

**South Carolina Corn Board**  
Minutes  
Buddy Jennings Commodity Training Facility  
350 Ballard Court, West Columbia, SC  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

**ATTENDEES**

Frances Price, Chair of the Ag Commission  
John F. Long, Newberry County  
Bo Norris, conferred in via phone  
Mac Eaddy, Clarendon County

Landrum Weathers, Orangeburg County  
Dean Hutto, Orangeburg County  
Marion Dubose, Clarendon County  
Jimmy Taylor, Marion County

*\*\*No board members were absent*

**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES**

- Woody Green, National Corn Growers Associations-Risk Management Action Team, Sumter County
- Jason Creamer, SCCSA, Lamar, SC
- Dr. John Andrae, Director, Clemson Edisto REC
- Dr. Michael Plumbelle, Corn and Soybean Agronomist Specialist, Clemson's Edisto REC
- Aaron Wood, Assistant Commissioner for Operations, SCDA
- Clint Leach, Assistant Commissioner, External Affairs and Economic Development, SCDA
- Alden Dalton, General Counsel, SCDA
- Sam Quinney, Director of Agricultural Outreach, SCDA
- Chris Whitmire, Director of Marketing, SCDA
- Ben Gramling, Ag Commission, Spartanburg County
- Bradley Orr, Ag Commission, Anderson County
- Dr. Kathy Coleman, Director, Clemson Sandhill REC
- Dr. Paula Agudelo, Clemson Associate Dean for Research and Director of the Experimentation
- Rachael Sharp, SC Soybean Board member, Allendale County
- Mary C. Cromley, Executive Director, SC Corn & Soybean Association
- Cody Simpson, Ag Advisor to Governor McMaster
- Ellen Lloyd, Admin. Assistant, Ag Commission

**I. Call to Order**

Frances Price, Chair of the Agriculture Commission of South Carolina and ex-officio member of the South Carolina Corn Board, called the first meeting of the SC Corn Board to order at approximately 10:13 a.m. Chair Price gave the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Price was asked by a corn board member if a motion could be made to change the order of today's agenda. Chair Price asked for the motion. ***A motion was made to follow Welcome and Introduction with Election of Officers, followed by Establishing Bylaws, followed by Incorporation, followed by SCDA Overview. The agenda would then pick up with Setting Priorities and Goals. Motion was seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.***

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**II. Welcome, Introductions, Oath of Office**

Chair Price welcomed everyone and asked that everyone introduce themselves. After introductions, Chair Price administered the Oath of Office to all Board members as they stood and repeated after her. All oaths to be signed and notarized by the Board members.

**III. Election of Officers**

Chair Price asked for nominations for Chairman of the SC Corn Board.

***A motion was made and seconded to nominate John Long. All were in favor. Motion carried.***

The new Chair, John Long, then conducted the remainder of the meeting. He thanked the board for their support and nomination as chair of this board. He also thanked the Commission for all the work they've done to help make this happen. Chair Long said he and the other board members are looking forward to representing the corn farmers and doing the best job they can to invest the assessment dollars into matters of importance that will improve the bottom line of corn growers in South Carolina.

Chair Long asked for nominations for a Vice Chair.

***A nomination was received and seconded for Landrum Weathers as Vice Chair. All were in favor. Motion carried.***

Chair Long then called for nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. It was noted this could be a big job.

***A motion was made and seconded to delay electing a Secretary/Treasurer at this time.***  
The Board discussed that items later in the agenda today that will assist in selecting this person.

***All were in favor. Motion Carried.***

**IV. Establishing the Bylaws**

The board members discussed the items left blank in the proposed Bylaws. On page 2, the board left the principal place of business blank saying information later in the agenda may influence that decision. ***A motion was made and seconded that going forward, after the staggered start terms, board members would serve three-year terms. Officers could serve 2, 2-year-terms. All were in favor. Motion carried.***

Chair Price pointed out the following changes to be made:

- **Pg. 2 Responsibilities** add semicolons after bullet points and an “and” after the next to the last line. Under **Duties** bullet points, add an “and” after the next to the last line.
- **Pg 3 Election and Term**, add the word “An” to begin sentence and make officer singular to read “An officer shall be elected by the Board. “
- **Pg. 4** Top of page, change to say, “Checks shall be signed on behalf of the Board by the chair and vice chair.”
- **Pg. 5** Bottom of page, the last line, need the word acting “in” place of the Chair.
- **Pg. 6** Change to say “Minutes will show vote counts on all adopted resolutions” and on the next line, change the word “Commission” Agriculture Commission of South Carolina and do the same to the word “Commission” on page 7.

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- **Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Responsibilities**, add semicolons after bullet points and an “and” after the next to the last line.
- **Article VI, Section VII** There was a discussion about adding language here for virtual meetings in its on section. Denoted that if a virtual meeting is held and a vote is taken that the vote would need to be submitted in writing by those who voted virtually. The board approved this recommendation and asked that staff prepare wording for the board and board to make official at next meeting.
- **Article VI, Section VII, Voting**, add language about email voting and procedure required.

***A motion and second were made to accept all changes above to the Bylaws. All were in favor. Motion carried.*** Bylaws adopted.

**V. Incorporation**

Chair Long asked for background on this agenda item. Miss Cromley said the board just needs to vote to file paperwork with the Secretary of State as outlined in the Agricultural Commodity Marketing Act to officially be incorporated and recognized and be able to have the powers of a corporation in South Carolina.

