Maryland Food Center Authority
Board of Directors Meeting

7801 Oceano Avenue
Jessup, Maryland 20794
March 19, 2026

Present:

Gail Yeiser, Chair
Susan Summers
Monica LaPenta
Ryan Phillips
Carlton Brown
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. Darren Jarboe, for Dr. Wendy Powers, Dean and Director, University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Myriem Seabron, Assistant Attorney General

Katie Zenk, Executive Director, MFCA
Gary Decker, Director of Market Operations
Anja Lindner, Director of Administration, MFCA
Peggy Torre, Chief of Staff, MFCA, Secretary/Treasurer MFCA BOD

Meeting Convened

Ms. Gail Yeiser called the members of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Food Center Authority (MFCA) to order at 9:00 a.m. on March 19, 2026.

I. Regular Session

A. Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Ms. Wendy Scott-Napier to accept the Minutes from the November 20, 2025, and December 11, 2025, meetings. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ryan Phillips and was unanimously approved.

B. **MFCA Updates**

- Ms. Katie Zenk gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Board for current framework for the Five-Year Strategic Plan that the Board tasked her to undertake. Following the presentation, she asked for input from Board members. Several of the ex-officio members offered help with the Strategic Plan moving forward, including potential consultant suggestions. Additional information will be provided at the June meeting.

- Ms. Katie Zenk advised the Board that Mr. Carlton Brown, Ms. Mary Wilkerson and Ms. Myriem Seabron reviewed all documentation and are now recommending that MFCA adopt the State Investment Policy. Ms. Katie Zenk advised that the State has done a strong job managing funds and this adoption would continue MFCA's current approach. The options will be reviewed annually. A motion was made by Ms. Susan Summers and seconded by Ms. Monica Lapenta to adopt the investment policy of the State of Maryland as the official investment policy of the MFCA and review this policy on an annual basis. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Ms. Katie Zenk provided a brief update on Produce Modernization project. Updated drawings, including fire suppression and electrical updates, are nearly complete and are expected to go out to the County in the next one to two weeks. MFCA anticipates going out to bid in April. As this represents only a portion of the original project, approval by the County is expected without issue.

- Ms. Katie Zenk discussed two winter storms that occurred this season. MFCA successfully cleared all snow and ice using internal maintenance personnel; however, she noted that the most recent storm pushed operational limits, and larger events may require outside contractors. The Authority's focus remains on safety within the markets. Staff performance was commended, and the Tenant Advisory Board Snow Committee was kept informed throughout both events. Lodging accommodation is provided to ensure staff safety and adequate rest during storms.

- Ms. Katie Zenk advised the Board that she is working to mitigate a feral cat situation by partnering with an animal rescue group to trap, neuter and release the cats.

- Ms. Katie Zenk advised the Board that tenants have raised concerns about non-tenants selling in the market (cross-docking), which violates Market rules. Increased oversight has been implemented, including earlier on-site monitoring and enhanced coordination with security to track incoming trucks and enforce compliance. Efforts are ongoing to ensure appropriate consequences for violations.

- Ms. Katie Zenk advised that MFCA is working to improve the Tenant Advisory Board (TAB) meetings. Three Produce Market TAB meetings have been held since her start, with a commitment to schedule them at least quarterly. The Maryland Market Center has expressed interest in reestablishing a TAB, and a planning meeting will be scheduled.

- Ms. Anja Lindner discussed the new State of Maryland cybersecurity policy and ongoing coordination with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) and legal counsel to ensure compliance. Due to limited staffing, MFCA may need to return to the Board to request additional funding to meet these requirements.

- Mr. Gary Decker provided an update on the Stream Restoration Project occurring between the Produce Market and Route 1. The final phase must be completed during colder weather and is scheduled for January or February of 2027.

- Mr. Gary Decker also discussed the Stormwater Pond, which is more than 40 years old. The County has required approximately $80,000 in improvements. MFCA is exploring options, with legal guidance, to share costs with other benefiting property owners.

C. **Statement of Revenue and Expenses affecting private tenants and users of Authority Projects –** The October 2025 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. Both markets have been made aware of these statements. A motion to accept the statements was made by Mr. Ben Seigel and seconded by Ms. Wendy Scott-Napier and unanimously approved.

II. **<u>Executive Session</u>** Ms. Gail Yeiser requested a motion to end the Regular Session and move into Executive Session under General Provisions Article §3-305(b) "consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.", "consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation", and "discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals;.;" At the end of Executive Session and motion will be made to adjourn and the meeting will conclude. The motion was made by Ms. Susan Summers and seconded by Ms. Wendy Scott-Napier and unanimously approved.