



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, June 3 at 10 a.m.
Open Meeting Minutes

- SMADC Members:** Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Edward Goodman, Erik de Guzman, Willie Goddard, Amanda Hand, Bill Hitte, Linda Jones, Delegate Rachel Jones, Deana Tice, Mary Wood
- Members Absent:** Senator Jack Bailey, Lisa Barge, Guy Kilpatric, Ronald Marney, Julie Oberg, Barbara Polito, Donna Sasscer, Lucille Walker, Steve Walter
- Staff:** Susan McQuilkin, Cia Morey, Heather Hulsey, Rachel Norris, Karyn Owens, Craig Sewell, Shelby Watson-Hampton
- Guests:** Jaelon T. Moaney, Reg. Dir. for Anne Arundel/So. Md, U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen

Minutes

Chairwoman Wood announced the Minutes of the May 6, 2021, were approved in the Executive Session prior to the Open Meeting.

Board Position Updates – Director Watson-Hampton welcomed the new House of Delegates board representative Delegate Rachel Jones to the meeting; the position was previously held by Delegate Michael Jackson, now Senator Jackson.

Cathy Cosgrove, of Horsman Farm in Calvert County has stepped down as the representative ‘Calvert County Farmer’ voting board position. Recommendations for the new member/representative are encouraged.

MMM Staff Positions Update – Juliet Glass, has moved to a new job in DC. The position is now advertised. Following a review of candidates, interviews will be conducted in the coming weeks.

Director Watson Hampton reported the SMADC Board approved (in Executive Session) to fund 30% of the MMM salaries from the total SMADC Programmatic Services budget (\$333,000) for a total of \$40,848.00, based on MMM work/admin for the 12 Southern Maryland markets. The rationale to support the MMM staff positions is the program has doubled in size since its inception resulting in a significant increase in staff administration and is now a cornerstone program of SMADC and leverages SMADC’s funding relevance and engagement with legislators statewide.

Grant Updates

Director Watson Hampton announced there are 4 new grants in the pipeline:

USDA FMPP - with the approval of the SMADC Chair, Vice Chair and TCC Board, staff is submitting a proposal for a USDA Farmers Market Promotion Grant/Community Training and Technical Assistance Project – range is from \$1,000 to \$750,000 over three years with 25% match required (funds and in-kind). SMADC's proposal focuses on existing programs and the expansion of the MMM to benefit farmers and underserved communities; a grant writer is being hired to assist.

Beginning Farmer Rancher Grant – with University of Maryland Extension; focus on Urban Farming, the SMADC/Maryland FarmLINK and Mentor Match Programs – award announcement pending.

Maryland Heritage Area Authority Grant/Grandma's Hands Project – award announcement pending.

MARBICO/Local Farm Enterprise Food Aggregation Grant – for and on behalf of St. Mary's County North St. Mary's County Farmers Market Value-Added Building – award announcement pending.

Baltimore Women's Giving Circle Grant – **AWARDED to MMM** – \$24,5900 total funds.

Rowell's Butcher Shop Update/SMADC Special One-Time Grant

Craig Sewell has assisted Rowell's Butcher Shop to submit for a MARBIDCO Grant for USDA upgrades urgently needed to complete the meat/slaughter/cut and wrap processing chain until the RAC is built. Due to highly competitive grant round, only half of the requested funds were granted (approximately \$50,000). In consultation with the Executive Committee and SMADC voting Board, members voted to approve a one-time-only Grant award for Rowell's to complete the required USDA upgrades/renovations for cut and wrap. Craig Sewell will work with the Attorney General to draw up the grant contract; terms are conditional, reimbursable upon receipts/quotes up to \$55,000 with the full oversight of SMM Livestock and Marketing Manager.

Meat Trailer/Transport and Amish/Westham Lane Butcher Shop Update

SMADC has purchased a refrigerated trailer/mobile meat processing unit and truck for \$4,900.00. The unit is a fully outfitted butcher shop on wheels and will be used to transport hanging meat carcasses from the Westham Lane Butcher Shop slaughter facility to Rowell's, other regional butcher/retail venues, and ultimately the RAC for further process.

The Westham Lane Butcher Shop has been operating under USDA inspection for one month. Five regional USDA supervisors recently visited the facility and marveled at the operational off-the-grid ingenuity and plant cleanliness. The USDA considers the project a benchmark achievement for the agency and SMADC. Craig Sewell is now working with plant management to USDA certify for 'basic' cut and wrap (retail exempt) which will provide a cash flow business for fresh butcher meat cuts.

Directors Report

Director Watson- Hampton reviewed FY'22 Budget line-item highlights (as approved in Executive Session):

- SMADC will offer Southern Maryland Farmer Mini-Grant – 2 rounds of \$40,000.
- \$10,000 for CASE program (\$2,000 per county) for high school students.
- \$4,000 for Food Processing – Acidified scholarship, and Cottage Food recipe testing (\$250 x 10 farmers).
- \$13,800 to support LEAD scholarships (up to 50% of tuition for 6 SOMD farmer/agriculture professionals @ \$2,300 each).

Staff Reports

Cottage Food Industry – Susan McQuilkin reported SMADC was invited to review new MDH Cottage Food guidelines with Grow & Fortify and others. MDH has not expanded the allowable foods list but, will entertain approval of certain recipes pending results of laboratory testing. SMADC continues to dialogue with MDH and in FY'22 will provide funds to alleviate financial burden of recipe testing/reviews for So.MD Cottage Food producers.

MMM – Heather Hulse reported she is working through FY'22 budgeting and funding sources. A 'Nourishing our Neighborhoods' Campaign with Whole Foods Market in the Baltimore area, and a statewide marketing campaign in partnership with Maryland DHS are successfully underway. 139,000 MMM informational brochures will be mailed out with SNAP determination letters across the state during the summer.

SMM Junior Program – Rachel Norris reported the 2021 Jr. Program is now open and accepting applications; details are posted on the SMM website and SMADC Facebook. A new Sponsorship opportunity has been developed and launched; letters have been sent to larger agriculture companies/organizations to invite their sponsorship to offset the cost of Jr. Program completion scholarships and promotional items.

Member Updates – Members shared news and updates.

Adjournment

Dan Donohue made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joan Bearden seconded the motion. All approved.