



Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Food Security Committee

Virtual: (Zoom)

June 8, 2023, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present:

Karen Basinger, U of Maryland Extension – HC
 Annabelle Beavan, LindaBen Foundation
 Erika Chavarria, Columbia Community Care
 Michelle Clark, HC Health Department
 Lois Joellenbeck, HC Health Department
 Alice Lee, HC Health Department

Paloma Leon, Luminus Network
 Chimezie Ndukuba, HC Health Department
 Emmanuella Osei, Columbia Community Care
 Brian Ralph, Howard County Public School System
 Razan Sahuri, University of Maryland Extension- HC

Staff Present:

Ashton Jordan, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition
 Sonya Lloyd, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition
 Reena Rambharat, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition

Topic/Agenda	Discussion	Action/Follow-up
Welcome and Introductions	<p>Ms. Sonya Lloyd, Community Engagement Coordinator, Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC), called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. She provided a welcome to members in attendance, shared the meeting goal of gathering partners to discuss collaborative efforts to address food and nutrition insecurity in Howard County. Ms. Lloyd gave a brief recap of the previous Food Security meeting and reviewed the agenda for today's meeting.</p> <p>Ms. Erika Strauss Chavarria, Executive Director of Columbia Community Care (CCC) introduced her new Summer intern to the group from University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Ms. Emmanuella Osei.</p>	<p>Members are asked to review previous meeting minutes: https://www.hclhic.org/home/meeting/2022?catId=365.</p>
Announcements	<p>Ms. Lloyd shared information about the next quarterly full LHIC meeting to be held on a new date: July 19, 2023, at 8:30am.</p> <p>Ms. Reena Rambharat, Director, HCLHIC, shared that the LHIC and Community Ecology Institute (CEI) planted a community garden at Bryant Woods Elementary School and Talbot Elementary School with funds from LHIC's CareFirst grant. LHIC will be partnering with the University of Maryland Extension – Howard County, to incorporate garden activities into the school curriculum as well as provide parent and staff wellness activities.</p> <p>Ms. Lloyd shared an announcement that The Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Baltimore are operating two Summer camps this year: one in Columbia and one in Ellicott City for</p>	<p>Agendas for previous full LHIC Meetings: https://www.hclhic.org/home/meeting/2023?catId=1</p> <p>Register for the Full LHIC Meeting: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-hclhic-full-coalition-meetings-tickets-433126562207</p> <p>Any additional announcements email: lhic@howardcountymd.gov</p> <p>Email Boys and Girls Club: Anna Piccirilli apiccirilli@bgcmetrobaltimore.org</p>

	<p>ages 6-12. There are 9 open spots left at each location before the camps are full. The camps are completely free.</p> <p>Mr. Ashton Jordan, Community Engagement Coordinator, HCLHIC, announced the following items: the Howard County Health Department's (HCHD) Cancer Tobacco Program which is part of the Chronic Disease Prevention Management Workgroup received a NACo award. The next Health Literacy workgroup meeting is on Friday, July 14th at 10 a.m. and is preparing the launch of their Healthy Howard Lifestyle Campaign. The next Healthy Minds and Suicide Prevention Coalition meeting is on July 6th from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.</p>	<p>or Justin Lawrence jlawrence@bgcmetroaltimore.org if interested in the summer camps.</p> <p>Healthy Howard Lifestyle Campaign: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/healthyhowardcounty</p>
<p>Food Brochures & Food Map Poster</p>	<p>Ms. Lloyd said that the <i>Howard County Food Pantries & Hot Meals</i> brochures (all locations and city-specific) are on the HCLHIC website in PDF format and can be printed by anyone. The All-Locations Howard County brochure lists every food pantry and hot meal service in Howard County. This trifold brochure was created from the Partner Food & Nutrition Resource Guide. The digital version of this brochure includes hyperlinks to each pantry. The All-locations brochures are in the following languages: English, Spanish, French, Mandarin and Korean. Print versions are available for request by the public. All these brochures include a QR code to the Howard County Food Connection Map.</p> <p>Ms. Lloyd shared that the three additional bifold area-specific brochures were created for ease of use and accessibility. These brochures are also available digitally on LHIC's Healthy Eating webpage and can be requested in print format. The three brochures are titled: <i>Food Pantries & Hot Meals Columbia, Food Pantries & Hot Meals Ellicott City and Elkridge, and Food Pantries & Hot Meals Laurel, Jessup, Fulton, Glenelg, Savage, Marriottsville, & Woodbine</i>. These three brochures are in the following languages: English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, and Korean.</p> <p>Ms. Lloyd discussed the new Howard County Food Connection Map, an interactive tool to help you find low-cost, accessible food, and nutrition resources in the County. A Food Map Poster was created and printed to promote the food connection map. The Food Map Poster is 16 x 20 and includes a QR code that will take you directly to the Food Connection Map website. The poster lists 5 different languages: English, Spanish, French, Korean, and Chinese.</p> <p>You can request print copies of any of the food brochures and food map poster by filling out the request form on LHIC's website. There is a limited quantity of printed food pantry brochures. For the All Locations and City-Specific Brochures we can give 20 English brochures and 10 for all other language requests. The requestor will be contacted when they are ready for pick up at the HCHD.</p>	<p>Digital version of Howard County Food Pantries and Hot Meals All Locations and City-Specific brochures: https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/eating</p> <p>Access the Food and Nutrition Resource Guide for Partners.</p> <p>Access the Howard County Food Connection Map.</p> <p>Access Howard County Food Connection Map Poster: https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/eating/foodposter</p> <p>Click here to Request Print Copies of Food Brochures & Food Map Posters</p>

