



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

Prince George's County Council Food Security Task Force Minutes May 7, 2021

Attendees:

Council Member Todd M. Turner, Chair
Dr. Deborah Archer, University of MD Extension
Dr. William Campbell, Senior Pastor, Union Bethel AME Church
Maddy Carver, University of MD Public Policy Student
Nicole Hall, Economic Development
Dennis Lewis, Department of Social Services
Stacey Little, UM Capital Region Health
Kimberly Rush Lynch, Soil Conservation District
Maria Martin, Parks & Recreation
Roberto Melara, Capital Area Food Bank
Aimee Olivo, County Council Representative
Dr. Darlene Saunders, Department of Health
Joan Shorter, Prince George's County Schools
Lindsay Smith, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Cathy Stasny, Department of Family Services
Bridget Warren, Department of Health

Consultants

Sydney Daigle, Institute for Public Health Innovation
Julia Groenfeldt, Prince George's County Food Equity Council
Evelyn Kelly, Institute for Public Health Innovation
Laura Runnels, Institute for Public Health Innovation

Council Staff

Sandra Eubanks, Education & Work Force Development Committee Director
Leroy Maddox, Legislative Officer
Charlotte Aheart, Administrative Aide
Shirley Anglin, Administrative Aide
Lochelle Ferguson, Administrative Aide
Sharon Williams, Administrative Aide

1. **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Chair Turner called the Food Security Task Force meeting to order and welcomed the members. Chair Turner thanked the members for their work during the meetings and their work outside of the task force.
2. **Review & Approval of Minutes – March 5, 2021**
The minutes were approved as presented and any changes should be forwarded to staff.
3. **Updates:**
 - **Recap of Task Force Work Priorities (Sydney Daigle)**
 - **Timeline:**
 - October - Review of the group priorities
 - November - Present the data and evidence base
 - November – January - Briefings based on where group priorities and data intersect
 - January – February - Develop short-term recommendations based on urgent needs related to COVID-19 pandemic
 - March – launch subgroups
 - March – May – Develop report recommendations
 - May – June – Community engagement strategy and finalize recommendations
 - June – Draft report, approve as the FSTF and brief County Council
 - **Timeline Update:**
 - Report is due June 30th – There might be a resolution to update the timeline for the report in May or June. This is generally flexible and easy to pass. More information will be provided if that moves forward.
 - **CB-28-2021 (Curbside Grocery Trucks) (Chair Turner)**
 - CAFB approached the County about launching a curbside grocery truck in the County (CB-28-2021) – This is modeled on a pilot that CAFB implemented in DC.
 - That stems from some of the work with the food trucks.
 - The grocery truck will be housed in areas with limited food access – that will go out for a public hearing in the next 30 days.
 - All Council Members have signed on to the legislation.
 - Expected to pass and be signed by County Executive in early June.
 - **Food Assistance Provider Call: (Julia Groenfeldt)**
 - April meeting – The Food Assistance Provider Call had received requests for more information on vaccine distribution for food and farm workers.
 - The April call focused on information about the vaccine and resources that providers could share with their clients and networks.

- May meeting – The May meeting included a presentation on FEC's new project launching three new cold storage trailers at provider sites in the County. The project is funded by Washington Gas Project. Partners are planning a launch event to unveil the new trailers in June.
 - Overview of recent MWCOG meetings (Lindsay Smith)
 - MWCOG hosted FARMs calls on increase in SNAP.
 - Also hosted a brief out on MD, VA, and DC legislation – bill information is being updated and sent out.
 - Next FARMs meeting is next week at 11 am.
 - Shout out to Joan Shorter – it's National School Hero Lunch Day! Montgomery County Food Council summary of legislation:
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=test_email_&u=94db16f73c96fb3b92c6494f0&id=099164feb0
 - The farmer panel video will be posted with the other meeting materials from the last FARM meeting here:
<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2021/4/9/food-and-agriculture-regionalmember-farm-ad-hoc-advisory-committee/>
4. Sub-groups Updates:
- a. The consulting team convened three small group meetings with two sessions each to identify recommendations and vote on top recommendations that should be included in the final report.
 - b. Criteria to prioritize recommendations:
 - i. **Urgency:** If this isn't acted upon, will there be further harm to the food system?
 - ii. **Feasibility:** Can the recommendation be reasonably implemented and is there political will and champions to move this forward and is there work to build off?
 - c. Individual and Resident Safety Net
 - i. Recommendations
 - ii. Top recommendations
 - 1. Increase participation in Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs.
 - 2. Create a "one stop shop" for residents to learn about and receive assistance navigating everything they are eligible for.
 - 3. Ensure accurate, timely information about Food Assistance is available to all residents including those with limited English proficiency and/or low literacy through multiple trusted platforms (app, text, phone, print, internet, social media, word-of-mouth).
 - 4. Include community leaders, organizations and networks in planning for future Food Security disruptions.

