

**Maryland Food Center Authority
Board of Directors Meeting**

7801 Oceano Avenue
Jessup, Maryland 20794
September 25, 2025

Present:

Gail Yeiser, Chair
Susan Summers
Monica Lapenta
Carlton Brown
Kerry Greer
Stephanie Jerger

Ben Seigel, for the Honorable Brooke Lierman, Comptroller

Wendy Scott-Napier, for Atif Chaudry, Secretary, Department of General Services

Cassie Shirk, for Kevin Atticks, Secretary, Department of Agriculture

Dr. Wendy Powers, Dean and Director, University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Dr. Darren Jarboe, for Dr. Wendy Powers, Dean and Director, University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Peggy Torre, Secretary, Treasurer MFCA Board of Directors

Staff and Counsel Present:

Myriem Seabron, Assistant Attorney General

Katie Zenk, Executive Director, MFCA
Gary Decker, Director of Market Operations, MFCA
Trevett Freeman, Senior Accountant, MFCA
Mary Wilkerson, Director of Leasing and Finance, MFCA
Anja Lindner, IT Risk Manager, Procurement Officer, MFCA

Meeting Convened

Ms. Gail Yeiser called the meeting of the Maryland Food Center Authority (MFCA) Board of Directors to order at 9:00 a.m. on September 25, 2025.

I. Regular Session

A. Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Ms. Susan Summers to approve the Minutes from the June 5, 2025, and June 12, 2025, meetings. Ms. Myriem Seabron noted an error in the June 12, 2025, minutes. The minutes incorrectly stated that she would draft the Investment Policy, the correction is that Myriem was to *research* policies adopted by other independent agencies and report back to the Board with her findings. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephanie Jerger and unanimously approved the minutes from both dates, with the noted correction to the June 12, 2025, meeting.

B. MFCA Updates

- Ms. Gail Yeiser advised that the Procurement Committee had a vacant position. As a current member, Ms. Wendy Scott-Napier described the committee's responsibilities. A motion was made by Ms. Kerry Greer to elect Ms. Stephanie Jerger to serve on the Procurement Committee, through the end of her current term. The procurement committee consists of three board members who review bid documents exceeding \$500K and may approve procurements

above that threshold when a procurement cannot wait until the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Susan Summers and passed unanimously.

- Ms. Gail Yeiser introduced two new Board members: Ms. Monica Lapenta and Dr. Wendy Powers, Dean and Director of the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, as well as the new MFCA Executive Director, Ms. Katie Zenk.

- Ms. Gail Yeiser noted the need to fill the vacant Vice-Chair position. She asked that any interested Board members should reach out to either herself or the Ms. Katie Zenk.

- Ms. Katie Zenk introduced herself noting she has been in the position of Executive Director for just over a month. She expressed appreciation to the Board for meeting with her individually over the summer and shared that her focus has been on learning all facets of the Authority, engaging with tenants, and reviewing internal processes for efficiency. To modernize operations, Security and Maintenance staff have transitioned from physical timecards to electronic time entry. Training is already underway. Ms. Zenk has toured the markets with Mr. Gary Decker and met with several Produce Market owners to discuss issues and concerns. The tenants will provide a written list of concerns for follow-up. The goal is to maintain open communication and high tenant engagement. A Tenant Advisory Board (TAB) meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2025, and Ms. Zenk plans to hold one-on-one meetings with tenants at the Produce Market, Maryland Market Center, and Rock Hall in the coming months.

- The Produce Market Expansion project is officially out for bid. A pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 4, 2025.

- Ms. Katie Zenk reminded the Board that in March 2025, an increase to Task Order # 5 for the Produce Market Expansion project was approved. Since then, additional site work was required, including test pit drilling and x-ray imaging of the structure and substrate,

which increased costs. A motion was made by Dr Darren Jarboe to approve an increase to George Vaith Associates' Task Order #5, from \$589,215.00 to \$650,130.00, an increase of \$60,915. This includes the additional drilling, mapping, and expanded cost estimation fees. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kerry Greet and unanimously approved.

- Ms. Katie Zenk updated the Board on the Maryland Market Center Renovation Project. The contract was awarded on July 9, 2025, and the work began about one month ago. Bi-weekly status meetings are being held. As of this week, the contractor reports that the project is approximately 25% complete, with 27% of contract time elapsed. Due to the complexity of the project, each unit being unique, further updates will be provided at a future meeting

- Ms. Katie Zenk reiterated her open-door policy for all the Board members and invited anyone interested in touring the markets or requesting additional information to contact her.

- Ms Myriem Seabron explained the need for a written Investment Policy. In April of 2025, the Chief Investment Officer for the State Treasurer's Office advised that all authorities are required to adopt a written investment policy under a 2023 law. MFCA's funds are currently held within the State Treasury investment pool. The authority must either adopt its own investment policy or co-sign the State's. At the request of Mr. Carlton Brown, Ms. Seabron contacted other agencies and found that most policies are 10-13 pages long and closely model the State Treasurer's policy. The Board recommended that Ms. Mary Wilkerson and Ms. Myriem Seabron draft a policy for review, with Mr. Brown assisting once a draft is prepared.

- Mr. Gary Decker reported that MFCA is waiting for final approval from Howard County for the Stream Restoration Project; we expect an answer within two weeks.

- Mr. Gary Decker updated the Board on Howard County’s required Forest Conservation, related to NAFCO/Merritt project. The authority passed its first inspection, which should remain valid through 2027.

- Ms. Mary Wilkerson reported that MFCA remains on track to meet September 30, 2025, audit submission deadline to the State.

C. Statement of Revenue and Expenses – affecting private tenants and users of the Maryland Wholesale Produce Market and the Maryland Market Center were reviewed by the Board. We will be presenting these to the Produce Market tenants at the upcoming Tenant Advisory Board (TAB) meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Kerry Greer, seconded by Ms. Stephanie Jerger, and unanimously approved to accept the Statement of Revenues and Disbursements.

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Susan Summers, seconded by Ms. Stephanie Jerger, and unanimously approved.