**Owen Brown Place
Pop Up Pantry
and Planting Party
Results**

Ms. Lloyd discussed the results of the Pop-Up Food Pantry at Owen Brown Place on April 22, 2023, which was a collaboration between the Community Action Council of Howard County Food Bank (CAC), the University of Maryland Extension SNAP-Ed of Howard County, and the HCLHIC. The Pop-Up Pantry was for residents of Owen Brown Place, a low-income, senior, diverse community in Columbia. Over 150 bags containing food items such as produce and staple items to make meals along with recipes and additional resources and giveaways, were provided to the residents. The LHIC filmed a Spotlight Video about the Pop-Up Pantry and placed the 3-minute video on YouTube.

Ms. Razan Sahuri, Nutrition Educator, University of Maryland SNAP-Ed Extension Howard County, discussed the Owen Brown Place Container Garden Project aka Planting Party. This was a collaborative initiative with the assistance of Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers, Community Ecology Institute (CEI) University of Maryland Extension SNAP-Ed and Master Gardeners, Accessible Resources for Independence (ARI), Asian American Center of Frederick, and HCHD. The event set up container gardens with herbs and vegetables for residents to grow on their patios and decks. The following were the results of this event: around 150 residents planted 160 containers using a total of 950 plants and over 100 residents participated in a fruit and green salad tasting.

Ms. Sahuri said a feedback survey was sent to participating partners. We received four responses back. All the respondents said it was an enjoyable event. Some suggestions for future activities at Owen Brown include how to harvest, eat, preserve the plants that were grown. Additional suggestions for improving future events at Owen Brown: ensure that all needed equipment and supplies are available, crowd control – flow of residents (in one way and exit out another way), and a bit chaotic moving through areas.

Ms. Lloyd went back to Owen Brown Place the following week to check on the plants and confirmed they were doing great. CEI donated 8 tomato plants which were planted by Master Gardeners in two large, raised wooden boxes on the back deck of Owen Brown. There are pictures from the Owen Brown Place Planting Party event compiled into a short video on YouTube.

Watch the Pop-Up Pantry Spotlight video:

<https://youtu.be/BejmsdKAEM>

Watch the Planting Party video:

<https://youtu.be/uAvF1T8zyLY>

Free Summer Meals Program

Mr. Brian Ralph, Director, Food and Nutrition Services, Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), gave a presentation on the free Summer Meals Program at HCPSS. Schools close for the Summer and that hunger doesn't end. This program runs June 21, 2023, to August 4, 2023, from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday and is closed on the July 4th holiday.

The program is for youth 18 years old and under without charge. Acceptance and participation requirements for the Program are the same for all children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Parents or guardians do not need to apply to get free summer meals for their children. They can simply bring their child to the safe summer meal site(s). Nine total meal sites, 8 of which are schools and the ninth is at Howard County Library System, East Columbia Branch.

Mr. Ralph said the Summer Food Service Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). It is an extension of the National School Lunch Program, which is designed to guarantee eligible children free and nutritious breakfasts and lunches during the school year.

The free summer meals program is intended to meet the growing need to feed hungry children in Howard County and fill the nutritional gap over the summer months. Free summer meals help families stretch their food budgets throughout the summer months. Participation in the free summer meals program helps to reduce learning loss for children and helps them return to school ready to learn.

Mr. Ralph mentioned that the Summer Meals served will be healthy and will follow USDA nutrition guidelines. All meals will be served on a first-come first-served basis and all meals must be eaten on site. No portion of the meal may be taken out of the meal serving area(s) and adults may not eat any portion of a child's meal. Small children must have adult supervision.

Parents/guardians will not be allowed to collect meals to go for their children. Meal sites, start/end dates, and pickup times are subject to change based on participation. For more information, please contact the Howard County Public School System, Food and Nutrition Service at 410-313-6743 or access our website for the most accurate information. Please share this program with your communities that are in need, over 30% of families are in need of food and to work collaboratively to overcome the barriers associated with food hunger. Mr. Ralph will share the HCPSS Summer Meals flyers with Ms. Lloyd to distribute to networks and said they are in English, Spanish, and Korean.

Mr. Brian Ralph's email is Brian_Ralph@hcpss.org

Contact HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service at 410-313-6743 with any questions.

