



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, October 7, at 10 a.m.
Minutes

SMADC Members: Lisa Barge, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Erik de Guzman, Willie Goddard, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Delegate Rachel Jones, Ronald Marney, Martin Proulx, Donna Sasscer, Deana Tice, Steve Wall, Lucille Walker, Shelby Watson-Hampton, and Mary Wood

Members Absent: Senator Jack Bailey, Eddie Bowling, Linda Jones, Guy Kilpatric, Hagner Mister, Julie Oberg, Barbara Polito, Charles Rice, Charlie Sasscer III, Kelly Swann, and Steve Walter

Staff: Cristina Berthelot, John Hartline, Heather Hulsey, Rachel Norris, Karyn Owens, Craig Sewell

Guests: Jaelon Moaney, Regional Director for Senator Chris Van Hollen

Minutes

Wille Goddard made a motion to approve the minutes from September 2, 2021. Joan Bearden seconded the motion, all approved.

Mini Grant Round 8 – Awards Review

Rachel Norris, Administrator in Training, reported \$40,000 was budgeted for this round with 31 Grant applications received for a total funding request of \$51,915.93. The Mini-Grant Review Committee reviewed and made recommendations on 28 mini-grant applications; (3 submissions were not sent to the Review Committee due to ineligibility). The Committee recommendation is to approve 24 applications for a total of \$38,806.00. Staff recommends using the remaining budgeted funds of \$1,194.00 in the second round of Mini-Grants scheduled to open in November for a total budget of \$41,195.00. **Joan Bearden made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Mini-Grant Review Committee to award 24 applications for a total of \$38,806. Lucille Walker seconded the motion, all approved.**

Board Openings

Two applications for board position nominations were received - Tresor Thomas, Founder and CEO of My Mustard Seed, LLC for 'Calvert County Farmer' and Corinthia Briscoe for the 'At Large' position (also a resident of Calvert County). Susan McQuilkin reviewed the nominees' letters of interest. Kelly Swann, Calvert County Agricultural Development Specialist provided additional background information on both candidates and commended them to the Board. **Willie Goddard made a motion to approve the**

nominees for Calvert County Farmer and the At Large board positions as recommended. Joan Bearden seconded the motion, all approved.

Staff Announcements

MMM Program – Heather Hulsey reported the Program is applying for two small grants; the Delaplaine Foundation, a Frederick-specific funder, in the amount of \$24,900, would apply for MMM incentive funding for farmers, operational funding, and funding for markets to hire a market manager/food access coordinator and pay for their benefits processing equipment at Frederick County markets; the Resilia, a nonprofit software platform, offering five \$1,000 no-strings attached microgrants to nonprofits to be selected at the end of the month. Both applications were approved by Mr. Hartline, TCCSMD Executive Director, as they are under the small grant threshold that does not require board approval. If awarded, the Delaplaine grant would be applied to the 2022 farmers market season and may straddle FY'22/FY'23. The Resilia opportunity would be immediate funding for FY'22.

Meat Processing – Craig Sewell reported the Amish owned/operated **Westham Lane Butcher Shop** slaughter facility is doing very well. On-site USDA inspectors are very satisfied with current operations. Staff continue to assist with the development of plans and associated standards of procedure for **Rowell's Butcher Shop**. Currently the facility is processing deer carcasses; per USDA specifications the building is designed to clearly separate the red meat processing operations of livestock and deer. It is hoped Rowell's will be approved under USDA Grant of Inspection in approximately 3 to 4 weeks.

EDA Build Back Better Challenge Regional Cluster Grant – Craig Sewell explained The Challenge centers on regions coming together to make transformational changes to their economies. All five county Economic Development Departments have agreed to partner in the regional Cluster. County Point of Contacts have been identified and are energetically contributing to the development of the Southern Maryland Cluster proposal. Several meetings have taken place with projects identified for each county. A diagram of the proposed county Cluster illustrated the interconnection between cluster partners and potential county projects. The vision is designed around a Hub and Spoke concept with the RAC at the center addressing aggregation, processing, and distribution needs of larger institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.), and county 'mini-RACs' satellites which will have retail components, community kitchens, cold storage, and aggregation and distribution points to support farmers and value-added production and service consumers in their immediate areas. SMADC as the Lead institution will submit for a Phase 1 award. 50-60 regional coalitions of partnering entities will be awarded \$500,000 in technical assistance funds to develop and support a regional growth cluster. The Phase 2 application will select 20-30 finalist coalitions to receive \$25- \$100 million to fund identified projects. Members were encouraged to alert their communities to write Letters of Support.

Cottage Food Testing Reimbursement launched – Susan McQuilkin reported SMADC has launched a new funding initiative to increase opportunity for Southern Maryland farmers to expand their inventory of Cottage Food products. Cottage Food testing reimbursement funding is now available for moist bread and icing recipe categories of up to \$250 for Certified Laboratory tests for one recipe to be evaluated for up to 10 Southern Maryland Cottage Foods farm vendors/producers. Testing evaluation is to assure submitted moist bread and icing recipes (currently not on the Department of Health list of 'allowable' products) are non-potentially hazardous when stored and sold under normal conditions (without refrigeration). Farmers can apply for reimbursement through the online application form.

Member Updates – Members shared news and updates.

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