

Final Minutes
Virginia Cattle Industry Board
February 27, 2025 - 10:00 AM
Hotel Roanoke
Roanoke, VA

Presiding: Bill Tucker, Chairman

Roll Call:

Members Present

Julia Jones
Bill Tucker
Bob Threewitts
Richard Lloyd
Nick McNeil
David Coleman
Cecilia Moyer

Members Absent

Perry Huffman
Matthew Hill
Buddy Shelton
Andy Smith

Staff Present

Matthew Sponaugle, VDACS Liaison

Others Presents

William Morris – VCA
Samuel Hadacek – VCA
Lisa McCormick – VT

Brandon Reeves – VCA
Stephanie Weiss – VBC

Public Comment

Brandon Reeves gave an update on Virginia Cattlemen’s Association (VCA) and some of the work they had been doing within the industry. Virginia’s presence at the NCBA convention in San Antonio, TX this winter was well received and Gene Copenhaver from Meadowview, VA was appointed President Elect. This will make him the first Virginia producer to be elected president of the NCBA, which will officially take place at the 2026 National Convention. Reeves reported that the VCA foundation had been busy assisting with hurricane relief programs in South West Virginia and that many funds had been raised from producers / industry friends around the state. VCA is making plans to work with the local Virginia Cooperative Extension Services to continue assessing need and distributing items / funding as needed. VCA will be hosting the Virginia Beef Expo in Harrisonburg, VA this April and many are looking forward to the strong trade show and cattle sales which accompany it. Lastly, Reeves shared that Virginia would be hosting the NCBA Region 1 meeting this year which will take place in September. Following his report, Reeves answered questions pertaining to different items he had discussed.

Grant Updates:

No grant updates were given.

Financial Report

Richard Lloyd reviewed the financial report as presented below:

Summary:		
Cash Balance:	June 30, 2024	\$1,220,193.23
Receipts through:	January 31, 2025	\$177,864.94
Interest through:	January 31, 2025	\$26,438.95
Expenditures through:	January 31, 2025	-\$225,342.45
Cash Balance:	January 31, 2025	\$1,199,154.45
Committed / Unpaid (Grants):	January 31, 2025	\$473,429.69
Committed / Unpaid (Admin)	January 31, 2025	\$28,825.62
Funds available for allocation:	January 31, 2025	\$696,899.36

A motion to approve the financial report was made by Lloyd, 2nd by McNeil. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Jones moved to approve the draft minutes of the July 16, 2024 meeting. The motion was seconded by McNeil and the motion was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Grand Amendment Request

The Board discussed the amendment request for Grant 24-13B prior to reviewing grant proposals. The VCA requested a 6-month term extension and a budget increase of \$69,880 (making the new total funded amount of \$107,380) in order to properly support app improvement and maintenance. Many Board members shared that they relied upon the app for daily cattle updates and found it to be very useful. After discussion around the analytics, the current / future goals of advertisement revenue, and general ways to help the app grow, Lloyd made a motion to pass the amendment request as presented. Threewitts 2nd and motion passed.

Action on Grant Proposals

The Board reviewed the following grant submissions:

NUMBER	TITLE	ORANIZATION	TYPE	AMOUNT REQUESTED
25-1B	E-Commerce Beef Promotion with a National Retailer	Virginia Beef Council	Promotion	\$5,000.00
25-2B	Does Implanting Nursing Calves Impact Feeder Cattle Grades?	VCE - Augusta County	Education, Research	\$4,000.00
25-3B	2025 Virginia 4-H/FFA Market Beef Ultrasound Contest	VCE - Augusta County	Youth Development	\$3,000.00
25-4B	Virginia Bovine Emergency Response Plan	Virginia Farm Bureau Federation	Education	\$16,676.00
25-5B	Griddle/Hood Installation to Promote Local Beef Consumption and Expansion of Market Operations	Century Farm Market	Market Development	\$25,000.00
25-6B	Promoting Quality Assurance Practices	Lee County Livestock Association	Education, Promotion	\$2,500.00
25-7B	Butcher Beef Cut Models for Youth Education Throughout Virginia	Virginia Beef Council	Education	\$3,250.00
25-8B	Enhancing Experiential Learning	Virginia Tech	Education	\$6,616.00

