



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, May 4, 2023
DRAFT Minutes
FINAL APPROVED

- SMADC Members:** Joan Bearden, Steve Connelly, Delegate Brian Crosby, Dan Donohue, Edward Goodman, Kayla Griffith, Bill Hitte, Martin Proulx, Dan Rider Elizabeth Robinson, Charles Sasscer III, Donna Sasscer, Russell Shlagel, Tresor Thomas, Deana Tice, Lucille Walker Vice Chair, Steve Wall, Mary Wood Chair
- Members Absent:** Senator Jack Bailey, Lisa Barge, Eddie Bowling, Willie Goddard, Linda Jones, Ronald Marney, Barbara Polito, Brian Russell, Caroline Trossbach
- Staff:** Cristina Berthelot, Sophie Brauns, Tori DiVincenzo, Kelley Koeppen, Rachel Norris, Craig Sewell, Kelly Swann and Shelby Watson-Hampton
- Guests:** Tammi Neville - USDA SBIR-STTR - Guest Speaker, Sierra Criste – Financial Programs Associate, MARBIDCO; Leadership Representatives of SOMD Farm Bureaus: Chrissy Catterton, Cathy Cosgrove, Harrison Palmer, Jay Raley, Lindsay Stine, Jamie Tiralla, Parker Welch

Minutes

SMADC Chair Mary Wood called for a motion to approve the minutes from April 6, 2023. Dan Donohue made a motion to approve the minutes. Kayla Griffith seconded the motion. All approved.

Guest Speakers

Sponsorship Request – Gerardo Martinez, owner/operator of Wild Kid Acres requested \$1,500.00 in sponsorship funding for the 2023 Maryland International Agriculture and Environment Conference. Discussion and questions followed a presentation to confirm SMADC sponsorship budget availability and verify investment from other sponsors. **Dan Donohue made a motion to approve SMADC sponsorship support for the 2023 Maryland International Agriculture and Environment Conference at \$1,000.00. Edward Goodman seconded the motion. Kayla Griffith recused herself from voting. All approved.**

Guest Presentation – Tammi Neville of USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), presented on [USDA's Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer](#) programs, topic areas, opportunities and advice to incentivize successful grant applications.

SOMD Farm Bureau's Presentation – Director Watson Hampton welcomed leadership representatives from the 5 southern Maryland Farm Bureaus and noted several Farm Bureau members serve on the

SMADC Commission: Dan Donohue, Prince George's, Kayla Griffith, Anne Arundel, Russell Shlagel, Charles, and Joan Bearden, St. Mary's.

Kayla Griffith introduced county Farm Bureau Presidents: Chrissy Catterton, Anne Arundel, Cathy Cosgrove, Calvert, Harrison Palmer, Prince George's, Jay Raley, St. Mary's, and Farm Bureau Representatives: Lindsay Stine, Regional Field Manager, Jamie Tiralla, District 3 Director, and Parker Welch, Director of Organization.

Farm Bureau leadership gave feedback from recent meetings with regional stakeholders on SMADC's performance including successes in support the agricultural community (examples included SMADC guides, BLC, SMM Jr. Promotion, scholarships/sponsorships and other) and voiced several areas of serious concern articulated by FB members (examples included poor communications/outreach channels, lack of collaborative input concerning the RAC and Grain Elevator projects, funding for grants, CRF funding attributed to staff/admin, and others). Chair, Mary Wood addressed representatives and affirmed SMADC's role in the community, effective communication channels, and inclusive outreach. John Hartline, Ex. Director, TTCSSMD, concurred with similar observations. **Director Watson-Hampton thanked FB representatives and reassured them their concerns are 'heard' and will be addressed. The following actions were noted:**

- FB to document questions pertaining to the issues/concerns expressed in their presentation and send to Director Watson-Hampton to respond in writing.
- FB to identify/update leadership individuals to whom SMADC reports, updates and other information should be shared/disseminated to their membership.

Director's Report

Buy Local Challenge Celebration – the in-person event will be hosted at Suttler Post Farm Clydesdales in St. Mary's County on Monday, July 31 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Solicitation for farm vendors will launch in the first week of May, free booth space is available for up to 30 vendors – farms, producers, and artisans from Southern Maryland and statewide are encouraged to participate. Ticket sales will launch early June - \$5 admission (free for kids 5 and under) - cost includes carriage rides, kid's pony rides, musical entertainment, BLC insulated shopping tote, Vendor Raffle, and more. [Sponsorships](#) are offered. Agriculture Secretary Atticks will be in attendance.

Southern Maryland Ag Community and Leaders Round Table Meeting Recap – hosted on April 25, at the Charles County Soil Conservation District Office, the second Round Table meeting was open to anyone interested in SOMD agriculture and attracted 29 people. Topics/areas of interest or concern for discussion were collated from the online sign-up form. Individuals had 3 minutes to share their thoughts. Round Table Meetings will be scheduled in the fall and winter.

SMADC Commission Protocol/Membership/Mission Working Document – No additional comments or concerns have been received since the working document was presented at the April Commission meeting. **Action:** In the interest of members' time, further discussion and vote is deferred to June meeting.

