



Draft Minutes

VIRGINIA CORN BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Mechanicsville, VA 23111

I. Attendance

Board Members Present

L. Hayden Eicher, *Chairman*
Wesley Marshall, *Vice Chairman*
Virginia Barnes
Wallick Harding
E. Philip Hickman
Elizabeth Cooper
Shannon Ellis
Raymond Keating
Savannah McQuarrie
Wanda Lambert
Laura Maxey-Nay, Program Director

Board Members Absent

David Coleman

Guests

Sadie Knight, National Corn Growers Association
Leigh Hubbard, Virginia Grain Producers Association
Taylor Hubbard, Virginia Grain Producers Association
Hunter Frame, PhD Virginia Tech
Olga Walsh, PhD Virginia Tech (virtually)
Melissa Ball, VDACS

- II. **Call To Order** – Chairman Eicher called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. and thanked the group for their service to the Virginia Corn Industry and for taking their time to attend the meeting.
- III. **Reading and Approval of Minutes** – Wallick Harding moved, and Ray Keating seconded a motion for the Board to dispense with the reading of the February 1, 2024 minutes and to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed.

III. Financial Report- Laura Maxey-Nay presented the Financial Statement that reflected revenues and expenditures for Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024) close out and the Financial Statement for July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024. The Fiscal Year 2024 financial report showed that on June 30, 2024, there was a total balance of \$1,512,537.07 which includes receipts of \$511,629.98, interest of \$37,699.56 and expenditures of \$463,433.60.

The Financial statement for July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024, shows a total balance of \$1,090,891.21 which included \$41,787.74 in receipts and \$0.00 in interest. The Board had expended \$291,008.67 this fiscal year with \$248,315.33 outstanding for FY 2024-25 projects: \$300,000.00 in reserve and \$251,567.21 available for allocation to new projects. Wallick Harding moved, and E. Philip Hickman seconded a motion for the Board to accept the financial report as presented. Motion passed.

IV. Old Business- Chairman Eicher asked for old business items for discussion; None was presented.

V. Conflict of Interest Training- Justin Bell from the Attorney General’s Office trained all Board Members present on their Conflict-of-Interest responsibilities. All present completed the training which is required of all Board Members every two years.

VI. Area Reports- Each member of the Board reported on the 2024 corn crop conditions and outcomes in their respective area of the Commonwealth. Board members reported that the 2024 season was a rough one for corn. Most reported poor corn quality due to drought. The poor corn crop was often mowed down or cut for silage/cattle. High aflatoxin levels were reported in the higher yielding fields which negatively impacted sales. The Eastern Shore reported the best yields for the commonwealth, but only average yields were harvested.

VII. Virginia Tech Research Update – Dr. Hunter Frame opened with thanking the Board for their letter of support for his project. The new project will look for optimal fertilization practices for corn with limited nutrient runoff into our waterways, especially the Chesapeake Bay. Dr. Frame reported that he is finishing up the multi-year irrigation project funded by the Board. His report from the project will include the combination of irrigation, fertilization, seeding rate and plant spacing which result in optimal yields. Dr. Frame also reported progress on the cover crop project funded by the Board.

Dr. Olga Walsh joined the meeting virtually to report on her fertilization trials on corn. Dr. Walsh requested that farmers share their needs to direct research efforts. Dr. Walsh is planning a Corn School and a Soil Nutrient Management Conference for Virginia in 2025.

VIII. Virginia Grain Producers Association– Taylor Hubbard reported on some of the major areas of work for the Virginia Grain Producers Association which included the State Fair of Virginia, Consumer and Producer Resources, Industry Promotion and Market Development, participation in local field days, Virginia Cooperative Extension meetings, Virginia Agribusiness Council events, the NCGA Corn Board, new logo, membership, Annual Virginia Corn & Soybean Conference, the 2024 & 2025 Virginia Ag Expos and the annual Golf Tournament. Mr. Hubbard highlighted *Medius*, a new digital research platform which centralizes and streamlines public

access to Virginia Tech and other land-grant university's data. A tutorial for using this new technology is available on YouTube and anyone can access this tool at <https://viriniagrains.medius.re/>