	Opportunities for High School Students at the Virginia Governor's School for Agriculture			
25-9B	Developing Replacement Heifers on Alternative Forages	VT - Shenandoah Valley AREC	Research	\$35,704.00
25-10B	Virginia Beef Cattle Center of Excellence - Coordinator Position	Virginia Tech	Education	\$34,524.00
25-11B	Relationship Between Genomic-Predicted Genetic Merit in Commercial Cattle and Subsequent Maternal and Terminal Performance	Virginia Tech	Research	\$55,193.00
25-12B	Virginia Beef Cattle University 2025	Virginia Tech	Education	\$50,000.00
25-13B	Education Programs for Eastern Virginia Cattlemen in 2025	Eastern Virginia Cattlemen Association	Education	\$5,000.00
25-14B	Effects of Chromium Propionate on Performance, Reproductive, and Metabolic Responses of Replacement Heifers	Virginia Tech	Research	\$24,950.00
25-15B	Uncovering the Effects of Nutritional Restriction on the Follicular Fluid Environment in Beef Cattle	Virginia Tech	Research	\$16,000.00
25-16B	Virginia Tech Livestock Judging Team Advancement and Growth	Virginia Tech	Education	\$15,000.00
25-17B	Beef Cattle Field Day: Enhancing Education and Skills for the Future of Virginia's Cattle Industry	Louisa County High School	Education	\$3,857.69
25-18B	Cattle Industry Education to Enhance VALOR Program Curriculum	Virginia Tech - VALOR Program	Education	\$5,000.00
25-19B	Virginia Inbound Trade Mission	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Market Development	\$10,182.00
25-20B	VQA Research Project	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Research	\$4,800.00
25-21B	Rockingham Feeder Cattle Association Annual Meeting 2025	Rockingham Feeder Cattle Association	Education	\$1,500.00
25-22B	AI-Driven Continuous Monitoring Systems for Dairy Cow Health Using Milker-Implantable Sensors	Virginia Tech	Research	\$38,185.00
25-23B	Promoting Virginia's Cattle Industry 2025	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Promotion	\$14,250.00

Total = \$380,187.69

The Board discussed and voted on each grant submission individually. After minimal discussion, the following grants were passed as written with a unanimous vote:

Grant# 25-1B: *“E-Commerce Beef Promotion with a National Retailer”* (motion by Coleman; McNeil 2nd)

Grant# 25-2B: *“Does Implanting Nursing Calves Impact Feeder Cattle Grades?”* (motion by Coleman, Jones 2nd)

Grant# 25-3B: *“2025 Virginia 4-H/FFA Market Beef Ultrasound Contest”* (Motion by Threewitts; Coleman 2nd)

Grant# 25-4B: *“Virginia Bovine Emergency Response Plan”* (motion by McNeil; Threewitts 2nd)

Grant# 25-12B: *“Virginia Beef Cattle University”* (Motion by Lloyd; Coleman 2nd)

Grant# 25-13B: *“Education Programs for Eastern Virginia Cattlemen in 2025”* (motion by Coleman; Lloyd 2nd)

Grant# 25-14B: *“Effects of Chromium Propionate on Performance, Reproductive, and Metabolic Responses of Replacement Heifers”* (Motion by Threewitts; Jones 2nd)

Grant# 25-15B: *“Uncovering the Effects of Nutritional Restriction on the Follicular Fluid Environment in Beef Cattle”* (motion by Lloyd; Jones 2nd)

Grant# 25-16B: *“Virginia Tech Livestock Judging Team Advancement and Growth”* (motion by Coleman; Lloyd 2nd)

Grant# 25-18B: *“Cattle Industry Education to Enhance VALOR Program Curriculum”* (Motion by Moyer; Jones 2nd)

Grant# 25-20B: *“VQA Research Project”* (motion by McNeil; Jones 2nd) – Tucker sustained from the vote

Grant# 25-21B: *“Rockingham Feeder Cattle Association Annual Meeting 2025”* (motion by Coleman; Moyer 2nd)

Grant# 25-22B: *“AI-Driven Continuous Monitoring Systems for Dairy Cow Health Using Milker-Implantable Sensors”* (motion by Moyer, Jones 2nd)

Grant# 25-23B: *“Promoting Virginia’s Cattle Industry 2025”* (Motion by Lloyd; Threewitts 2nd)

Other Grant Proposal discussion included:

Grant# 25-5B: *“Griddle/Hood Installation to Promote Local Beef Consumption and Expansion of Market Operations”*

After much discussion about the purchase of equipment for private use, the Board did not feel that they could fund the project. McNeil made a motion to not fund the grant. Moyer 2nd and motion passed. Lloyd sustained from the vote.

Grant# 25-6B: *“Promoting Quality Assurance Practices”*

After reviewing the grant request, the Board felt as if the association could more reasonably source the items listed in the budget part of the grant. Coleman made a motion to deny the grant request. Jones 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 25-7B: *“Butcher Beef Cut Models for Youth Education throughout Virginia”*

Stephanie Weiss from the Virginia Beef Council shared that the original butcher beef cut out models purchased a few years ago have been very well received. As additional educators around the state have become aware of them, request for use has gone up. Coleman made a motion to fund the grant as presented and Lloyd 2nd. After discussion, Coleman amended his motion by increasing the total funding amount to \$5,000 in order to purchase three new models rather than two. The third model is to be housed in the northern region. Lloyd 2nds the amended motion and the motion passed as amended.

Grant# 25-8B: *“Enhancing Experiential Learning Opportunities for High School Students at the Virginia Governor’s School for Agriculture”*

Much discussion took place amongst the Board members as to the value of parts of the curriculum for the school as well as some scheduled field trips. McNeil made a motion to fund the grant request at the full amount, provided a VCIB member be permitted to attend parts of the school through out the year. Lloyd 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 25-9B: *“Developing Replacement Heifers on Alternative Forages”*

Discussion on the grant request was tabled until further details pertaining the budget and funding of personal could be provided via the project lead.

Grant# 25-10B: “Virginia Beef Cattle Center of Excellence – Coordinator Position”

The Board discussed the current and future state of funding that they are providing for the coordinator position. Many Board members felt as though the VCIB should be decreasing the percentage of funding they are providing for the position over time and question if the annual recurrence of this expense is something they wish to do and the current level of commitment. Lloyd made a motion to approve the grant request at the full amount for this coming year with intentions to re-evaluate if the same grant request is presented in the future. McNeil 2nd and motion passed on a vote of 6 to 1.

Grant# 25-11B: “Relationship Between Genomic-Predicted Genetic Merit in Commercial Cattle and Subsequent Maternal and Terminal Performance”

Jones made a motion to remove the budgeted amount for the Other category (Graduate student tuition) and approve the grant at the new amount of \$38,094. Threewitts 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 25-17B: “Beef Cattle Field Day: Enhancing Education and Skills for the Future of Virginia’s Cattle Industry” (motion by Smith, Moyer 2nd)

The Board felt that the project had value; however, questioned if the instructors would be BQA certified trainers. Some Board members also questioned if funding was provided for a single school, how many others would in return ask for the same thing. Lloyd made a motion to approve the grant request at the full amount, given that the event be open to regional participation and BQA certified instructors help lead the classes. Coleman 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 25-19B: “Virginia Inbound Trade Mission”

The Board adjusted some budget request to better model the state per diem rates at which they could fund the travel portion of the grant request. Lloyd made a motion to approve the grant at the amount of \$8,424. McNeil 2nd and motion passed.

Grant# 25-24B: “Genetic Variants that Cause Embryonic Death”

The Board tabled the grant request to gather more information and allow them to review the outcomes of previous VCIB funded research projects that set the basis for this grant request.