Staff Program Reports

Maryland Market Money Team – Cristina Berthelot

E-incentives: E-incentives pilot has been live and ongoing at the Gaithersburg Casey Farmers Market since the fall. During the winter, this market was once a week, starting May 6, it will be bi-weekly. Two farmers are accepting e-Incentives at this market and are testing the eWIC integration in TotilPay Go mobile app with TCC loaned iPads. The TIMS loyalty function (SNAP/EBT or eWIC benefits spent trigger the automatic release of MMM matching e-Incentives funds directly to customer's MyMarketLink (app is currently in the testing stage). Novo Dia Group, the creators of TotilPay Go, hired an android

developer to program the eWIC and e-Incentives function for android devices to increase farmer and vendor accessibility to this pilot. We are in the beginning stages of onboarding several other markets in Baltimore City and Southern Maryland Counties to the MMM e-Incentives Pilot.

SMADC Farmer and Farmers Market Resource Fair: SMADC hosted a statewide Farmer and Farmers Market Resource Fair at the Maryland Farm Bureau office in Davidsonville on April 17, for technical assistance and resources. Community partner service providers included USDA, MarketLink, MDA, MDH, MARBIDCO, and SMADC program staff. The resource fair was open to all farmers and farmers market managers statewide interested in accepting Federal Nutrition Benefits, Benefit Matching Programs, Grant Opportunities, Cottage Food Guidelines, Technical Assistance, and more. The event welcomed 20 farmers and farmers market managers throughout the region. SMADC staff completed 6 Maryland Market Money Applications and USDA staff reported signing 5 farmers up for SNAP acceptance, a record number. Other service providers reported similar success. All parties stated the event was a success for them. SMADC plans to hold future Resource Fairs annually.

MMM Onboarding and Ongoing Application: SMADC is currently onboarding 8 new applicants for Maryland Market Money. Applicants include a variety of direct-marketing farms and farmers markets throughout Maryland including 2 new access points in Prince George's, 1 new access point in St. Mary's, and 1 new access point in Charles Counties. SMADC is now accepting applications for Maryland Market Money for the 2023 farmers market season and beyond. Applications are open for all farmers markets, farm stands, and CSAs (or direct marketing farmers). Find and share the application here: <https://www.marylandmarketmoney.org/mmm-application>.

SOMD Community Fridges Grand Opening: SMADC, with the assistance and award from the Rural Maryland Council's RMPiF fund and many community partners, is piloting a Community Refrigerator Program throughout Southern Maryland. These Community Fridges are a type of mutual aid effort that SMADC will support by monetarily compensating Southern Maryland farmers. This pilot program will benefit communities facing food insecurity with 24-hour free food access and empower neighbors to participate through ongoing efforts, past the scope of this pilot. Please join SMADC for the Grand Opening of the first SOMD Community Fridge in Charles County at the Christ Church La Plata at 2 pm on Saturday, May 6, 2023. For more information visit smadc.com/somdcommunityfridges.

Buy Local Guide Update – Kelly Swann reported the [2023 Buy Local Guide](#) launched end-April and is now live on the SMADC website 'Get our Guides' page. The guide is designed to be the 'essential' directory of Southern Maryland farms and producers. Published online, the 'Flipping Book' format allows consumers to search and connect with farms, markets and producers close to home and region wide. Expanded listings include all types of farm grown, harvested and made products offered by the region's farms and producers including the region's wineries, breweries, distilleries. Starting with the release of the Farmers Market section in April, additional guide sections will be added in the coming months. The Farmers Market section highlights 41 markets (32 farmers markets in SOMD and 9 additional markets in Maryland, Metro D.C and Virginia that host one or more SOMD farm vendor. A printed rack card promoting the guide is in development to be distributed region-wide, and a paid Ad will follow in regional media.

Infrastructure Updates – Craig Sewell

RAC Update: Our monthly RAC update meeting with St. Mary's County was held on Monday April 17, with St. Mary's Co. reporting on the status of the design document circulating through different departments. All agencies are to report back shortly. If there is no major rewrite of drawings, we will be able to meet the deadline of submission for construction bid. If a big rewrite is necessary, the timetable will be adjusted. The timeline discussed was once all agencies have reported with no major changes, the

DPW requires couple of weeks to finalize the bid. Procurement will need a month to develop the bid package in their accepted format. The bid will be released with at least 30 days allotted for review and submission. The County would then take an additional 15 days to review and award.

RAC Budget Update – Legislative Session Allocated \$250,000 additional:

- Capital Budget: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/bills/hb/hb0201E.pdf> - \$100,000 in Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) funding is on Page 105, lines 29-34.
- Prior Authorizations: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/bills/hb/hb1298E.pdf> - \$150,000 in Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) funding is on Page 14, Lines 15-24

Lothian Grain Elevator: Funds have been allocated in the State Budget to go to Anne Arundel County for the County to purchase the Lothian Grain Elevator from Perdue and keep it in use for the grain farmers of SOMD. In addition, SMADC has been assisting Anne Arundel County with potential ideas for value added agricultural enterprises that could also be done on the property to help it stay financially solvent, while at the same time providing additional infrastructure resources for the ag community. Funding to help support SMADC assist Anne Arundel County in this additional work was provided in the State Budget as well at \$100,000. Craig Sewell recently attended a midwestern grain conference to become more knowledgeable about opportunities for an artisanal local grain mill at the site.

Member Updates – Members shared news and updates.

Adjournment

Dan Donohue made a motion to adjourn. Kayla Griffith seconded the motion. All approved.

Next SMADC Meeting (first Thursday of the month):

Thursday, June 1, 2023

- Speaker: Margaret (Megan) Todd- Legal Research Associate, Presenting on Regulatory Decision Trees for Maryland Producers