



Washtenaw County Food Policy Council (WFPC)
Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2025; 9:00 – 11:00 AM
Via Zoom

ATTENDEES

Council Members:

Present

1. Anna Taylor-McCants
2. Noelle Blasch
3. Andrew Paniagua
4. Chrissy Taylor
5. Keesa V. Johnson
6. Lauren Marquardt
7. Jae Gerhart
8. Julius Buzzard
9. Nicholas Pomante
10. Ava HaberkornHalm
11. Kelly Wilson
12. Preety Gadhoke
13. Crystal Lecoq
14. Peter Lindeman
15. Lunia Oriol
16. Brian Meko

Absent

1. Justin Hodge (Commissioner)

WFPC Support Staff:

1. Ariane Donnelly – Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD)

Other Attendees:

1. Dayna Popkey (Growing Hope & Food Access & Nutrition Policy Action Team Co-Chair)
2. Jeff Tritten (Washtenaw Optimal Wellness)
3. Russ O'Brien (WCHD)
4. Dayna Brimley (WCHD)
5. Kelly Goolsby, CHW
6. Anabela Gomes
7. Leena Abouzahr (MSU Extension)
8. Autumn Rose Eno-Klingler
9. Fatima A Khan
10. Francesca Arielle Williamson
11. Kate Holcomb

MEETING NOTES

1. Opening/Introductions

9:02-9:14 am

a) Council members share name, affiliation, seat, Policy Action Team (PAT)/Committee, area of interest, and location of remote attendance (municipality, county, state).

c/o WCHD, 555 Towner St., Ypsilanti, MI 48198

E-Mail: washtenawfoodpolicycouncil@gmail.com

Web: <https://www.washtenaw.org/1469/Washtenaw-County-Food-Policy-Council>

Attendees shared their name, affiliation, seat, PAT/Committee, and area of interest. Council members also shared from where they are attending remotely (municipality, county, state). Council members in remote attendance:

- Andrew Paniagua attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Anna Taylor-McCants attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Ava HaberkornHalm attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Brian Meko attending remotely from Ann Arbor Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Chrissy Taylor attending remotely from Canton, Wayne County, Michigan
- Crystal Lecoq attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Jae Gerhart attending remotely from Superior Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Julius Buzzard attending remotely from Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan
- Keesa V. Johnson attending remotely from Pittsfield Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Kelly Wilson attending remotely from Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Lauren Marquardt attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Lunia Oriol attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Nicholas Pomante attending remotely from Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Noelle Blasch attending remotely from Plymouth, Wayne County, Michigan
- Peter Lindeman attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Preety Gadhoke attending remotely from Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona

b) Icebreaker - Anna

- Council members participated in an ice breaker.
 - What is your go to food song:
 - Banana Pancakes
 - Spice Up Your Life
 - The Ketchup Song
 - Strawberry Field
 - Peaches
 - The Land
 - Cheeseburger in Paradise
 - Peanut Butter Jelly Time
 - Sugar in the Tank
 - Down Under
 - I Am the Eggman (I Am the Walrus)
 - Watermelon Sugar
- From chat:
 - Lauren: Welcome to our newest member, Kelly!!
 - Kelly Wilson heart'd this message
 - Kelly Goolsby: Bubbling Brown Sugar
 - Lunia: The Ketchup Song by Las Ketchup
 - Autumn heart'd this message
 - Kelly Goolsby: I like it
 - Francesca: The Way by Jill Scott (because of the lyrics about breakfast 😊)
 - Autumn: Starfish and Coffee by Prince
 - Peter: Sugar in the Tank by Julien Baker & TORRES
 - Crystal: I know a weenie man, he own's a weenie stand. He sells most everything from hotdogs on down. Someday I'll join his life, I'll be his weenie wife. Hot Dog, I love that weenie man!

2. Agenda, Minutes Additions/Deletions/Approval - Jae

9:14-9:17 am

a) Previous Meeting Minutes (January and February)

- To allow enough time for review, will wait to vote on the January 8, 2025 and February 12, 2025 minutes until a future meeting.

b) Meeting Agenda (March)

I. Motion: To approve March 12, 2025 meeting agenda

1. **Motion: Jae, Seconded: Lauren**

2. **Approved: Yes-15, No-0** (15 council members present at time of vote)

3. Public Comment - Jae

9:17-9:18 am

- Ariane: I want to introduce Russ O'Brien, my coworker, who will be your support staff while I am off. He is great!
 - Russ: Introduced himself.
- Jeff Tritten: with Washtenaw Optimal Wellness
- Dayna Popkey: with Growing Hope and a Food Access & Nutrition Policy Action Team Co-Chair
- From chat:
 - Leena: I'm sorry, my mic and camera are not working, but I am Leena Abouzahr, with MSU Extension. I am a early childhood policy, system, and environment educator, with a focus on food waste and farm-to-table initiatives. I'm based in Washtenaw County, though I work state-wide.
 - Lunia heart'd this message