5. Improve transportation options to access healthy food outlets and Food Security providers.
- d. Provider Capacity and Coordination
 - i. Recommendations
 - ii. Top Recommendations:
 1. Make food security a line item in the County budget.
 2. Establish partnerships with food providers to help purchase.
 3. Develop centralize resource hub on food assistance locations.
 4. Develop State and County partner provider group.
 5. Develop master coordination and communication plans and ensure this is in multiple languages to ensure access.
 6. Discussion key points:
 - a. Transparency – create clear communications channels on how to have access.
 - b. Making this a County budget priority.
 - c. Need for collaboration and systematic approaches to create a county response and not one-off actions.
 - d. Another response was about how we work with community members and set aside resources to compensate individuals who are assisting with food – paying workers for their service.
- e. Government Agency and Systems Response
 - i. Recommendations
 - ii. Top 5 Recommendations:
 1. Create a robust Incident Command Structure plan.
 2. Apply for all available public and private Food Security funding.
 3. Update, maintain, and use data sources related to Food Security to make inform decisions.
 4. Create an online hub for Food Assistance Program info and data and map food distribution in real time.
 5. Create and fund a County Food Security Office.
- f. Food Systems Planning
 - i. This body of recommendations is about policies, systems, and environment initiatives that promote food system resilience and food security.
 - ii. How can the County government improve its policies and systems to create a better food system?
 - iii. This group has not yet met.
 - iv. This group will meet to review the comprehensive recommendations and see what is missing.

- g. Big Picture:
 - i. Create and fund a **County Food Security Office** (line item in the County budget)
 - ii. Apply for all available public and private **Food Security/Resilience funding**
 - iii. **Update, maintain, and use data** sources related to Food Security to inform decisions.
 - iv. Develop a master Food Security/Resilience **communication strategy** that ensures accurate and timely information available in multiple languages, for multiple language proficiency levels, and is issued across a variety of trusted platforms (e.g., app, text, phone, print, internet, social media, word-of-mouth (central hub)).
 - v. Establish partnerships with food suppliers (and local producers) to order bulk food for providers or help providers establish **bulk purchasing coops.**
 - vi. Work with stakeholders (government, community leaders, organizations and networks) to **plan for future FS disruptions**, including a robust Incident Command Structure plan to quickly respond to emergency situations.
 - vii. Increase **participation in Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs**
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 - viii. Create a “one stop shop” for residents to **learn about and receive assistance, navigating everything** they are eligible for.
 - ix. Improve transportation options to access healthy food outlets and FA providers
- k. Discussion:
 - i. Sydney Daigle: Missing food systems resilience related to production and agriculture investment.
 - ii. Sydney Daigle: Helpful to think about the community networks and connections that we have in our neighborhoods and communities.
 - iii. Lindsay Smith: helpful to organize the recommendations in terms of near to medium-term (e.g. increase participation in Federal Programs is happening).

