



**Maryland
Department of Agriculture**

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary
Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

Maryland Young Farmers Advisory Board

Agriculture | *Maryland's Leading Industry*
mda.maryland.gov

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building
50 Harry S Truman Parkway
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-841-5882 Baltimore/Washington
410-841-5914 Fax

**Maryland Young Farmers Advisory Board
Minutes
January 17, 2024**

Present:

Mason Grahame (Virtual)
Gale Livingstone (Virtual)
Nora Crist (Virtual)
Amy Rowe
Miranda Rounds (Virtual)
Charlie Sasscer (Virtual)

Jennell Eck McHenry
Martin Proulx
JT Albright (Virtual)
Edward Goodman
Kelly Stevens (Virtual)
Harry Huntley (Virtual)

Absent:

Tyler Mercure
Matt Hurd
Brandon Boyer

Emily Jackson
Tyler Rill

MDA Staff:

Michael Calkins
Rachel Jones
Alisha Mulkey

Guests:

None.

Welcome:

The January 2024 Young Farmers Advisory Board meeting was called to order by Harrison Palmer, Executive Secretary, at 10:05 am.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the November 2023 minutes made by Jennell Eck McHenry, seconded by Edward Goodman.

Executive Secretary's Report:

Executive Secretary Harrison Palmer gave a brief update on administrative responsibilities of the board.

Elections:

The board elected unanimously the following slate of officers for the 2023 Maryland Young Farmers Advisory Board:

Chair: Jennell Eck McHenry
Vice Chair: Edward Goodman

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Representative: Jennell Eck McHenry

Young Farmer Reports:

- Edward Goodman, Vice Chair
 - o Potential legislation that will ban all invasive species sales within the nursery industry.
 - Has not yet been introduced.
 - New Jersey had similar legislation that was vetoed by their Governor, so there is precedent within the region.
- Jennell Eck McHenry, Chair
 - o Foreseeing a lot of legislation surrounding Climate Smart Agriculture
 - Maryland STEM programs at Maryland State Department of Education
 - Increasing the Critical Area Buffers from 35' to 200'+
 - Banning cages for egg laying operations
 - Atrazine, PFAS, Solar, DAF, Seed treatments, all hot topics
 - o Many scholarships available through [Maryland Grain Producers](#)
 - o 4R Alliance Grant for trying new biological soil amendments and split fertilizer applications.
 - o Cattle prices are relatively stable, grain prices are low, but input prices are declining.
 - o Farmers are exploring new opportunities to make off-season income like brokering and hauling manure.
 - o Queen Anne's Agriculture Awareness Day on April 9th & 10th will bring 7th graders out to explore agricultural opportunities and careers.
 - Cecil County will be replicating this event.
- Amy Rowe
 - o Hearing trends of new chicken houses being built with downward trending interest rates, not many chicken houses have been built in the last 5 years for a variety of reasons. Permitting has changed over time, will be interesting to see how that process will evolve.
 - o [Horizon Farm Credit's](#) Grant Opportunities have opened for young & beginning farmers.
 - Feb 29th Horizon Farm Credit webinar on how to write a business plan.
- Martin Proulx, MDA Value Added Agriculture Specialist
 - o Organizing a primer event for Agricultural Business Development Professionals across the state.
 - County representatives need to be well versed in statewide regulations to aid their constituents.
 - o Developing a roadmap for agritourism and value-added production to guide businesses that are interested in embarking on these endeavors.
- Miranda Rounds
 - o Nutrient Management is still a major concern for Western Maryland
 - One part-time planner is Garrett County & Allegany, which is going to create a major backlog for farmers in the region.
 - o Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- Farmers now must claim 40% of the full value of farm assets when applying for FAFSA, not their Adjusted Gross Income from the farm. This will potentially cut farm kids out of being eligible for federal student aid to go to college.
- JT Albright
 - Mid Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (MANTS)
 - Baltimore County Value Added Agriculture analysis will be published from Cultivate & Craft, analyzing the state of Value Added and how the County can be more accessible.
 - This will lead to several changes in county law and will have a major impact on agriculture.
- Mason Grahame
 - Quiet time of year preparing for spring.
- Harry Huntley
 - Relatively slow time of year.
 - Lots of discussion on forestry in the environmental sector
 - Limited opportunity for low-grade timber sale reduces the incentive for foresters to manage the existing land.
 - Working with UMD to develop a method of burying low grade timber to sequester carbon and tap into the value of that market.
- Gale Livingstone
 - Quiet time of year prepping for the 2024 season, hiring and looking for resources.
 - This is conference season, opening a lot of opportunities to find capital and human resources on the farm.
- Kelly Stevens
 - Worcester County is still wary of Avian Influenza and LT, not a lot of cases thus far but this is the season for that to happen.
- Nora Crist
 - Off season for agritourism, spending a lot of times at conferences:
 - All American Farm Marketing
 - Boston, MA, February 2024
 - Future Harvest CASA, this coming weekend
 - World of Pets Expo @ Maryland State Fair
 - Maryland Horse Industry Board will set up Horse Land to market the equine industry
 - Grow & Fortify has officially closed its doors and rebranded as Cultivate & Craft

MDA Reports:

- Rachel Jones
 - MDA is keeping an eye on the upcoming legislation that will be coming up in the 2024 session.
- Alisha Mulkey
 - Shared information on the Healthy Soils Competitive Fund

Board Discussion:

- The Board discussed the establishment of priorities and identified Cost of Entry and Development Pressures as the first two of many priorities the board will work to address.
- The Board will publish a statewide young farmer survey to gauge the landscape of Maryland's young farmers.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Amy Rowe, 2nd by Jennell Eck McHenry at 11:53 AM.

Respectfully Submitted by Harrison B. Palmer, Executive Secretary