



**Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission**  
**Thursday, November 7, 2024**  
**Approved Minutes**

**SMADC Members:** Mary Wood, Lucille Walker, Delegate Gary Simmons, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Linda Jones, Elizabeth Robinson, Russell Shlagel, Tresor Thomas, Deana Tice, Karl Shlagel, Commissioner 'BJ' Bowling, Daniel Mast, Steve Connelly, Jennifer David, Shelley Garrett, Priscilla Leitch, Caroline Trossbach, Steve Wall, Sydney Garner

**Members Absent:** Senator Jack Bailey, Delegate Brian Crosby, Senator Michael Jackson,, Willie Goddard, Brian Russell, Dan Rider, Jamie Tiralla,

**Staff:** John Hartline, Shelby Watson Hampton, Craig Sewell, Heather Hulsey, Sabrina Dobbins, Rachel Norris, Cristina Berthelot, Kelley Koeppen, Terri Wright Gresholm

**Guests:** Sierra Criste (Marbidco); Martin Proulx (MDA); Jonathan Cribbs (American Farm Publications); Chris Kaselemis (St. Mary's Co. Economic Development)

**Minutes**

**Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to approve the minutes for October 2024 meeting. Lucille Walker made a motion to approve the minutes and Delegate Gary Simmons seconded.**

**Director's Report**

**RAC Update:** St. Mary's County and the TCC Exec Board has concluded that despite best efforts, the RAC project can go no further in its current state. The only way to achieve success is moving forward and pivot from the current model and current MOU. The TCC Exec Board and St. Mary's County will come to a mutual amiable agreement on how to dissolve the partnership, the MOU, and the current project, at the next TCC Exec Meeting on Nov 21st. Pending that official dissolution, SMADC will be returned a portion of the money that was given to St. Mary's for the project (approx. \$300,000 - \$500,000 depending on how the contract is dissolved.)

**The Motion is as stated:**

“Re-allocate funds in the amount of 500k for the RAC MOU for a public/private partnership for a meat processing facility and if approved by the TCC Executive Board, TCC move to dissolve the agreement with St. Mary's County with the transfer of ownership of the RAC building plans to SMADC.

Furthermore, SMADC agrees to the negotiations by TCC for the cancellations of the MOU for the RAC in St. Mary's County. “

The vote was 14 members stating aye and one abstaining.

**Staff Updates:**

**Maryland Market Money (MMM)**

With the holiday season approaching, the MMM team is actively supporting farmers markets, farm stands, and CSAs across Maryland to prepare for a busy winter season. We're finalizing a comprehensive list of access points that will remain open through the winter months and assisting those that will close for the season with their wrap-up. You can find MMM updates here: <https://www.marylandmarketmoney.org/>.



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Additionally, the team recently published a 2024 list of Maryland Grown Turkeys to promote local, farm-raised options for holiday tables. Please check out the listing and encourage others to share it with their communities to help support Maryland's local farms this season: <https://www.marylandmarketmoney.org/news/maryland-grown-turkeys-2024>.

**SoMD Community Fridges and Food Access:**

The SMADC MMM/Food Access Team is proud to announce an exciting collaboration with the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), several local farmers, and Maryland watermen to bring free, locally grown Thanksgiving Boxes to families in need. This initiative, made possible by a grant from the Charles County Board of Commissioners, will feature 100% Maryland-grown turkeys and produce. The boxes will be distributed at a special giveaway event on Friday, November 22nd, at LifeStream Church of the Nazarene in Waldorf, MD (5105 Leonardtown Rd, Waldorf, MD 20601). This effort is part of a broader campaign by Maryland's Best to highlight organizations providing access to locally sourced, nutritious food during the holiday season.

The SoMD Community Fridge Program will operate in Charles County through the end of 2024 as funding allows. You can find more information about SoMD Community Fridges and other SMADC food access efforts here: <https://smadc.com/somdcommunityfridges/>.

**Funding Appeal:**

We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support from Commission members like you, who recognize the importance of strengthening local food systems and ensuring equitable access to fresh, nutritious food across Southern Maryland. Thanks to this critical backing, food access initiatives such as Maryland Market Money and the SoMD Community Fridge Program continue to serve those in need while providing valuable economic opportunities for local farmers.

In light of current financial challenges, SMADC food access program staff are exploring corporate giving strategies, including checkout charity campaigns and business-focused appeals, to diversify our funding sources. This approach will allow us to meet the rising demand for food access services without placing additional pressure on our community members, who are also feeling the effects of these economically challenging times. Looking ahead to expand and sustain these essential programs beyond 2024, additional funding will be crucial. Continued financial support will allow us to reach more communities, deepen our impact, and ensure that fresh, locally-grown food remains accessible to all. Thank you again for your partnership and commitment to our mission. Together, we can drive lasting change for the health and resilience of our communities.

**Outreach:**

We are pleased to announce the placement of multiple billboards around the SOMD region advertising our Farms for the Holiday Guide that features over 100 farms & agricultural producers and their goods for the holiday season! This was funded by the USDA FMPP grant, via the marketing and promotion portion.

**Regulatory:**

SMADC continues to act as a liaison between Amish/Mennonite Communities and the Maryland Department of Health. One Amish farmer has been waiting patiently to hear an update on the law requiring the cottage food producers to provide an email and phone number on the label of their products to be sold at a grocery store be changed to allow a representing entity to be labeled on their product. This farmer has been waiting since April 2024. SMADC was informed that the MDH had been reviewing that change and was informed there may be an emergency regulation change to allow a representing entity to be the point of contact on the label. In late October, SMADC was sent a letter via Senator Jack Bailey from the MDH stating "This regulatory proposal will be prepared and sent to the Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and



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Legislative Review (AELR) for review before it is sent to be printed in the Maryland Register. MDH anticipates sending this proposal to AELR prior to the upcoming regulatory

**Maryland FarmLINK**

All three teams have joined to sign agreements to commence their yearlong mentorship.

The three teams are:

- Woody DeLauder (Rootbound Farm, Charles County) with Natasha DeLong
- Leah Eller with Brianna Bowling (Retreat & Learn, Charles County)
- Earl Lumpkins (Part Green Hill Farm, St. Mary's County) with Hazel Ptack and Andrew Boyle.

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

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

**Next SMADC Meeting: Thursday December 5, 2024.**