



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, December 5, 2024
Approved Minutes

SMADC Members: Mary Wood, Lucille Walker, Senator Jack Bailey, Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Edward Goodman, Bill Hitte, Linda Jones Brian Russell, Elizabeth Robinson, Dan Rider, Russell Shlagel, Deana Tice, Jamie Tiralla, Karl Shlagel, Commissioner 'BJ' Bowling, Daniel Mast, Shelley Garrett, Priscilla Leitch, Caroline Trossbach, Sydney Garner

Members Absent: Delegate Brian Crosby, Senator Michael Jackson, Delegate Gary Simmons, Willie Goddard, Tresor Thomas, Steve Connelly, Jennifer David, Steve Wall

Staff: John Hartline, Craig Sewell, Heather Hulsey, Sabrina Dobbins, Rachel Norris, Kelly Swann, Cristina Berthelot, Sophie Brauns, Kelley Koeppen, Terri Wright Gresholm

Guests: Sierra Criste (Marbidco); Martin Proulx (MDA); Jonathan Cribbs (American Farm Publications); Jennifer Stauffer (Stauffer's Butcher Barn)

Minutes

Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to approve the minutes for November 2024 meeting. Joan Bearden made a motion to approve the minutes and Bill Hitte seconded.

Director's Report

Staff Updates:

Maryland Market Money (MMM)

The program has stayed busy through November. \$48, 148 was disbursed to MMM access points in incentive match funding in November.

SoMD Community Fridges and Food Access:

The SMADC MMM/Food Access Team had a soul-nourishing November. Our collaboration with the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), several local farmers, and Maryland watermen supplied locally grown Thanksgiving Boxes to 100 families in need on November 22nd thanks to the generous support of the Charles County Board of Commissioners. Thanks to MDA and their awesome Maryland's Best team, the effort was featured on Good Morning Maryland!, a morning show on Baltimore's ABC affiliate station as well as a live interview on 100.7 The Bay's Huber in the Morning radio program. You can read MDA's press release here: <https://news.maryland.gov/mda/press-release/2024/11/20/marylands-best-and-southern-maryland-agricultural-development-commission-partner-on-thanksgiving-meals/>

The SoMD Community Fridge Program will operate in Charles County through the end of 2024 as funding allows. Several other external partners in counties in SMADC's service area have expressed interest in expanding the fridge program into their own counties. You can find more information about SoMD Community Fridges and other SMADC food access efforts here: <https://smadc.com/somdcommunityfridges/>.



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, December 5, 2024
Draft - Minutes

Funding Appeal:

It's end -of -year fundraising season as well. You may have seen our newsletter or Giving Tuesday appeals. We are deeply grateful for the 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. 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.

Currently, SMADC food access program staff are exploring and implementing corporate giving strategies, including checkout charity campaigns and business-focused appeals, to diversify our funding sources. If you have any connections to corporate donors looking to decrease their tax liability at the end of 2024 through charitable donations, please send them our way.

Outreach:

The Southern Maryland Holiday Guide was published online via Flipping Book on November 15th and has already garnered over 1,700 views. This guide features more than 50 farms and agricultural producers, providing valuable insights into the local offerings. You can access the guide through the Flipping-Book link available on [SMADC.com](https://www.smadc.com) or visit <https://online.flippingbook.com/link/1017673/>

To further promote the Holiday Guide, we have installed five billboards strategically located across the five Southern Maryland counties. In addition, a press release has been issued, several social media posts have been shared, and a rack card promoting the Southern Maryland Farm Guide has been printed. These billboards will remain on display until early December and were funded through our USDA FMPP grant.

Regulatory:

MDH has approved a new recipe for Clover Hill Dairy. All SOPs, labels and ingredient source documents have also been updated.

There has been an update on the issue regarding 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 to be changed to allow a representing entity to be labeled on their product. The new director of regulation and policy for the MDH, Jordan Fisher Blotter, has reached out to Senator Jack Bailey who has informed us that there has been an emergency and proposed regulations sent to AELR to address this issue. The following text is included in these which states:

- “C. Cottage Food Business.
(1)—(7) text unchanged
(8) *The phone number required in §§C(1)(c)(i) and (viii) of this regulation shall enable contact with the cottage food business by the Department within 24 hours.*



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, December 5, 2024
Draft - Minutes

(9) The email address required in §C(1)(c)(i) of this regulation shall enable contact with the cottage food business by the Department within 48 hours.”

These emergencies and proposed regulations are targeted to be published in the Maryland Register on December 13, 2024.

Maryland FarmLINK

Mentor Match:

Teams have been submitting their first monthly report. To date, all reports have positive feedback about the mentorship program.

Urban Ag Portal:

An Urban Ag Consultant Request for Proposal was open from October 10th to November 15th. This consultant will be responsible for coordinating project management, conducting promotional outreach, and identifying training opportunities for urban farmers and agriculture realtors. A total of 9 applicants applied for the Urban Agriculture Consultant position. A committee is meeting December 6th to select an individual for this role. The individual selected will be notified by December 10th. This role will commence on January 6th, 2025, and will complete all work by June 30th.

RAC Update: At the Tri-County Council Executive Board Meeting on Nov 21st, the Board discussed and voted on the Regional Ag Center.

“Commissioner Alderson made a motion to terminate the MOU between TCCSMD/SMADC and St. Mary’s County for the Building of the RAC and to return the amount of \$450,000. St. Mary’s is to also return ownership of the RAC Plans to SMADC. The Motion was Seconded by Member-at-Large Steve Tuttle and approved unanimously by the executive board.

Commissioner Bowling made a motion to reallocate the \$450,000 from the RAC to a public/private partnership for a meat processing facility. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Alderson and approved unanimously by the executive board. “

The St. Mary’s County Commissioners will meet on December 10th to finalize their decision, and a joint press release will be put out by St. Mary’s and TCCSMD/SMADC immediately following that meeting. A public RFP for a public/private partnership for a meat processing facility in Southern Maryland will be put out by TCCSMD/SMADC soon.



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
Thursday, December 5, 2024
Draft - Minutes

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 January 9th, 2024.