

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ARAC) MINUTES

In-person Meeting

May 1, 2024, 2:30-3:30 p.m. **ADOPTED 9/11/2024**

Attendees :

ARAC Members:

Pharyn Smith, Chair and Citizen Member
Dan Donohue, Co-Chair and Forestry Industry Representative
Bill Ritchie, Citizen Member
Jennifer Cross, Farm Bureau Representative (by phone)
Cheryl Abrams Davis, PGCAR Representative (by phone)
Steve Darcy, SCD

Staff Attendees:

Marian Honeczy, M-NCPPC
Charles Sasscer, UME
Kathy Canning, County Council Legislative Officer

Public:

Julie Wolf, DoE
Jason Sierra, SCD Urban Agriculture

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions

2:20 pm meeting began without a quorum (one member notified group they would be late). The meeting began with the understanding that no votes or decisions could be made until a quorum was reached. The meeting began with an introduction of members and public.

2. Approval of ARAC minutes of May 1, 2024

The group agreed that minutes were correct and would take vote once there was a quorum.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Members: Update on Term Expirations and New Members Update

Re-Appointments

Mr. Dorsey, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Donohue and Ms. Smith were reappointed this spring with a new term expiration date of 6/30/2027. Jennifer Cross should be reappointed this Fall. We may have a new member, Tracey Duval, who is expected to be appointed this fall.

The updated Committee Member Directory was handed out. Ms. Honeczy explained the shading. Those who resigned were shaded out to remind members they resigned members still refer to these folks as members. The directory will be updated again after October 18th (county council's appointment meeting). Ms. Honeczy was tasked to contact Ms Brewer about the appointment paperwork deadlines for spring and fall. This will assist the committee members with recruitment.

ARAC Vacancies

The chair requested that all members assist with filling vacancies. Mr. Darcy will ask about the County Land Preservation position and Mr. Sasscer will ask his office for an Extension member. Mr. Sierra was asked if he could assist in recruiting an urban agricultural farmer for a citizen position. Mr. Ritchie brought up UMD students studying agriculture as possible citizen members.

4. Web page

- Open Meeting Act discussion lead by Ms. Canning

Ms Canning informed the members of the Open Meeting Act (OMA). ARAC as a county committee is required to comply. Public Notice and Agenda must be posted on the website a minimum of 5 days before the meeting. Draft minutes are posted 2 – 3 weeks after the meeting. Two documents (Open Meetings FAQ – A Quick Guide to Maryland’s Open Meeting Act and Compliance Checklist for Meetings Subject to the Maryland Open Meeting Act) were distributed. Meetings need to be a quorum to be held and that may be difficult with the current number of members. The website needs to be updated to reflect the OMA.

- Outreach material

Mr. Ritchie discussed how outreach material would make it easier to recruit members. He suggested a three fold brochure or rack card be developed. There was a question about funding. There was discussion that printing the updated website could work for now. But it would need to be a double sided 8x11 page.

- Updating Website

Ms. Honeczy was tasked with updating the website to reflect OMA, fix the Commission vs Committee (looks like there are two different websites), add the agenda/public notice/ minutes, and place a banner to recruit members.

3:15 pm Quorum. Meeting minutes were read into record and May 1 meeting minutes were approved.

- Next Agenda

Members discussed adding to next agenda: 1) the unfinished initiatives or the Recommendations and Requests from the 2023 Annual Report to the Agenda; 2) outreach piece; 3) invite DPIE to discuss permits and farmer’s market and 4) County Council briefing.

6. Next Meeting Date/Next Steps

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 12 (second Wednesday of the month), 2:30-3:30 p.m. as a hybrid meeting. Location: SCD Office

7. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned.