

# ABC Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2023, 7pm @ Catoclin Mountain Orchard

## Frederick County Office of Economic Development

**Council Members in attendance:** Tom Mullineaux, Tom Barse, Bob Black, Dick Bitner, Gary Grossnickle, Brian Sweeney, Victoria Robinson

**Others in Attendance:** Katie Stevens, Becca Tucker

Tom M determined a quorum and called the meeting to order.

Gary G made a motion to approve the February 28 minutes and the March 15 minutes. Tom Barse 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

### Industry Updates:

- **Livestock** (Brian Sweeney)- Nutrient Management has calmed down a bit. Cull cows are still high- sold one for \$1700. Beef Prices still holding strong
- **Craft beverage** (Tom Barse)- Shipping and supply costs are still so high. Bottles have doubled in the last year. Just finished lambing- lamb prices are up. Getting into the busy season for the brewery.
- **Dairy/Crops** (Gary Grossnickle)- price of milk has fallen significantly to \$18.68/cwt, corn is around \$7/bu, there is a short hay crop this year because it is extremely dry.
- **Organic** (Dick Bittner)- Fox Haven 640 Acres, food forest, organic vegetables herbs and nut trees
- **Ag Service** (Tom Mullineaux)- met with Secretary of Ag- Secretary has appointed members to a deer commission (with members from UMD Extension) - Pilot program to try border crops and spring-planted bearded barley and triticale.
- **Marketing** (Victoria Robinson)- started a marketing service for small farms and ag businesses to help increase direct-to-consumer sales
- **Produce** (Bob Black)- Moving ahead with staffing changes. Market is open for the season. Strawberries in the South are being hurt by cold wet weather.

### Approval of Reappointments- Katie

- Gary G and Bob B are up for reappointment and submitted a letter of interest.

Tom B made a motion to approve their reappointment. Brian S second. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

### Legislative Update- Katie

- Agritourism Update- Councilman Donald's drafted bill- ABC and Farm Bureau representatives met with Councilman Donald, reviewed the bill and shared their comments with a focus on working together for a solution and being good neighbors. The bill is on hold.

### Other business:

- Brian S- Ag Property Rezoning—there is a request for piecemeal rezoning of a property neighboring Alcoa from Ag to GI. It has gone through the planning commission and is currently at the County Council, public comment has closed as of last Tuesday.
  - Brian made a motion for the ABC to oppose piecemeal rezoning due to its devastating effects. Tom Barse second. No Discussion. Motion passes unanimously. ABC will submit a letter.
- Gary- Whitmore Property in Walkersville passed at the Public Service Commission in Annapolis to become solar. (2200 – 3k /acre/ year for these properties) Council Member MC Keegan-Ayre’s solar work group is coming back.
- Tom B- Hot air balloon issues with farmers.

#### **FCOED Update-**

- Lara Fritts is the new Director of FCOED.
- May 9<sup>th</sup> afternoon farm tour with the County Executive, her Senior Leadership and our Director Lara, to talk all about Ag in Frederick County.

#### **Table for next meeting**

- Farm Family of the Year
- Ag Business of the Year
- Young Farmer of the Year
- Ag Advocate of the Year

**Next Meeting:** TBD

Meeting Adjourned