- iv. Lindsay Smith: I think there could be a stronger emphasis on community voice/engagement/perspective.
- v. Kim Rush Lynch: Think about calling the body entity the Office of Food Security and Equity.
- vi. CM Turner: There are technically budgeting for agencies, so what is the line item for providers?
- vii. Dennis Lewis: The budget for providers should be housed somewhere in the County budget to ensure there is reliable funding for food providers and food security. We need to know where those line items are and how this can support our initiatives.
- viii. Lindsay Smith: This is a strong list of recommendations. Can we push ourselves a bit more to focus on the community engagement and community voice? Can we address root causes of inequity as a part of addressing food insecurity?
 - 1. Some of those root causes can be drilled down into looking at those root causes.
 - 2. We will also be focusing the next meeting on equity and community voices.
 - 3. If anyone wants to dig into this question, please join small group meeting #4.
- ix. Bridget Warren: In addition to supporting our local suppliers and distributors, we can consider those relationships as part of disaster/resiliency planning.
- x. Kim Rush Lynch: Increase participation in Federal Nutrition Programs – can that focus be on County specific assistance like Maryland Market Money or other county funds?
- xi. CM Turner: Can we add the County specific landscape at the beginning of the report to form an underlying basis of understanding for why we're looking at this? That would lay the groundwork for the recommendations moving forward.
- xii. Sydney Daigle: There's a need to do more data collection among folks that have been historically under monitored. Are we able to collect data on food insecurity more regularly through community-based organizations? Now, we're relying on outdated food insecurity data through national data efforts. Can we rely on real time data collection?
- xiii. Roberto Melara – The data that CAFB is using is from Feeding America and census so it's outdated. We need a more responsive system...
- xiv. Lindsay Smith: On the amended "increase participation in Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs" with MD Market Money, etc.

We may want to say "increase and support" to acknowledge that participants in some cases don't just have to enroll but participate in recertification processes.

- xv. To Kim's point, disseminating information about farmers markets, their acceptance of SNAP and WIC, and the \$10 match of Maryland Market Money. Partnering with farmers when it comes to gleaning as well "ugly" fruit as a means of food recovery and food waste. Educating residents-the produce has the same nutrient value as those sold in stores or at farmers market.

5. Community Outreach Strategy

a. **How can we ensure our recommendations address the lived experiences and priorities of food-insecure Prince Georgians?**

- i. Focus groups with diverse groups of residents to inform recommendations.
- ii. Surveying residents attending food distributions on proposed recommendations.
- iii. Other ideas to collect community information and feedback?
 - 1. CAFB conducted a survey by selecting people from different areas. Tried to identify different criteria and demographics to guide these recommendations and once we have the preliminary data, we present the data to a different group of people – timing of that process could be an issue.
 - 2. CAFB also has a Council that meets a few times a year that we could utilize for more specific answers
 - 3. Helpful to have the nonprofits working on the data collection from a legal perspective.
 - 4. Department of Social Services also does data collection – they conduct HUD survey on homelessness, but it's optional to participate and incentivized with gift card.
- b. Trying to incorporate "Equity Lense" into the discussion and the development of the recommendations.
- c. The next meeting will focus on equity and level-setting these concepts for this process to analyze the impact of these recommendations (who is impacted and what are the consequences).
- d. Ways County is incorporating equity into process –
 - i. Rand adopted a health in all policies approach.
 - ii. Police reform work.
 - iii. Housing opportunities work group.

6. Federal/State Updates

- a. American Rescue Plan – Expectation that the County and State will get more funding. Guidance on how they can be spent will come this week. \$176,000,000 will

be allocated to Prince George's County (part this fiscal year and part next fiscal year). Towns and municipalities will get funding as well.

Important to work with municipalities on that... More updates will be provided soon on developments and food security impacts.

- b. State – Also getting funding from American Rescue Plan – some of that will also go to food security, State programs, and Community Development Block Grants.
- c. County Council is in the middle of budget season (public hearings were last week where folks participated from the county) – some of the recommendations will be advanced as a part of the budget.

7. Open Discussion & Assignments for Next Meeting

8. Announcements from Taskforce Members

- a. Joan Shorter - School meals will be free to all students next school year.
- b. Deborah Archer –
 - i. UMD had a surplus of funds (\$30,000 will be provided to the campus pantry). 71% of students are working full time jobs and are single parents. There are more issues around food security than they realized previously.
 - ii. The Hunger Free Campus Grant Program passed the house and senate and is awaiting signature. Funding will be allocated to colleges and universities that declare themselves a hunger free campus.
 - iii. Lindsey Smith: To reinforce Ms. Archer's point, we were very lucky to have Dr. Breaux talk about Bowie State University's systems approach to supporting food security on campus at the last FARM Committee meeting. Could there be a focus group(s) with community college and college students as part of the task force work?

9. Next Meeting – Friday, June 4, 2021 at 1:00 pm.

At the next meeting, the request to extend the FSTF will be submitted.

10. Adjourned at approximately 3:00 pm.