A summary of grant approvals below:

NUMBER	TITLE	ORANIZATION	TYPE	AMOUNT FUNDED
25-1B	E-Commerce Beef Promotion with a National Retailer	Virginia Beef Council	Promotion	\$5,000.00
25-2B	Does Implanting Nursing Calves Impact Feeder Cattle Grades?	VCE - Augusta County	Education, Research	\$4,000.00
25-3B	2025 Virginia 4-H/FFA Market Beef Ultrasound Contest	VCE - Augusta County	Youth Development	\$3,000.00
25-4B	Virginia Bovine Emergency Response Plan	Virginia Farm Bureau Federation	Education	\$16,676.00
25-5B	Griddle/Hood Installation to Promote Local Beef Consumption and Expansion of Market Operations	Century Farm Market	Market Development	\$0.00
25-6B	Promoting Quality Assurance Practices	Lee County Livestock Association	Education, Promotion	\$0.00
25-7B	Butcher Beef Cut Models for Youth Education Throughout Virginia	Virginia Beef Council	Education	\$5,000.00
25-8B	Enhancing Experiential Learning Opportunities for High School Students at the Virginia Governor's School for	Virginia Tech	Education	\$6,616.00

	Agriculture			
25-9B	Developing Replacement Heifers on Alternative Forages	VT - Shenandoah Valley AREC	Research	tabled
25-10B	Virginia Beef Cattle Center of Excellence - Coordinator Position	Virginia Tech	Education	\$34,524.00
25-11B	Relationship Between Genomic-Predicted Genetic Merit in Commercial Cattle and Subsequent Maternal and Terminal Performance	Virginia Tech	Research	\$38,094.00
25-12B	Virginia Beef Cattle University 2025	Virginia Tech	Education	\$50,000.00
25-13B	Education Programs for Eastern Virginia Cattlemen in 2025	Eastern Virginia Cattlemen Association	Education	\$5,000.00
25-14B	Effects of Chromium Propionate on Performance, Reproductive, and Metabolic Responses of Replacement Heifers	Virginia Tech	Research	\$24,950.00
25-15B	Uncovering the Effects of Nutritional Restriction on the Follicular Fluid Environment in Beef Cattle	Virginia Tech	Research	\$16,000.00
25-16B	Virginia Tech Livestock Judging Team Advancement and Growth	Virginia Tech	Education	\$15,000.00
25-17B	Beef Cattle Field Day: Enhancing Education and Skills for the Future of Virginia's Cattle Industry	Louisa County High School	Education	\$3,857.69
25-18B	Cattle Industry Education to Enhance VALOR Program Curriculum	Virginia Tech - VALOR Program	Education	\$5,000.00
25-19B	Virginia Inbound Trade Mission	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Market Development	\$8,424.00
25-20B	VQA Research Project	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Research	\$4,800.00
25-21B	Rockingham Feeder Cattle Association Annual Meeting 2025	Rockingham Feeder Cattle Association	Education	\$1,500.00
25-22B	AI-Driven Continuous Monitoring Systems for Dairy Cow Health Using Milker-Implantable Sensors	Virginia Tech	Research	\$38,185.00
25-23B	Promoting Virginia's Cattle Industry 2025	Virginia Cattlemen's Association	Promotion	\$14,250.00
25-24 B	Genetic Variants that Cause Embryonic Death	Virginia Tech	Research	Tabled

Total: \$299,876.69

OLD BUSINESS:

Other Business

Grant Amendments

Two additional grant amendments were presented to the Board pertaining to budget changes and term extensions. McNeil made a motion to approve all amendment request as presented below. Lloyd 2nd and motion passed.

- 1) A no-cost term extension was requested for Grant 24-3, extending the grant period through October 2025. Justification included a low supply of slaughter ready cattle as well as lagging laboratory work needed to complete the research project. The new terms of the grant agreement will extend through October 31, 2025.
- 2) A no-cost term extension was requested for Grant 24-5B. Justification given included personal turnover and the challenge in finding the proper laboratory to work with. The Board moved to extend the grant terms for 24-5B through February 28, 2026

Future Meeting Date

The next in person meeting date is tentatively set for July 21 or 22 in Blacksburg, VA.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Sponaule, VDACS Liaison