

Agriculture, Seafood and Forestry Board

Meeting Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023

Generated by Lisa Ledman

Approved: February 8, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 12:10 PM

2. ROLL CALL

A. Confirmation of Quorum

Members present included Stephen Reeves, Scott Bacon, Bonnie Browne, Justine Cheseldine-Gass, Kaitlin Fraer, Priscilla Leitch, James Moore, James "Bubby" Norris, Richard Polk, Michael Sirk, Bruce Young

B. Welcome Guests

Chris Kaselemis, St. Mary's County Economic Development

Lisa Ledman, St. Mary's County Economic Development

Sue Veith, St. Mary's County Economic Development

Caroline King, Southern Maryland Resource Conservation & Development

Viv Marek, Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust

Joan Bearden, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau

Susan McQuilken, Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission

C. Approval of the November 9, 2023 Minutes

I move to approve Minutes from November 9, 2023 Agriculture, Seafood & Forestry Board Meeting. Motion by Bruce Young, second Bonnie Browne

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Stephen Reeves, Scott Bacon, Bonnie Browne, Justine Cheseldine-Gass, Kaitlin Fraer, James Moore, James "Bubby" Norris, Richard Polk, Michael Sirk, Bruce Young

3. PRESENTATION

No presentation.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Farmers Markets

Subcommittee membership includes Joe Wood, Phil Langley, Scott Bacon, and Phil Dorsey

Priscilla Leitch updated the Board that The Barns at New Market Seasonal Building is now open Monday – Saturday (closed Tuesdays & Thursdays) from 9 am until 4 pm. There is a Holiday Market open in the Value Added Building on Saturdays from 9 am until 2 pm. Both markets will close for the season on December 16, 2023 at which time, the parking lot expansion project will begin.

The Home Grown Farm Market is open Saturdays from 9 am until 1 pm year round (closed for Christmas and New Years). There was be a special Holiday Market on Sunday, December 3, 2023 from 11:30 am until 330 pm.

The California Farmers Markets is open on Saturdays from 9 am until 1 pm until November 18, 2023.

The Board was also given the following information which shows the difference between the operations of each of the County Sponsored Farmers Market.

Homegrown Farmers Market Operated by an LLC	California/BAE Farmers Market Operated by a board overseen by St. Mary's County Economic Development	The Barns at New Market Operated by St. Mary's County Economic Development
21078 Three Notch Road Lexington Park	22810 Three Notch Road California	29133 Thompson Corner Rd Mechanicsville
Open Saturdays year-round 9am-1pm	Open May through November	Seasonal market (outdoors) Monday-Saturday 9am-4pm Winter market (indoors) Saturdays 9am-2pm Holiday Market November and December 7 Saturdays 9am-2pm
Indoor	Outdoor	Outdoor stalls and indoor facility
\$400/year (Jan-Dec) \$30/week. Additional costs for electric.	\$40/year (May-Nov)	Seasonal Market (Apr-Nov) \$2,000/ year M-S (6 days per week) \$10/weekdays, \$25/Saturday Out of county \$15/weekdays \$37.50/Saturday, \$3,000/annual. Additional costs for electric. Holiday Market (Nov 5- Dec 16) \$15/ Saturdays \$20/Out of county
Producer only market	Producer only market	Not a producer only market. Limited to sales of Southern Maryland products only.
26 vendors participated in 2023	22 vendors participated in 2023	39 vendors participated in 2023 (winter market, seasonal market, and holiday market)
Abby Trossbach 301-904-7837	Economic Development, Ag and Seafood Division Lisa Leadman Priscilla Leitch 240-309-4022	Economic Development, Ag and Seafood Division Mary Dell Trossbach 240-561-0758

B. Agriculture Land Preservation Advisory Board

Subcommittee membership includes Phil Langley, Alan Polk, Stephen Reeves, Michael Sirk, and Joseph Wood.
No update.

C. Agriculture Reconciliation Committee

Subcommittee membership includes Bonnie Browne, Phil Dorsey, Alan Polk, Michael Sirk and Steve Reeves.
No update.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Seafood/Aquaculture Updates

No update.

B. Forestry Updates

Alan Polk distributed the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Southern Region 2023 Annual Report. Alan Polk questioned the lack of larger area-controlled burns in this area, Sue Veith responded that it was because of the air quality being close to Washington DC metropolitan area.

C. Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)

No update.

D. Rural Legacy

Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust (PTLT) – Viv Marek updated the Board that PTLT recently closed on 2 easements, Stauffer (20.35 acres) and Leeland (73.58 acres). They hope to close on the Greenwell (413.57 acre) easement in January 2024.

Southern Maryland Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) – Caroline King shared that RC&D will soon be settling on 2 pending easement properties, Chreky (118 acres) and Cari (53.35 acres). RC&D has been researching loan options and other ideas for funding the incidental easement expenses.

E. Regional Agriculture Center (RAC)

Chris Kaselemis updated the Board that SMADC would like to schedule a ground breaking for February 2024.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2023 Annual Report

The Board reviewed a draft copy of their 2023 Annual Report. It was noted that James "Bubby" Norris' name was mistakenly left off the membership list. This will be corrected in the final version before it is submitted. I move to approve and submit the St. Mary's County Agriculture, Seafood, and Forestry Board 2023 Annual Report with the addition of James "Bubby" Norris to the membership list.

Motion by Bruce Young, second Alan Polk

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Stephen Reeves, Scott Bacon, Bonnie Browne, Justine Cheseldine-Gass, Kaitlin Fraer, James Moore, James "Bubby" Norris, Richard Polk, Michael Sirk, Bruce Young

B. The Barns at New Market Rules

Pricilla Leitch shared with the Board that there will be a meeting with the Seasonal Farmers Market vendors from the Barns at New Market. Copies of the 2023 Seasonal Market Rules were distributed for the Board to review. The Board is welcome to submit comments and suggestions in regard to these rules to the Department of Economic Development, however it is not a task of this Board to create or edit the Market Rules.

C. Board Member Open Comment Period

Bruce Young invited the Board to attend the Soil Conservation Dinner on February 24, 2024 at the Bay District Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall. Mr. Young also updated the Board of the Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) goal deadlines and these projects will take priority for his office, they are targeting larger properties

and best management practices. There are also changes to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) which provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural and forestry producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits. Participants can now sign up on an on-going basis rather than once a year.

Alan Polk spoke about Maryland Department of Natural Resources emergency regulations to increase protections for Maryland's striped bass spawning population. This topic will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

C. Partner Updates

Susan McQuilken told the Board about the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) grant award for the Blue Catfish Analysis to include harvesting, processing, marketing, etc. The results of the study should be available in October 2024.

7. ADJOURN

I move to adjourn the December 14, 2023 Agriculture, Seafood & Forestry Board Meeting. Motion by James Moore, second by Richard Polk

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Stephen Reeves, Scott Bacon, Bonnie Browne, Justine Cheseldine-Gass, Kaitlin Fraer, James Moore, James "Bubby" Norris, Richard Polk, Michael Sirk, Bruce Young