- IX. National Corn Growers Association** – Sadie Knight, National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Director of Grassroots and Political Strategy reported on some of the activities related to the National Corn Growers Association which included NCGA's appreciation for Virginia's long-standing relationship with NCGA, the election results' expected impact on corn markets, Virginia's contribution to CornPAC efforts, their focus on market development during the lame duck, FARM Act for securing disaster and economic assistance, and getting more value from corn with E15 implementation. NCGA is developing a trade and tariffs tool for better understanding of international and national market access. They are also working with Mexico to sustain the current trade agreements. NCGA is working with the United Soybean Association to create a report showing how tariffs will impact U.S. markets. NCGA is focusing on biofuels via the Next Generation Fuels Act, 45Z tax credit, and fighting foreign feed stock from being favored nationally. Lastly, NCGA anticipates President Elect, Donald Trump, will focus on the Tax Cuts and Job Act early on in his presidency.
- X. U.S. Grains Council**– Chairman Eicher reported on Virginia's activities at U.S. Grains Council (USGC) meetings. Chairman Eicher networked with delegations from Moraco and is excited for Virginia's future with them.
- XI. Annual Report** – Laura Maxey-Nay presented and distributed the Virginia Corn Board Annual Report that had been written for fiscal year 2023-24 and indicated that the report will be submitted to the Commissioner of Agriculture's office for publication on the VDACS website. Wesley Marshall moved, and Virginia Barnes seconded a motion for the Board to accept the report as presented. Motion passed.
- XII. Financial Disclosure Statements:** Laura Maxey-Nay made the Board aware of their responsibility to complete their Financial Disclosure Statement. She explained to the group that they would be receiving an e-mail from the Ethic Council after January 1, 2025, with instructions for completing the form online. She explained the critical importance of them completing the statement.
- XIII. Electronic meeting policy:** Laura Maxey-Nay proposed an electronic meeting policy to be included in the Virginia Corn Board's Handbook. The Board highlighted that two in-person meetings are still required annually. The Electronic Meeting Policy is used only when additional meetings are needed. If an electronic meeting is required, all attendees must attend virtually, and hybrid options are not required to be made available. Likewise, if an in-person meeting is being held, all attendees must be present and hybrid options are not required to be made available. The Board will follow *VDACS Policy 2.3* for electronic meetings. Wanda Lambert made a motion to approve the electronic meeting policy as stated above, Ray Keating seconded, and the motion passed.
- XIV. Handbook-** Laura Maxey-Nay updated the Virginia Corn Board's Handbook to include a Board approved electronic meeting policy, Chair/ Vice-Chair duties related to grants and contracts, a

matrix tool to assist in funding proposal selection, and allowable and unallowable costs for projects funded by check-off funds. Shannon Ellis made a motion to approve the Handbook with discussed edits, Wanda Lambert seconded, and the motion passed.

- XV. Other New Business**- Chairman Eichert requested that the Virginia Grain Producer's Association include funds in their Fiscal Year 2026 budget for plaques to recognize past Board Member for their many years' service to the Virginia Corn Board. Plaques were requested for Chuck McGhee, Henry Goodrich, Heath Bray and William Crossman.

Chairman Eichert also requested that the Virginia Grain Producer's Association include funds in their Fiscal Year 2026 budget for Virginia Corn Board, professional headshots and group photo.

A website for the Virginia Corn Board was discussed and Laura Maxey-Nay was asked to explore how to accomplish this. Maxey-Nay was asked to have a proposal to present to the Board at the next meeting.

- XVI. Nomination & Election of Officers for 2025**

Chairman

The floor was opened for Chairman nominations. Wesley Marshall nominated Hayden Eicher to serve as the Board's Chairman during the year 2025. Ray Keating seconded the nomination and moved for the nominations to be closed and Hayden Eicher to be elected by acclamation. Motion passed.

Vice Chairman

The floor was opened for Vice Chairman nominations. Virginia Barnes nominated Wes Marshall to serve as the Board's Vice Chairman during the year 2024. Wallick Harding seconded the nomination and moved for the nominations to be closed and Wes Marshall to be elected by acclamation. Motion passed.

U.S. Grains Council – Representatives

The floor was opened for discussion regarding Virginia representation at the U.S. Grains Council in 2025. Shannon Ellis moved and Wallick Harding seconded the motion for Wesley Marshall and Hayden Eicher to represent Virginia on the U.S. Grains Council in 2025 and for Virginia Barnes to serve as an alternate representative to the U.S. Grains Council if Wesley Marshall and/or Hayden Eicher are not able to attend 2025 U.S. Grains Council meetings. Motion passed.

- XVII. Next Meeting** – The Board will hold its next annual funding meeting on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at the Virginia Farm Bureau West Creek Office in Richmond, VA.

- XVIII. Public Comment** – Chairman Eicher asked for public comment. There was none.

- XIX. Adjournment** – There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:39 am.