4. Executive Committee (EC) Announcements

9:18-9:39 am

a) Annual Report - Review Draft, Discuss Edits, Vote – Jae

- At the Wed, 3/19 Board of Commissioners (BOC) meeting, Jae will present the annual report and the two resolutions which will be discussed today.
- Jae reviewed the draft.
 - Keesa: Would like to add information about an equitable community food assessment.
 - Jae: This can be added to a section about work in the community.
 - Keesa: Will add language today.
 - Jae: Is there other work that folks would like to highlight that intersects with their job?
- Motion: To approve the 2024 annual report in its draft form which will be finalized by March 19, 2025
 - **Motion: Jae, Seconded: Nick**
 - **Approved: Yes-16, No-0** (16 council members present at time of vote)

b) 2025 Legislative Education Day - Update from Those Who Participated - Julius, Andrew

- Andrew: Julius and I went to Lansing to speak with state legislators. Discussed strategy and talking points so could raise local concerns. Met with State Representative Jimmie Wilson Jr and Senator Jeff Irwin. They are both our allies and in agreement with what we were saying. We did not have to do too much education/convincing. Spoke about increased demand for food, possible threats at federal level to food programs, and highlighted the importance of the Michigan Agricultural Surplus System (MASS).
 - Julius: Andrew's right in that a lot of folks that represent us are on our side. But even though it can feel like why go, because you agree with us, it is still important to show up. While in Lansing, ran into Senator Sue Shink who shared her appreciation for us coming. All legislators have office hours in district, so there are opportunities to educate locally.
 - Jae: Thanks for showing up and for talking about issues we care about!
- Andrew: Regarding food access, Senator Irwin mentioned that he would like to hear about the barriers to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/barriers to accessing SNAP. For example, he is willing to look into what other states are doing to operate SNAP, and he works closely with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).
 - Also discussed free breakfast and lunch for all (Michigan School Meals program) as Senate Bill 500 (from 2023) has stalled and would need to be re-introduced for this program to be enshrined. Currently this program is being budgeted by the Governor annually (it is not enshrined in legislature).
 - Jae: Budget vs law. Budget needs to be reapproved year to year.
 - Crystal: What more can we do?
 - Jae: The American Heart Association has been driving this work. We can write letters for support.
 - Peter: Support from representatives does not result in prioritization. Prioritization is the work

we can do with our legislators. Because even if they are supportive, it does not mean that their time and bargaining power would go toward pushing it forward. Can build coalitions across counties to have coordinated messages.

- Jae: I think this is a statewide effort and that other food policy councils are talking with their legislators about it. School meals was the theme for the legislative education day.
- From chat:
 - Keesa: Where's the link to add work to the report?
 - Lauren: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iiQ13c8aTP_7eV1E_CqcZ_a1-QFHOMqtByZdm9qEU8w/edit?tab=t.0
 - Keesa: Thank you 🙏
 - Lauren: You're welcome!
 - Julius: I'm in a full elevator, but Sen. Irwin also wondered about Arbor One and any potential for emergency allotments for SNAP.

5. Featured Presentation: Dayna Brimley, Health Department

9:39-10:13 am

a) Community Health Needs Assessment

- Dayna gave a [presentation](#) on WCHD's Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan.
- Hospitals do this every three years, WCHD every 5 years. Trinity Health, Michigan Medicine, and WCHD have a monthly call.
- Discussion:
 - Crystal: What are the benchmarks for WIC and SNAP?
 - Dayna: WIC enrollment data are available on our [Health for All Washtenaw](#) website. SNAP data are available, and we are trying to get it added to our website. Also looking to see how best to display data for school meals.
 - Crystal: What do restaurants need to do to accept SNAP?
 - Dayna: There is an application.
 - Jae: Once restaurants get a Food and Nutrition Services number, then they can get hardware to run SNAP cards.
 - Crystal: What is the threshold to be eligible for WIC in Washtenaw County?
 - Dayna: I can get that information for you from our WIC coordinator and share with you. Our WIC department works with Head Start and other places where people might be falling through the cracks.
 - Dayna's post meeting follow-up about WIC eligibility:
 - Those eligible to receive WIC are the following individuals:
 - Pregnant and breastfeeding women
 - Women who recently had a baby
 - Infants from birth to 12 months
 - Children who are 1 to 5 years
 - Individuals must also be a resident of the state of Michigan (including those residing in a group home, shelter, or other institutions) and be income eligible (at or below 185% of Federal Poverty Income Guidelines). Click [here](#) for more info on recent changes to expand income eligibility. Those families receiving Medicaid or SNAP also qualify for WIC.
 - Peter: What are the questions/specific information that the workgroup thought would be helpful to inform action items?
 - Dayna: There used to be a Health Improvement Plan survey done every 5 years. It was a huge landline phone survey that took about 45 min to complete. It resulted in great data but asked a lot from people to participate. Examples of questions asked: Have you ever had to go without a meal because you could not afford it? Have you had to skip grocery shopping because of cost/transportation?
 - The workgroup is interested in revising some questions/creating questions that get to these objectives. For example, what prevents someone from accessing a local food pantry (ex:

