goochland, Virginia
Mike Bryant, Virginia Soybean Association, Lottesburg, Virginia
Easton Kuboushek, Soy Aquaculture Alliance, Ankeny, Iowa
David Holshouser, Virginia Tech, Suffolk, Virginia

- II. **Call to Order** – Chairman Giese called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked the group for their service to the Virginia Soybean Industry and for taking their time to attend the meeting.
- III. **Reading and Approval of Minutes** – Ronnie Russell moved and Colin Whittington seconded a motion for the Board to dispense with the reading of the March 16, 2023 minutes and to approve them as presented. Motion passed.
- IV. **Financial Statement** – Phil Hickman presented the financial statement that reflected revenues and expenditures from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. The Financial Statement showed that on June 30, 2023 there was a total balance of \$3,333,204.29; the Board had expended \$1,596,585.27 with \$11,329.42 in unspent funds for FY 2022-23 projects; \$500,000.00 in reserve; \$781,624.00 approved for FY 2023-24 projects; \$454,995.02 available for allocation to new projects. Bill Nelson moved and Harrison Moody seconded motion for the Board to accept the Financial Statement as presented. Motion passed.

- V. **Area Reports** – Each member present reported on the crop conditions in their respective area of the Commonwealth. Generally, board members reported that the 2023 crop looks good. However, members reported that hot and dry conditions were prevailing across the state and the crop will need moisture soon to help the full season beans fill pods and the double crop beans to enhance growth. It was reported that the Culpepper and Louisa areas have been dry all season.
- VI. **Research Report** – Phil Hickman presented a letter from Dr. Matthew Chappell who is the Director of the Tidewater Agricultural Research & Extension Center. The letter pointed out that the School of Plant & Environmental Sciences is currently interviewing four candidates for the Grain Crops Agronomist position, Dr. Hunter Frame (chair of the hiring committee) and hiring members of the Soybean Agronomist position are currently evaluating applicants for this position and it is their intention to present an offer to the successful candidate no later than the end of September, Mr. Chis Buck was hired as the senior field technician for the Tidewater AREC Soybean Agronomy program in May, at the College (CALs) level, Dr. Mary Burrows has stepped into Dr. Mostaghimi's role as Director of Virginia Agriculture Experiment Station and Dr. Chappell wanted to express on behalf of CALs and the Tidewater AREC their gratitude for continued support and he hoped to introduce the new Soybean Agronomist at the next Virginia Soybean Board meeting.
- VII. **Virginia Soybean Association Report** – Rachel Gresham and Gayle Terry reported on the activities of the Virginia Soybean Association. The reports included the following topics. The 2023 Virginia Ag Expo, the 2023 Virginia State Fair, the 2024 Soybean State Staff meeting, Soy Shoes, Soy Tires, New Soy House, Eastern Shore Farm Tour, the 2024 Virginia Ag Expo will be held at Level Green Farm that is operated by Ryan & Stephen Ellis, an American Soybean Association checkoff flyer and an Anti-Checkoff Bill that has been brought up in Congress and 95% of the Virginia Soybean Association's activities are concentrated in the promotion, education and marketing areas.
- VIII. **United Soybean Board Update & Soy Tire Project Update** – Susan Watkins provided updates on activities at the United Soybean Board and the Virginia Soy Tire Project. Some of the topics discussed were that she and Shannon Ellis attended the July meeting of the United Soybean Board that was held in Niagara Falls, New York, the 77 farmer leaders serving on the United Soybean Board approved a \$191.5 million dollar budget for the 2024 fiscal year budget, she and Shannon are on the Health & Nutrition Committee which has a budget of \$12 million dollars, New CEO search as Poly Ruhland will be leaving the United Soybean Board in December and Shannon Ellis is on that committee, the 2025 summer meeting will be held in Virginia, podcasts, attendance at the September Women in Agribusiness meeting that will take place in Nashville, Susan thanked everyone for their help with the soy tire promotion that took place at the 2023 Virginia Ag Expo, Karen Edwards manned the soy tire booth at the Ag Expo, the need to continue to plan more activities to get exposure for soy and Susan thanked the Virginia Soybean Board for giving her the opportunity to represent Virginia on the United Soybean Board.