***A motion was made and seconded that the SC Corn Board do the proper paperwork to become incorporated to be recognized and be able to have the powers of a corporation in South Carolina. All were in favor. Motion carried.***

**VI. SC Department of Agriculture Overview**

- Clint Leach discussed the following assistance SCDA can provide the Corn Board:
  1. Divisions of Department of Agriculture and how they interact/intertwine with the Commodity Marketing Act and the commodity boards.
    - a. Consumer Protection Division, regulatory division, includes weights and measures, gas pump inspections, restaurant retail inspections, etc.
    - b. Agency Operations, the business functions, the finance, the procurement, the audits, the grants
    - c. External Affairs and Economic Development, marketing, agritourism, specialty foods, consumer branding, etc.
      - i. Under marketing, is the commodities department, Sam Quinney is the point person for commodity boards that we provide oversight to and manages those personnel and assists with issues.
      - ii. Ellen Lloyd is one of the two administrative supports for the marketing department and serves as the administrative assistant to the Agriculture Commission and administrative coordinator to four commodities. Stephanie Crowe services the other 3 commodities and many of the marketing programs. Mrs. Lloyd and Ms. Crowe provide the services of making sure board members are reimbursed for travel on behalf of the board.
  - Sam Quinney discussed Memorandums of Understanding that SCDA has with many of the commodity boards and how they can aid the corn board. An example SCDA MOU with a commodity board was provided as a handout with the section of SCDA’s roles and responsibilities for the board; not a full MOU as all MOUs are different.

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Board members had questions:

1. Board member: Are SCDA MOUs services a la carte or all or none?  
Mr. Quinney: Services can be a la carte as long as not in direct violation of SCDA or state policy.
2. Board member: What about legal counsel?  
Mrs. Dalton: Ultimately my client is the South Carolina Department of Agriculture. However, I can provide guidance or information.
- Aaron Wood discussed the following in the way of assistance SCDA's can provide the Corn Board as a public body:
  1. Fair Labor Standards Act and how it applies to staff.
  2. Benefits - workers' comp insurance, general liability insurance on your employee should the board gets sued, lower cost state group insurance.
  3. Full-service IT team, image devices (set up mobile device management, data security and security should a device be lost or stolen, desktop support, cybersecurity training and protocols). SCDA contracts with division of information security at the state of South Carolina for additional security. IT orders all replacement computers scheduled for replacement/updating.
  4. Finance and Administration. important because of internal controls which is managing risk, for fraud, waste, abuse, and misconduct.
  5. Same person depositing the check cannot be the same person that writes the check and pays bills. In place for employee's protection.
  6. Rental car programs with Enterprise and Hertz.
  7. Lodging card program that employees can access.
  8. Compliance audits – commodity boards under the state umbrella are already complying with much of process looked at by those auditors because of our agency's internal controls.
  9. Statutory exemption for commodity boards that benefit boards – SCDA went to the General Assembly and sought a Statutory Exemption for commodity boards on the procurement side so that boards could hire and procure items or services from whoever they wanted to and did not have to go through the established procurement act in order (this included not having dollar thresholds).
  10. A request submitted in SCDA's budget for fiscal 25-26, to start next July 1, 2025, to allow commodity boards to retain interest on their checkoff dollars that sit in a segregated account.
- Chris Whitmire discussed the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Corn Board as a public body. A handout was provided of basic information that public bodies need to know, not full description. Board members can access Title 30, Chapter four, of the Code of Laws. Handout supplied with these minutes.

**VII. Setting Priorities and Goals**

Chair Long asked Miss Cromley to lead on this topic. Miss Cromley said feedback from the board at the orientation meeting was to bring some folks from Clemson to talk about research priorities for next year. She said that the typical research proposal deadlines are coming up quickly and decisions need to be in by December for Clemson staff to make plans for the 2025 season. Miss Cromley invited Dr. Agudelo to speak on behalf of Clemson and corn research. Dr. Agudelo said they are open to all proposals. The board discussed seeing research proposals based on increasing corn yields and help with identifying

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whether their corn has aflatoxin. The board discussed also relying on Clemson this first year for research proposals for corn based on their expertise.

**VIII. Update on Assessment Collections and Budget Projections**

Chair Long had Miss Cromley provide the budget projection which was \$313,063.30. She explained her reasoning. Miss Cromley said assessment collections are done quarterly and are currently being received for the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (July-Sept). Miss Cromley said she cannot provide an exact amount at this time as all information had not been provided to her, but that it does not look like many of the large poultry operations have remitted yet.

**IX. Other New Business**

a. Strategic Session Planning Proposal

Miss Cromley said she wanted to discuss with the corn board the potential of doing a joint strategic planning session in January with the South Carolina Soybean Board. The Board asked to table this until the next meeting.

**X. Upcoming Events**

Board members took note of the upcoming events. Miss Cromley commented on the Annual Corn & Soybean Growers meeting saying it will be held at the Santee Conference Center, Tuesday, December 17th. Dr. Plumblee said this year's meeting will be different in that it will conclude with lunch to keep the crowd from dwindling down and not staying for the speaker normally reserved for after lunch. Lunch has also been pushed to get all the speakers in before lunch. Miss Cromley added that a speaker from the American Soybean Association and the CEO from the National Corn Growers Association are also on the agenda.

**Executive Session**

The board went into executive session to discuss matters of employment. Chair Price asserted that as an ex-officio member of the Board, she was entitled to attend the Executive Session. Miss Sharp and Miss Cromley were asked to stand by should the Board have any questions.

Following executive session:

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the concept of the SC Soybean Board's proposal of sharing Miss Cromley as a Joint Executive Director for the SC Soybean Board, SC Corn and Soybean Association and SC Corn Board and for Miss Cromley working under this agreement effective immediately. All were in favor. Motion carried.*

**XI. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:28 p.m.

*Minutes submitted by Ellen Lloyd, Assistant to the Agriculture Commission of South Carolina, and revised by Mary C. Cromley, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer to the South Carolina Corn Board.*