



**Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission**  
**Thursday, June 2, 2022**  
**APPROVED Minutes**

**SMADC Members:** Lisa Barge, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Kayla Griffith, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Linda Jones, Martin Proulx, Brian Russell, Donna Sasscer, Charles Sasscer, III, Russell Shlagel, Deana Tice, Tresor Thomas, Lucille Walker, Steve Wall, Mary Wood

**Members Absent:** Senator Jack Bailey, Willie Goddard Delegate Rachel Jones, Ronald Marney, Barbara Polito, Charles Rice, Dan Rider

**Staff:** Cristina Berthelot, Heather Hulseley, Susan McQuilkin, Rachel Norris, Craig Sewell, Kelly Swann, Shelby Watson-Hampton

**Guests:** Gretchen Hardman – Governor’s Office, Julie Oberg – Director, Calvert County Economic Development, Lindsay Stine – Maryland Farm Bureau, Deborah Carpenter – Chairwoman, Charles County Resilience Authority, Brandon Rosario – Destination Southern Maryland

**Minutes**

**Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to approve the minutes of May 5, 2022. Dan Donohue made a motion to approve the minutes from 2022. Linda Jones seconded the motion. All approved.**

**Guest Speaker- Deborah Carpenter, Charles County Resilience Authority, Chairwoman.** Director Watson Hampton introduced Deborah Carpenter who presented on the purpose and scope of resilience authorities across the state and specifically Charles County initiatives.

**Director’s Report**

**Vacant At Large Position** - Director Watson-Hampton encouraged members to consider nominees for the one remaining At Large position.

**Open Staff Positions** – Office and Grants Coordinator position is being advertised. Two applications have been received to date.

**FY’23 SMADC Draft Budget Approval** – Director Watson Hampton reviewed the Draft Budget by line item. The budget as presented reflects \$900,000 of state funding from the Cigarette Restitution Fund only, exclusive of outside funding or grants.

Grants line item of \$100,000 (mini-grants, equipment, CASE) – members were asked to consider dedicating the budgeted funds for a new round of equipment grants. Equipment grant rounds are typically

offered every 2/3 years. County entities can apply for grant funds to purchase needed equipment (seeders, tillers, balers etc.) to be rented by county farmers. Chairwoman Wood asked for consideration to use a portion of grant funds to purchase a livestock trailer to assist with the transport of animals to the Amish slaughter facility to help boost the trajectory of the local meat industry.

Members questioned if the Administrative and Expenses line item included allowance for staff raises and COLA. Director Watson Hampton affirmed there is sufficient budget to cover recently given COLA and any future step increases. Additionally, members requested that funding a livestock trailer be carefully considered. Director Watson Hampton concurred and requested members to approve in principle \$100,000 for a round of equipment grants, with appropriation of funds to be reviewed and approved by the Commission.

**Vice Chair Lucille Walker asked for a motion to approve the budget. Bill Hitte made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Dan Donohue seconded the motion, all approved.**

### **Staff Program Reports**

**MMM** – Heather Hulse reported it has been an extremely busy period with program rollout to participating markets and direct-marketing farmers. Cristina Berthelot has been busy with design work, marketing, and outreach. This month a huge summer push is underway to distribute MMM rack cards with every SNAP redetermination letter that goes out from Maryland DHS statewide. It is possible that funding may allow distribution year-round going forward which offers a great marketing opportunity for MMM participating markets and farmers to encourage more people to shop local. Cards are also available upon request; if interested, please email MMM staff Cristina Berthelot [cberthelot@smadc.com](mailto:cberthelot@smadc.com).

MMM has had a major funding win. The program applied to the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Recovery for enhanced funding in partnership with the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative Team. Funding would come from the City's American Rescue Plan allotment from the federal government and was awarded \$150k for the next two years for MMM work in Baltimore. As a result, FY23 is shaping with the most incentive funding since the program's inception. Approximately \$500k will be available to go back into the pockets of farmers and local food producers this fiscal year.

**Buy Local Challenge Celebration and statewide BLC** – Susan McQuilkin reported the BLC Celebration in person event launched officially on June 1 with press release and social media. Tickets are available by registration only and include all activities and entertainment. **The BLC Event takes place on August 1, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Serenity Farm, Charles County.** Attendance is limited to 1,000 guests. 45 vendors have signed up to participate of which 30 are farms. 200 tickets were registered within the first few hours of the launch.

**Creative Services** - Kelly Swann reported BLC website updates have been completed including ticketing platform, sponsor packets and graphics for the statewide campaign 'Buy Local Challenge Week' of July 22 – 31<sup>st</sup>. 15,000 BLC promo cards have been designed and printed to be distributed through statewide partners, and designs completed for 2,000 BLC shopping totes – 1,000 for the BLC Celebration and 1,000 to be distributed to Southern Maryland farmers markets for Buy Local Week promotions.

### **Southern Maryland Meats**

**SMM Junior Promotion** – Craig Sewell gave a brief overview for new members on the development and rationale of the show. 31 youth between ages of 8 and 18 have registered for this year's program, most are returning members of which 8 are new. Participants agree to raise project animals according to SMM standards and guidelines. At the end of the season candidates must complete one of three essay questions to receive the completion award and stipend of \$100 to help finance their on-going livestock projects.

**SMILE** – the livestock expo for regional youth will be held on June 24 – 26, 2022, at the St. Mary’s County Fairgrounds. Members were encouraged to attend the opening ceremony on Saturday, June 25 and watch the the Pee Wee (4 and 5 years old) and Novice (6 years and 7 years old) showmanship competitions taking place at noon.

**RAC**– the RAC is still on schedule to be completed a year and a half from now. In the meantime, equipment purchased with grant funds (MAERDAF and RMC) to outfit the building (instructional kitchen and charcuterie processing) is being stored in a facility in St. Mary’s County. Regular meetings with the St. Mary’s County Project Manager are ongoing. The floor plan is in the final stages of approval and soon will be sent out for construction bids.

**Rowells** – The final USDA inspection walkthrough took place last week with the regular USDA inspector and a newly assigned Enforcement Investigation and Assistance Officer (EIAO). Establishment plans/records were reviewed. The new EIAO compliance observations and requirements differed from HACCP submissions previously accepted and approved for the Westham Butcher Shop; small revisions are being made to meet the current EIAO requirements. It is anticipated Rowells will be approved and operational shortly.

**Member Updates** – Members shared news and updates.

**Adjournment**

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

**Next SMADC Meetings (first Thursday of the month):**

**Thursday, July 7**

**Thursday, August 5 – Meeting Cancelled**