- IX. **Soy Aquaculture Alliance** - Robert White reported that he attended the August 2022 Soy Aquaculture Alliance Board meeting that was held in Maine. He indicated that he learned about some research that is taking place regarding the growing of families of fish and then releasing them out into the wild and he indicated that there is an amazing amount of research going on in the aquaculture industry. Easton Kuboushek who is the Executive Director of the Soy Aquaculture Alliance and is housed out of the Iowa Soybean Association provided an update on the new structure at the Alliance and how the organization operates since he took over the organization from Kenlon Johannes. He indicated that they focus their research on the diets of fish and shrimp and the SAA works to increase the production of Aquaculture in the United States. Easton said that there are 12 other states that are members and they have a budget of \$800,000. Easton highlighted the fact that the Virginia Soybean Board would qualify for a Class B membership that would cost \$10,000 and provide Virginia with one seat on their Board of Directors. Ronnie Russell moved and Linda Smith seconded the motion for the Virginia Soybean Board to fund a Class B membership in the Soy Aquaculture Alliance in the amount of \$10,000 for the period July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. Motion passed.
- X. **Annual Audit** - Phil Hickman indicated that an auditor needed to be secured to perform the FY 2022-23 Virginia Soybean Board Annual Audit as required by the United Soybean Board and or Federal Law. Ronnie Russell moved and Harrison Moody seconded a motion for the Board to approve securing and compensating Joyner, Kirkham, Keel & Robertson in the amount of \$3,500.00 to perform the FY 2022-23 Virginia Soybean Board Annual Audit. Motion passed.
- XI. **First Purchaser Audits:** Phil Hickman reported that Joyner, Kirkham, Keel & Robertson had selected the following first purchasers for compliance audits during 2023. Farmers United, Inc., The Mennel Milling Company of Virginia, Montague Farms, Inc., and Surry Grain. Phil Hickman reported that the United Soybean Board and or Federal Law require these audits. Harrison Moody moved and Linda Smith seconded a motion for the Board to approve securing and compensating Joyner, Kirkham, Keel & Robertson, PC to perform the 2023 Virginia Soybean Board First Purchaser Audits, Generate Reports to the Board/First Purchasers, Draft Penalty Letters for the Board and anything else related to completing first purchaser compliance audits and work related to those audits. Motion passed.
- XII. **First Purchaser Compliance** – Phil Hickman presented Joyner, Kirkham, Keel & Robertson, PC's first purchaser compliance report for the quarter that ended March 31, 2023. The report indicated that 25 first purchasers had filed timely reports with assessments totaling \$374,076.58; four remitters had filed late assessments totaling \$102,271.69 with penalties paid of \$2,085.15. In summary, there were 29 total first purchasers, \$476,348.27 in assessments paid, and four penalties paid totaling \$2,085.15.

- XIII. **Annual Work Plan:** Phil Hickman indicated that he had presented on August 10, 2023 the FY 2023-24 Virginia Soybean Board’s Annual Marketing Plans & Budget to the United Soybean Board.
- XIV. **Virginia Soybean Project Management Portal:** Craig Giese reported that he and Phil have a meeting scheduled on August 30th with Fuel Digital to discuss improvements and enhancements to the Virginia Soybean Project Management Portal for FY 2023-24.
- XV. **Next Meeting** – The Board will hold its next meeting on Tuesday December 13, 2023 at the Colonial Soil and Water District Office in Williamsburg.
- XVI. **Public Comment** – Chairman Giese asked for public comment. There was none.
- XVII. **Adjournment** – There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip T. Hickman, Secretary

These minutes have been approved as written.

Craig H. Giese, Chairman