- stigma)?
 - WCHD does not have capacity to create and administer a survey. If anyone has capacity, please contact me.
- Preety: Where could we be the most helpful (in terms of prioritizing healthy food objectives)? Also, happy to help with survey methodology!
 - Dayna: The workgroup has not put the objectives in rank order yet, so do not know which one to prioritize. But if there is any alignment with what you are doing, I would be happy to talk more and think about what moving forward might look like in a tangible way. Gives you a little bit of freedom to figure out which one aligns with what the WFPC is working on.
 - Jae: Will add having a follow-up conversation about this to our April Working Meeting agenda.
 - Think could update policy agenda with some of the language about the objectives, as alignment only makes us stronger.
- Feel free to reach out to Dayna (brimleyd@washtenaw.org) with questions, request for information, etc.
- Jae: Will discuss how we as the WFPC can prioritize and move things forward
- From chat:
 - Jae: [Washtenaw :: Washtenaw Homepage](#)
 - Kelly Wilson: [Restaurant Meal Program](#)
 - Dayna Brimley: brimleyd@washtenaw.org
- b) [Washtenaw: Community Health Assessment](#)
 - Combined with above (#5a).

6. Policy Agenda Items & Local Policy Initiatives - Policy Agenda Working Document

- Anna: Updated the policy agenda. Also, one of my interns finished a policy scan for us. Next step: policies will be added to the policy agenda.
 - Also have a new form where you can request a change to the agenda, request to add something, request to remove something. Once you fill out the form, Anna will reach out to you to identify the urgency level (ex: this is something that can be discussed at the next meeting vs. we need to take action on this now).
- Jae: A policy agenda is great but does not capture the work we are doing and when we can check things off (like request made to the BOC). Created a Policy Agenda Working Document to help with this.
 - There are two initiatives that have surfaced:
 - Food pantries are going to be hit hard (there is already a massive cut to Food Gatherers' operating budget). The WFPC can educate the public why food pantries are important, how many people they serve, how you can support a food pantry, etc.
 - Thinking about seniors: A senior millage passed. What is happening with the money and how is it being allocated? The WFPC could work on a resolution.
 - Plan to use this Policy Agenda Working Document to keep identifying problems, devising solutions, and creating timelines. Will keep discussing this, likely at Working Meetings.
 - Andrew: This Working Document was helpful at the last Food Access & Nutrition PAT meeting. Discussed follow-up and priorities. Have some questions about logistics:
 - Who updates it?
 - Jae: Anyone can put items in and write who is adding the items so we can discuss them.
 - Suggest adding a column for who is working on the items so we can track changes and track who is doing what.
 - Suggest adding a column for any sources related to the problem (ex: what kind of data might support).
 - Suggest way to prioritize problems as well.
 - Jae: Added columns. Will be added to agenda for Working Meeting in April.
- Two resolutions have been drafted (one by Peter and one by Julius). We need to vote on them to go before the BOC.
- "Resolution in Support of Prioritizing Food Services for Seniors in Washtenaw County"
 - Peter:

- The “Where As” statements are the background information.
- “Be It Resolves/Further Resolves”: is what we are asking the BOC to do (so written from their perspective).
 - Affirming food and nutrition as a priority for the dollars.
 - Encouraging County administration to engage us on the topics related to food issues (ex: whether it is County staffing, Request for Proposal (RFP) dollars, etc.).
 - More specific uses of millage dollars.
- Next step: Send to the BOC, and they can make edits.
- Jae: Thank you so much for getting the resolution to this point!
- Chrissy: Likes that this is broad and not too directive/rigid. There is a lot of talk, but the money needs to be released as food pantries are being hit.
- Motion: To approve sending “Resolution in Support of Prioritizing Food Services for Seniors in Washtenaw County” to the BOC.
 - **Motion: Jae, Seconded: Chrissy**
 - **Approved: Yes-14, No-0** (14 council members present at time of vote)
- “Resolution in Support of USDA Staff and Commitment to Small and Minority-Owned Farms”
 - Crystal: Wish we knew the number of farmers being affected in Washtenaw County. Thanks to Julius for drafting this!
 - Motion: To approve sending “Resolution in Support of USDA Staff and Commitment to Small and Minority-Owned Farms” to the BOC.
 - **Motion: Crystal, Seconded: Jae**
 - **Approved: Yes-14, No-0** (14 council members present at time of vote)
- Ariane will ask about the process for submitting resolutions to the BOC.
- From chat:
 - Kelly Wilson: Great idea, Andrew!
 - Andrew: Thanks for your work on this Peter and Julius!
- a) **Seniors - Review Resolution - Julius**
- See above (#6).
- b) **Food Pantries - Public Education/Awareness Initiative - Jae**
- See above (#6).

