

Board Members Present:

Marshall Saunders, Chair
Bethany Schaepler
Ben Snapp

Jaime Williams
Patrick Ryan
Adam Marston

Guests/Staff Present:

Greta Liskey, Virginia State Horticultural Society
Debby Girvan, Flair Communications
Melissa Ball, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Jim Atwell, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Jim Bair, US Apple Association
Mark Campbell, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation
Lynn Graves and Phillip Glaize, Jr, Virginia apple growers

I. Call to Order / Welcome / Introductions

Marshall Saunders, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:48 AM.

II. Approval of Draft Minutes

The minutes of the January 14, 2025, meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

III. Financial Report

Melissa Ball provided a financial report reflecting the following for FY 24-25:

Cost Code 646

Cash Balance: 6/30/2024	\$83,006.30
Assessment Receipts: 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025	\$59,911.73
Total Cash Balance & Receipts:	\$142,918.03
Transfer to cc 647 – Reserve	\$0
Transfer to cc 648 - Admin	\$0
Total Actual Expenditures (from VDACS Financial Analysis)	\$113,425.65
Cash Balance: June 30, 2025	\$29,492.38

Note: In the beginning of FY25, there was the delay in receiving appropriation, that resulted several vouchers being temporarily coded to a different cost code. Once appropriations were received, journal entries were prepared to move the expenditures to their correct cost codes. This included Apple Board payments. In July of 2025, we realized the entry transferred two of the payments twice which reduced the cash balance in cc646 by \$38,730.66. This will be amended in FY 26 and will be reflected in both the FINSYS printouts and the FY 26 Annual Report.

Cost Code 647 - Reserve

Cash Balance: 6/30/2024	\$125,000.00
Other receipts	\$0
Total Balance	\$125,000.00
Deduct Total Actual Expenditures (from VDACS Financial Analysis)	\$0
Cash Balance: June 30, 2025	\$125,000.00

Cost Code 648 – Administration

Cash Balance: 6/30/2024	\$84,891.55
Transfer from cc 646	\$8,299.00
Other Receipts - Interest	\$8,797.47
Total Balance	\$102,078.02
Deduct Total Actual Expenditures (from VDACS Financial Analysis)	\$15,778.59
Cash Balance: June 30, 2025	\$86,299.43

IV. Annual Report

The Annual Report for FY 24-25 was reviewed. *Motion made and unanimously approved to accept the financial report as presented.*

V. Approval of Electronic Meeting Policy

Motion was made and unanimously approved to accept the Electronic Meeting Policy as presented.

VI. Distribution of funds for 2025 crop

For the 2025 crop, a motion was made and unanimously approved to distribute collections as follows:

US Apple Association: 40%
Virginia State Horticultural Society: 20%
Virginia Agricultural Research Program: 20%
Administration: 10%
Reserve: 0%

The reserve fund is currently at maximum capacity, thus 10% of the collections cannot be put towards the reserve. The balance will be distributed equally between U.S. Apple Association, Virginia State Horticultural Society and Virginia Agricultural Research Program.

A second motion was made and unanimously approved to transfer the remainder of the reserve funds to the Virginia State Horticultural Society after July 1, 2026.

VII. US Apple Update

Mr. Jim Bair US Apple President gave a brief update of US Apple Advocacy and Program Impact. He also explained historical fund collection from Virginia and the details for fund collection calculation.

VIII. Flair Communication – Website and Social Media Accounts

Ms. Girvan with Flair Communication provided a written proposal for the website and social media campaign. The analytics for the website and social media campaigns were also shared. Ms. Girvan reported a strong social media presence for VirginiaApples.net and also said the upcoming contract could be amended to six months if needed.

A motion was made and unanimously approved to accept the proposal for the year 2026.

IX. HB 65 Discussion

Board Members, along with Greta Liskey with Virginia Horticulture Society (VSHS), Growers; Phillip Glaize, Jr and Lynn Graves, as well as Mark Campbell with Virginia Farm Bureau Federation all actively participated in a constructive discussion of the apple industry in Virginia. The apple industry has drastically changed in recent years, with lower acreages harvested each year. This trend is expected to continue. The industry not only in Virginia, but on the east coast is trending from apples grown for processing, to primarily, fresh market. House Bill 65 states the excise tax levied on apples grown in the Commonwealth will not be collected after July1, 2026 and all remaining monies in the Apple Fund shall be dispersed to the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund on July1, 2028. Mr. Mark Campbell with Virginia Farm Bureau reported this legislation was developed through Virginia Farm Bureau after discussion with the apple advisory committee within Virginia Farm Bureau. Apple growers present, along with board members all recognize the changing apple industry and feel modification to the Code of Virginia is needed. Greta Liskey, with VSHS stated members want reform to the current structure. All growers present agree the monies in the Apple Fund should be allocated to activities to assist the Virginia apple industry specifically, such as research or marketing.

X. Board Member re-election

Board Members; Marshall Saunders, Patrick Ryan, and Ben Snapp have terms expiring in 2026. All three members wish to remain on the board for another term or conclusion of the Virginia Apple Board.

XI. Public Comment:

None

XII. Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 12, 2027 @ 11:00 AM at Farm Credit in Staunton, VA

XIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM