



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, August 5 at 9:00 am
Open Meeting Minutes

- SMADC Members:** Lisa Barge, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Willie Goddard, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Linda Jones, Delegate Rachel Jones, Guy Kilpatric, Martin Proulx, Kelly Swann, Charlie Sasscer Jr., Donna Sasscer, Deana Tice, Lucille Walker, and Mary Wood
- Members Absent:** Senator Jack Bailey, Eddie Bowling, Erik de Guzman, Amanda Hand, Ronald Marney, Hagner Mister, Julie Oberg, Barbara Polito, Charles Rice, Steve Wall, and Steve Walter
- Staff:** Cristina Berthelot, John Hartline, Heather Hulsey, Cia Morey, Rachel Norris, Karyn Owens, Craig Sewell, and Shelby Watson-Hampton
- Guests:** Kellie Hinkle, St. Mary's Co. Econ. Dev., Lisa Ledman, St. Mary's Co. Econ. Development and Brandon Rosario, Intern for Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium

Minutes

Bill Hitte made a motion to approve the minutes from June 3, 2021. Dan Donahue seconded the motion, all approved.

Director Watson-Hampton announced that she must absent herself from the meeting and will try and join back if she is able; staff will be taking over some of the reports on her behalf.

Staff Announcements

Director Watson-Hampton introduced Cristina Berthelot, the new External Relations & Development Coordinator for the Maryland Market Money Program. Cristina comes from New Orleans, Louisiana, but is no stranger to southern foodways, farmers markets, food access, and the water. She was raised in a family of fishers and perique tobacco farmers. Before coming to SMADC, Cristina worked for the nonprofit Market Umbrella where she managed the Crescent City Farmers Market, the flagship farmers market of the city and state. She has a lot of experience in food equity programming and is ready to get to work with MMM and Southern Maryland agriculture.

After 18 years with SMADC, Cia Morey announced that beginning September 1st, she will become a part-time employee. Cia will be in the office three days a week (Monday – Wednesday) and she has been cross-training Rachel Norris-Achterberg on programs and duties to ensure a seamless transition.

Program Reports

Grants – Cia Morey reminded the Board that during the Spring staff applied for multiple grants. So far, SMADC has been awarded two: The USDA Rural Business Development Grant for approximately \$60,000 for charcutier processing equipment for the RAC with no match required.

The second grant is a Maryland Heritage Area Authority (MHAA) Non Capital Grant for \$24,500. The project entitled “Our Grandma’s Hands: Recipes of Southern Maryland”, will create a video series of different people in their kitchens showcasing their family recipes. This grant requires a one-to-one match. The project is not just about the recipes, but also the heritage of food and how food is an integral part of the landscape in Southern Maryland. The project will illustrate how that heritage is held in the ‘hands of grandmas’ and passed on to children and grand-children; a living history of how food has influenced us and defined the region.

Staff will keep the Board apprised of any other grants that may be awarded.

MMM Program – Heather Hulsey reported the MMM Program is having a banner year with 46 markets participating statewide and possibly even more may join this season. Staff is still waiting on some of the big funders to issue FY 2022. Due to the pandemic funds, some county contract teams are backlogged on their caseloads.

Heather highlighted one bright story: a partnership in Southern Maryland with the Greater Baden WIC Clinic who is hosting eight pop-up farm stand markets in Southern Prince George’s County by serving both Prince George’s and Charles County residents. The partner is a Charles County farm that has matched around \$5,200 in FMNP benefits in July alone, helping the farmer make over \$10,000 in revenue in produce sales thus far. The program has been so popular that the MMM grant funds have already been exhausted. As mentioned above, because of the backlog, additional funds cannot be issued until a new contract is established with Prince George’s County.

BLC Campaign – Karyn Owens reported on the recently completed Buy Local Challenge (BLC) campaign. Building on the virtual program, this year several new components were added: a Buy Local Scavenger Hunt Contest encouraged consumers to take a photo or selfie after completing five different ‘buy local’ activities, for a chance to win a prize. A cross promotion with SMADC’s Maryland Market Money Program offered an additional \$5 match in “Bonus Bucks” during the Buy Local Week at 45 participating markets. Additionally, an enhanced BLC Media Tool Kit was launched and an expanded ‘Follow Me To...’ Video series featured 26 local farms and small businesses in Southern Maryland focused on value-added products and unique collaborations. BLC promotional market bags and flyers were distributed to 36 state-wide farmers markets and farm stands. Across social media platforms, over 54,000 people were reached.

Board Openings – Karyn Owens announced that there are several open Board seats. Staff will begin working on a press release to announce the openings. Please share with anyone who may be interested.

Mini-Grants – Cia Morey stated that a round of Mini-Grants was opened on July 1st and will end September 1st. She asked members to share the opportunity with their county clients and farmers.

Westham Butcher Shop and Local Meat Processing – Craig Sewell reported that the Amish are at the end of their 90-day temporary USDA license. After the 90 days are completed, a verification is needed. All indications are they will not have any problems receiving their permanent license. The USDA has

been extremely helpful and supportive with the Amish. The butcher shop is now approved through USDA and the St. Mary's County Health Dept. for basic retail exempt cut and wrap.

Delivery Truck – The truck has been purchased, inspected, licensed, and insured. It will be branded with the Southern Maryland Meats logo and used to transport carcasses to McKay's and eventually to area butcher shops and the RAC for further processing.

Rowell's Butcher Shop – Presently the business is under demolition and will be under construction next week. The plan is for the shop to be open and ready for cut and wrap butchery under USDA inspection by mid-September to late September.

RAC – Craig Sewell stated that the RAC project is facing some challenges and internally discussing options to resolve. The options are not sufficiently solidified to bring to the Board; staff will keep members informed of project developments.

Member Updates – Members shared news and updates.

Adjournment

Dan Donohue made a motion to adjourn. Lucille Walker seconded, all approved.