



Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission

March 6, 2025

Approved - Minutes

SMADC Members: Mary Wood, , Joan Bearden, Dan Donohue, Bill Hitte, Brian Russell, Elizabeth Robinson, Dan Rider, Russell Shlagel, Tresor Thomas, Deana Tice, Jamie Tiralla, Karl Shlagel Commissioner 'BJ' Bowling, Daniel Mast, Steve Connelly, Jennifer David, Caroline Trossbach, Steve Wall, Sydney Garner

Members Absent: Lucille Walker , Senator Jack Bailey , Delegate Brian Crosby, Senator Michael Jackson, Delegate Gary Simmons, Willie Goddard, Edward Goodman, Linda Jones, Shelley Garrett, Priscilla Leitch,

Staff: John Hartline, Shelby Watson-Hampton, Craig Sewell , Sabrina Dobbins, Rachel Norris, Kelly Swann, Cristina Berthelot, Sophia Brauns, Kelley Koeppen,

Guests: Sierra Criste (Marbidco); Kellie Hinkle, Julie Oberg, Jeff Carroll

Minutes

Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to approve the minutes for February meeting. Joan Bearden made a motion to approve the minutes and Dan Donohue seconded.

Director's Report

SMADC Budget Update- We asked for support via letters and testifiers for SMADC budget at the Senate Office. We had a great turn out from lots of Farmers and Ag Business. We would like to thank all that assisted us in making sure your voices are heard.

SMADC Commission Farmer Applications- We have four applicants to fill our empty spot on the commission. Amanda Kilpatrick is from Charles County (not a farmer). She was not a fit due to her not being a farmer. We do have two farmers from PG County. D'Real Graham is from PG County and is a farmer. He believes in caring for the community and ensuring fresh dinners for all families. He has extensive list of agricultural certifications. He was recommended by the PG Soil Conservation. The next one is Gabby Jennifer. Gabby is from PG as well. She's a mini farmer in Prince George's County with a focus on seasonal cycle crapping, native nutrition training, harvest sharing and community garden advocacy.

Motion to discuss the candidates for the SMADC Commission Board Members seat: Dan Donohue made the motion to start discussion on the new members and Elizabeth Robinson seconded.

All approved for D'Real Graham of Spice Creek Farm as a new member to the SMADC Commission Board.

Meeting Times Survey Results (again)- We conducted a survey for moving our meeting time. We had 26 responses. The time will remain 9:00am-11:00am. We will setup a time for folks who can't make the morning meetings and call it SMADC Roundtable. This will be conducted seasonally (Four times a year). The time frame will be from 7:00pm-9:00pm. Open meetings will give updates and everybody can participate. SMADC Roundtable is not mandatory. It's just to update those who are unavailable at the time of our meetings and to give updates.



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SMADC Commission SOMD Farm Tour (Charles Co.)

We also had a question about touring other farms once a year. The results were a resounding yes! The two best months were tied April and May. Look out for the SAVE DATE for our first tour. We will visit each county once a year. This year we will visit a farm in Charles County. This will count as our May meeting. The date is set for May 1st at 10:00am. We will visit two farms, and we will also provide lunch.

Staff Updates

Butcher Shop RFP

- The \$450,000 & the Final RAC Plans have been returned to SMADC from St Mary's County.
- An RFP has been released for a Capital and Equipment grant for a cut and wrap and value-added meat processing establishment in Southern Maryland
 - 💰 Funding Highlights: \$200,000 No-Match Grant for establishing a USDA-inspected meat processing facility. \$250,000 Loan with potentially forgivable terms for capital and equipment enhancements. Administered by the Maryland Agriculture and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)
 - This initiative will empower local livestock farmers by expanding access to fresh, locally sourced meat and creating a cut-and-wrap butcher shop in our community!
 - 📅 Don't miss our Butcher's Conference Info Session on March 13, 2025, at 10 AM!
 - 📄 Application Deadline: March 31, 2025, at 4 PM. Interested applicants should submit proposals that include business plans and facility specifications.
 - This program is set to transform our agricultural economy, improve local food systems, and support our farmers! For more details, contact Craig Sewell at csewell@tccsmd.org.
 - 🔗 To view the full press release, visit: <https://mailchi.mp/smadc.com/somd-meat-processing-loan>
 - The \$50,000 charcuterie box currently in storage is offered as a part of the grant
 - Additional HACCP training and consulting will be provided at the customer's request.
- Grant equipment that is in storage for the RAC Commercial kitchen
 - Items from commercial grade reach in refrigerators and freezers, double stacked pizza ovens, stainless tables, etc. will be offered via a grant to public and commercial establishments within the 5-county area.
 - Transportation from the storage site to the grantee will be borne by the grantee.

Maryland Market Money (MMM) Program:

February has been keeping the MMM Team busy with pre-season preparations while several access points have been open throughout the winter and offering MMM incentives. The MMM program has released \$110,613 in incentive funding to our access points since January 1st. You can see the list of MMM access points currently active here:

<https://www.marylandmarketmoney.org/news/maryland-market-money-winter-access-points-2024-2025>

Also, last month, MMM received good news from the City of Baltimore who has committed another \$300,446 to the program for 2025 through 2026.

The team also hosted its monthly MD Farmers Market Managers Community of Practice call where University of MD Food Safety Expert, Carol Allen, did a presentation to teach market managers about food safety laws and best practices at farmers markets.



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SOMD Community Fridges and Food Access:

On February 21st, the SMADC MMM/Food Access Team had its second Community Fridge grand opening at LifeStream Church in Waldorf which was very exciting.

Additionally in February, the RFP for qualifying farmers to provide and distribute food to the SoMD Community Fridge locations and partner community schools with fridges and pantries was awarded by the TCC selection committee to two Charles County farms: Shlagel Farms and Floating Lotus Farmstead. We also set aside a smaller fund to continue to allow farms with low fulfillment capacity to continue to sell their products into the program which will continue through September 2025. You can find more information about SoMD Community Fridges and other SMADC food access efforts here: <https://smadc.com/somdcommunityfridges/>

Creative Services

End of Year Reports are now available in print!

We are currently accepting submissions for the Spring/Summer edition of the "So Maryland, So Good" Farmers Market Guide. Applications will be accepted through March 17. [View the submission link here.](#)

Additionally, farm stands, farm stores, and CSAs will be featured in the mid-spring edition, please stay tuned for more updates.

Mini Grants:

Applications opened on February 7th and will close/closed February 28th. An independent mini grant review committee will meet in mid-March in order to provide recommendations to the commission. There will be an online vote for commission members to approve the grants in the coming weeks.

Legislative:

I went to testify for House Bill 0907 Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property – Alterations sponsored by Delegate Roberson which expands the urban agriculture tax credit in Prince George's County. The testimony went great with multiple supporters including producers in Prince George's as well as MD Department of AG and Prince George's County Food Equity Council.

Southern Maryland Equine Seminar:

We are solidifying plans for the Southern Maryland Equine Seminar that will be held on March 20th from 3-7pm in the SMECO auditorium in Hughesville. Our safety kit items were delivered, and kits will be put together in the coming weeks. We have three speakers, which included Sailor Endes, Gina Guffey and Elizabeth Farina. These three are professionals in equine nutrition, strength and flexibility for the rider and trail riding safety.

Buy Local Challenge Celebration:

There will be a small work group formed to begin planning for the 2025 Buy Local Challenge event. If you are interested, please drop your email in the chat group.



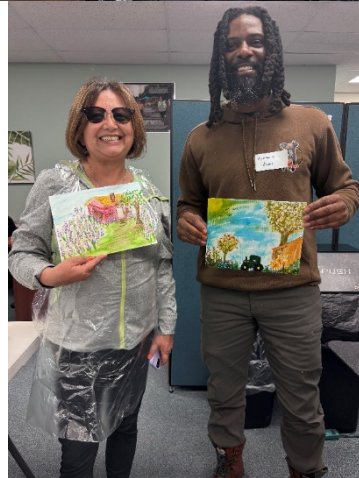
Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission

March 6, 2025

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Beginner Farmer/Rancher Development Grant:

Urban Agriculture Meetup was hosted on February 21st at the SMADC office from 5-7pm. We had 16 people signed up and all 16 participants attended the meetup. Dinner was provided in addition to a painting activity where attendees painted their goals for the 2025 growing season. Survey results from 15 participants were extremely positive with 100% of respondents stating the overall experience was excellent.



Member Updates – Members shared news and updates.

Adjournment – Chairwoman Mary Wood called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bill Hitte made a motion to adjourn. Comm. BJ Bowling seconded the motion. All approved.

Next SMADC Meeting: Thursday April 3rd , 2024.