



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission

Thursday, July 11, 2024

Approved - Minutes

SMADC Members: Mary Wood, Lucille Walker, Delegate Gary Simmons, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Elizabeth Robinson, Russell Shlagel, Deana Tice, Commissioner 'BJ' Bowling, Steve Connelly, Priscilla Leitch, Caroline Trossbach, Steve Wall, Sydney Garner, Charles Sasscer III, Jamie Tiralla

Members Absent: Senator Jack Bailey, Delegate Brian Crosby, Senator Michael Jackson, Willie Goddard, Linda Jones, Brian Russell, Dan Rider, Tresor Thomas, Karl Shlagel, Jennifer David, Shelley Garrett,

Staff: Cristina Berthelot, Sophia Brauns, John Hartline, Heather Hulse, Kelley Koeppen, Rachel Norris, Kelly Swann, Shelby Watson Hampton, Sabrina Dobbins, Terri Wright Gresholm

Guests: Steven Versen & Jordan Butler-VA Tobacco Commission

Minutes

Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to approve the minutes for June 6, 2024, with corrections. Bill Hitte made a motion to approve the minutes for June 6, 2024. Dan Donohue seconded the motion. All approved.

Director's Report

SOMD Farm Bureau Workshops– We held two workshops one was Farm Finances Workshop (June 25th) and Urban and Suburban Farm Workshop (June 26th). Both were well attended and received great reviews. The speakers were very informative. We will be holding another workshop, the Food on Farm Workshop, which will be held on July 17th at TCCSMD office. This workshop is now full. We are also working on a new series workshop on social media. The first one was held on July 10th. The next one will be held July 15th at the TCCSMD office. We will be sending more information about the ones scheduled for August.

Staff Program Reports

MMM Team- MMM ended FY24 with \$511,208 in funding going to farmers markets and direct marketing farms. That means farmers and local food crafters made over \$1m in benefits and MMM incentives because of this program. We're so happy that we're able to help farmers be part of the solution to that need while also growing their own businesses. We are truly bringing the people to the farm.

Food Access

We are still very busy with our Charles County food access work in the form of community fridges, both the one in La Plata and plans for potential new ones in Newburg and Waldorf. We are still supporting the Charles County community schools with their food pantries, as well as farm fresh food box distribution happening at select food pantries which were previously unable to offer fresh, perishable food. Almost every day we get calls and emails from folks outside Charles County wanting to bring this important support to their own counties.

BLC Event- We are in the process of completing our planning for the Buy Local Challenge event. We have space for 51 vendors. At the moment we have 31 vendors and are still receiving more applications. We have over \$7100 in sponsorships. We like to thank Charles County Economic Development, Southern Maryland National Heritage Area, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Charles County Tourism, MARBICO, St. Mary's County Economic Development, Colonial Farm Credit, Charles County Soil Conservation and the Maryland Horse Industry Board for their contribution.

BLC Promotion – Tickets for the Buy local Celebration event is now available at <https://smadc.ticketspice.com/buy-local-challenge-2024-celebration-event> .

Regional Agricultural Center (RAC)

RAC 1.0-. Design drawings are still being working in St Mary's Health Dept. There are 2 outstanding issues still to be addressed.

RAC 2.0 - The project was presented to the TCC executive committee and had favorable reviews. Craig is working on a detailed business plan for the St Mary's Administration to discuss the possibilities. He will go over the business plan to present to the TCC and St Mary's joint meeting on July 25th. We also did a walk-thru at the physical location.

SMM Junior Program: 33 Juniors signed up. A new record!

Rural Investment Collaborative: Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond class was successfully completed. A mini grant of \$2,000 was awarded for our Project. Ongoing promise of continued involvement via a Technical Assistance Grant.

Grandma's Hands: Licensing agreement has been signed with Maryland Public Television. They will be provided with 2 different 30-minute programs that will begin showing around Thanksgiving over the next 2 years.

Blue Catfish – A meeting was held via phone with stakeholders to discuss looking at setting up a catfish processing center. Please keep an eye for more workshops or forums for discussions.

Budget/Finance - The TCCSMD Executive Board voted to approve the TCCSMD FY25 Budget as presented at the June 27th meeting. The full SMADC budget was a piece of that approval and is attached as PDF.

Member Updates – Members shared news and updates.

Adjournment – Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan Donohue made a motion to adjourn. Joan Bearden seconded the motion. All approved.

Next SMADC Meeting: Thursday September 5, 2024.