	<p>Ms. Sahuri asked if outside agencies could provide educational materials or physical activity incentives at some of the sites? Mr. Ralph said any agency interested in collaborating or promoting with the HCPSS Summer Meals program is welcome to reach out to give advance notice.</p> <p>Ms. Annabelle Beavan, LindaBen Foundation, said her organization partners with schools in the area to provide Blessings in a Backpack. Ms. Beavan would like to assist the HCPSS summer meals program in providing supplemental healthy snacks and water to the students. Ms. Beavan said she can start at specific school sites to provide the snacks and will email Mr. Ralph after this meeting.</p> <p>Ms. Erika Strauss Chavarria, CCC, said that CCC has a free delivery service on Wed, Fri, and Sat anywhere throughout the county and is completely free. This is volunteer-based and does not require identification. Ms. Chavarria said CCC also has three grocery distribution sites on Saturday mornings in Columbia at the following places: Oakland Mills, Long Reach, and Wilde Lake.</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat asked about meal coverage for students during weekends or over the three-day holiday weekend with July 4th. Mr. Ralph said coordination of meals could be worked out, anyone can contact him directly to work out the details. HCPSS starts back to school on August 28th. There is a three-week lag with meals service to students in August. Ms. Rambharat said some more planning is needed with a smaller meeting to discuss with partners about closing the food gap on providing meals to students.</p>	
<p>Food Security Survey Data</p>	<p>Ms. Reena Rambharat, Director, HCLHIC, put together a Report based on the Food and Nutrition Security Survey Data Presentation in April at the full LHIC. The survey was for specific residents facing barriers to nutrition and food. From the survey responses, a data report was established to figure out the needs within the community. The goal is to launch two Roundtable Sessions in the Fall 2023 based off the survey results.</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat said the first session would be around access and the intangible needs of the residents. How we can ensure resources and information are available in multiple languages and then disseminating the languages in plain language to the community. Ways to possibly reach residents include putting fliers up in community centers or going door to door, social media is helpful but isn't always the best way to reach residents.</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat discussed ways to get trainings/skills resources, workforce development to the residents of Howard County. How can we make SNAP dollars stretch? How can we utilize CAREAPP and assist residents with navigating systems by including Community Health Workers? Ms. Rambharat would like input on additional</p>	<p>The Food Survey Data Report: https://www.hclhic.org/community/data</p>

items that are missing in the long-term and short-term in addressing food insecurity in Howard County including access to services.

The second roundtable session would address specific needs in the community. These are more tangible things that the residents wanted to see based off the survey findings, including more community and container gardens, fresh produce, farming, more mobile pantries, medical and dietary needs, allergy friendly foods, household items including diapers and detergents.

Ms. Rambharat said the plan was to have these two roundtable sessions in September 2023 based upon Access and Needs. After the roundtable sessions, then we will come up with a plan that includes short term goals (1 year) and long-term goals (2 to 3 years). The goal is to release the Report in the Fall 2023 (mid-October to mid-November). We need to address the immediate needs but also address long term impact. If we were to receive additional funds, what could we as a Committee do to work collaboratively on this plan?

Ms. Michelle Clark, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Deputy Director, Assessment Planning and Community Engagement, HCHD, said this is a big undertaking and hoped that everyone would participate in the Roundtable Session and come up with at least 2 or 3 priority items to collaborate on based off the Roundtable Discussions in September.

Ms. Beavan, LindaBen Foundation, said to focus on ALICE population in Howard County because they have trouble accessing the Food Bank (The Food Bank needs to follow certain guidelines) because of their income levels. Ability for people to access food based on eligibility requirements, this is a policy issue.

Ms. Erika Strauss Chavarria said that CCC does not ask for identification when distributing food to families. She said many families fall within that ALICE threshold where they don't qualify for the food bank.

Ms. Paloma Leon, Luminus Network, said they have two food pantries for Howard County residents. They also have a whole section of food items that anyone can come and pick up food and the person does not have to show ID or income.

Ms. Rambharat said there is a lot of need for mobile pantries to help with transportation barriers especially as you move West through Howard County. Another suggestion is for a community fridge. Ms. Beavan, LindaBen Foundation, said there is a need in Elkrige and Jessup for mobile food pantries because there are transportation issues and that is why they have a mobile food pantry van.

	<p>Ms. Lois Joellenbeck, HCHD, suggested that the educational component is crucial when it comes to medical diagnosis that require special diets i.e., kidney disease or other chronic diseases.</p> <p>Mr. Ralph, HCPSS, said there is a campaign that will be launched to encourage families to apply for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS). This will be a public campaign in the first week of July and promoted throughout the Summer about the FARMS program and the new eligibility guidelines that are published.</p>	
<p>Wrap-up and Next Steps</p>	<p>Ms. Lloyd will send out the meeting minutes in the next week. The Food Security Committee will meet again on Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 11 a.m.</p>	<p>Email lhic@howardcountymd.gov with any questions.</p> <p>Presentations and minutes will be posted on http://www.hclhic.org/</p>

Respectfully submitted by,
Ms. Sonya Lloyd, MA
Community Engagement Coordinator,
Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition