



John K. Parlett, Jr., Chairman
David Paulk, Vice Chairman

Colleen Corrigan **Phil Dorsey** **Dr. Edward Falta** **Patrick Russell**
Jon Shenski **Michael Sirk** **James Spence** **Charles Webb**

Agricultural, Seafood, and Forestry Board
May 14, 2015
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The Agricultural, Seafood, and Forestry Board meeting was held in the Conference Room of the Agriculture Services Center. Members in attendance were John Parlett, Colleen Corrigan, Phil Dorsey, Edward Falta, Jon Shenski, Michael Sirk, and James Spence. Also present was Ben Beale from the University of Maryland Extension, Bruce Young from the St. Mary's Soil Conservation District, and Robin Finnacom and Lisa Ledman from the St. Mary's County's Economic Development Department. Guests in attendance at the meeting included Al Stewart from the St. Mary's Resource Conservation Development, Frank Allen from the Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust (PTLT), Dr. Christine Bergmark from the Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission (SMADC), Willie Goddard from the St. Mary's County Farm Bureau, John Turgeon from Maryland Environmental Trust, and Mike Hewitt from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. It was confirmed that there were enough members present to form a quorum. Minutes from the April 9, 2015 were read and approved by the Board.

Old Business

SMADC Property- Dr. Bergmark updated the Board on the mission and source of funding (cigarette restitution funds) for the Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission. Legislation was recently passed enabling SMADC to use their funds to purchase property to support an Agricultural Business Park. SMADC is in the process of sending out an Expression of Interest to request landowners to submit properties for consideration of purchase. Once this has been published for 45 days then they will redraft the criteria into a Request for Proposals and hope to have this out by August. Dr. Bergmark shared with the Board the vision and components that could possibly be included at the Agricultural Business Park. Dr. Bergmark asked the members of the Board to complete a survey ranking their priorities for the Agricultural Business Park

Rural Legacy – Mr. Allen updated the Board that the PTLT is currently seeing new members for its board. The PTLT is continuing the process to become accredited. Mr. Parlett suggested that the PTLT consider additional public outreach to recruit new members. .

North Farmers Market – Mr. Parlett informed the Board that the request to add the CIP budget item for farmers market improvements/relocation was not added into the Budget proposed by the

Commissioners of St. Mary's County. Commissioner Hewitt addressed this issue and stated that there are current fund balance moneys that can be used for this project should it need to move forward and that the project may have to be delayed until the SMADC project moves further along.

Boards and Commission Training – A copy of the presentation from the St. Mary's County Boards, Committees or Commissions was distributed to the Board for their review at their leisure.

New Business

Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) – MET serves as the state's donated easement program. John Turgeon serves as the Conservation Easement Program Manager and Southern Region Easement Planner for MET presented the Board with a brochure and newsletter highlighting the efforts and accomplishments of MET. MET currently holds over 1,000 easements on more than 132,000 acres state wide. They partner with local land trusts for outreach and co-hold easements through cooperative agreements. Landowners who donated conservation easements are eligible for a Federal Income Tax Deduction, State Income Tax Credit, Federal Estate Tax Benefit, and Property Tax Credit. Monitoring donated easements can be costly and there is currently no dedicated funding to cover these costs. The Board will discuss the possibility of using county dedicated funding for monitoring of donated easements at a future meeting, this would be part of a future budget process.

Upcoming topics of discussion – The Board would like to address or further research the following items at future meetings

- Arrange farm tour for new Commissioners – to be arranged once the new Department of Economic Development Director arrives
- Economic Marketing for wholesalers
- Storm Water Management with regards to agriculture buildings – all review currently is through Public Works, ask for a possible delegation for agriculture projects to the Soil Conservation District
- TEDCO Rural Business Innovation Initiative
- Current State of the County – Dairy, SoMD Meats, other diversity
- Comprehensive Economic Development Study (CEDs) – have consultants return to determine if they were able to capture accurate information.

Sub-Committee Reports

Farmers Markets Sub-Committee

Members – David Paulk, Edward Falta, Charles Webb, Colleen Corrigan, Patrick Russell

No updates at this time

Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board

Members – James Spence (Chairman), David Paulk, Edward Falta, Jon Shenski, Patrick Russell

No updates at this time

Agricultural Reconciliation Committee

Members –Michael Sirk, Phil Dorsey, Colleen Corrigan, David Paluk, & Jon Shenski

No updates at this time

Open Comment

Mr. Young informed the Board that the stipend was reinstated for the Envirothon teachers and the winning team was planning to go before the Board of Education at an upcoming meeting with for a presentation.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m., motioned by Mr. Sirk and seconded by Mr. Spence. The next meeting will is scheduled for Thursday, June 11, 2015 at noon in the Conference Room of the Agriculture Services Center.