



**Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, December 2 at 9 a.m.
Executive Meeting Minutes**

SMADC Members: Senator Jack Bailey, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Willie Goddard, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Linda Jones, Delegate Rachel Jones, Guy Kilpatric, Deana Tice, Tresor Thomas, Lucille Walker, and Mary Wood.

Members Absent: Corinthia Briscoe

Staff: John Hartline, Susan McQuilkin, Craig Sewell, Shelby Watson-Hampton, Rachel Norris.

The purpose of the Executive Session is to review the MOU with St. Mary's County currently under re-negotiation for the construction of the Regional Agriculture Center (RAC) reflecting a new financing proposal, timelines, lease arrangements, maintenance agreements, etc.

Mary Wood stated voting members must decide to accept the current MOU revision, and or make additional changes/recommendations in time for ratification by the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland Executive Board and St. Mary's County Commissioner's at their meetings on December 7 and December 14, 2021, respectively, and before the original MOU terms on December 23, 2021.

Following a complete update of all MOU revisions and negotiations to the current time, Craig Sewell advised members the latest iteration of the Draft MOU submitted to SMADC on November 17, 2021, does not accomplish the terms, conditions and timelines that achieve a level of comfort, protection or trust and sought Board direction to move forward.

Members reviewed the Draft MOU point by point; a lengthy discussion ensued during which several major areas of concern were identified, and recommendations made for the revision of the following topics:

- lease terms – to renew with 'tenant's option'
- timeline for completion – fourth quarter 2023, is not acceptable
- re-instate all RAC construction details (building space summary)
- 'return' of funds pending premature termination/cancellation of MOU
- omit the audit of SMADC books at Commissioners' request.

Members directed that the MOU be revised to reflect the above recommendations to secure equitable protections and clarity and resubmit to St. Mary's County Government for review and comment.

Senator Bailey assured that the St. Mary's County Commissioners are eager to move forward with the RAC Project, and strongly recommended an 'in-person' meeting of all parties (including the States

Attorney General) is scheduled for Monday, December 13, to bolster confidence and trust and ensure cordial agreement on final terms and ultimately expeditiously secure a successful conclusion.

Director Watson-Hampton with the Board concurrence commended the following Actions:

- Craig Sewell and Director Watson-Hampton will work to revise the Draft MOU as recommended and submit to St. Mary's County Government for their review and approval by Friday, December 3, 2021.
- Schedule an in-person meeting of all parties on December 13, at the TCCSMD board room in Hughesville to discuss and/or finalize the MOU.