7. Round Robin

10:44-10:52 am

- Combined with #8 Open Comment
- Noelle: Where are the February Working Meeting minutes?
- a) **PAT updates**
- Noelle: Gave an update on the Food Waste & Packaging PAT.
 - Jae: Azella is working with restaurants regarding compost.
- Andrew: The Food Access & Nutrition PAT updated the Policy Agenda Working Document (added all the language in red). Chrissy and Barbara (CEO of Meals on Wheels) discussed putting together organizational one pagers. Ongoing conversations regarding access to SNAP for seniors and providing education to agencies serving adults.
 - Jae: Will assign the Food Access & Nutrition PAT in the Working Document and will change the red font to black.
- Anna: Added a Policy Agenda Canva Link (which has all of Autumn’s notes from the policy scan) to the Working Document. I have the actual policies in my email. Think that the WFPC and PATs should review the policies.
 - Jae: Can we add this to the April working meeting?
 - Anna: Can send to everyone.
- Ariane to add the first page of the policy agenda to the WFPC’s website.
- From chat:
 - Crystal: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M9c6gEmiMOh1ocppQBXw_7e3eSrTklzJ/view?usp=drive_link
 - Autumn: Most of what Justin sent me are definitely resources more than policies honestly, but we are also going through more this week

b) Things on the horizon, important updates from council members

- Combined with #7a.

8. Open Comment (Council Members and Public)

10:44-10:52 am

- Combined with #7 Round Robin

9. Adjourn

10:52 am

ACTION ITEMS

- To allow enough time for review, will wait to vote on the January 8, 2025 and February 12, 2025 minutes until a future meeting.
- At the Wed, 3/19 Board of Commissioners (BOC) meeting, Jae will present the annual report and the two resolutions.
 - Keesa: Will add language to the annual report today.
- Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan Discussion:
 - Jae: Will add having a follow-up conversation about what objective aligns with what the WFPC is working on to our April Working Meeting agenda.
 - Think could update policy agenda with some of the language about the objectives, as alignment only makes us stronger.
 - Feel free to reach out to Dayna (brimleyd@washtenaw.org) with questions, request for information, etc.
 - Jae: Will discuss how we as the WFPC can prioritize and move things forward
- Will add the Policy Agenda Working Document to the agenda for April's Working Meeting.
- Ariane will ask about the process for submitting resolutions to the BOC.
- Anna: Think that the WFPC and PATs should review the policies.
 - Jae: Can we add this to the April working meeting?
 - Anna: Can send to everyone.
- Ariane to add the first page of the policy agenda to the WFPC's website.

RECORDED VOTES

- 1. Motion 1:** To approve March 12, 2025 meeting agenda
 - a. Approved: Yes-15, No-0
- 2. Motion 2:** To approve the 2024 annual report in its draft form which will be finalized by March 19, 2025
 - a. Approved: Yes-16, No-0
- 3. Motion 3:** To approve sending "Resolution in Support of Prioritizing Food Services for Seniors in Washtenaw County" to the BOC.
 - a. Approved: Yes-14, No-0
- 4. Motion 4:** To approve sending "Resolution in Support of USDA Staff and Commitment to Small and Minority-Owned Farms" to the BOC.
 - a. Approved: Yes-14, No-0

CHAT TRANSCRIPT

09:06:03 From Lauren Marquardt (she/her) to Everyone:
Welcome to our newest member, Kelly!!

09:10:17 From Kelly Goolsby to Everyone:
Bubbling brown sugar

09:10:35 From Lunia Evodie Oriol to Everyone:
The Ketchup Song by Las Ketchup

09:10:46 From Kelly Goolsby to Everyone:

I like it

09:11:04 From Francesca [FW] Williamson she/her to Everyone:
The Way by Jill Scott (because of the lyrics about breakfast 😊)

09:11:05 From Autumn Rose Eno-Klingler to Everyone:
Starfish and Coffee by Prince

09:11:28 From Peter Lindeman to Everyone:
Sugar in the Tank by Julien Baker & TORRES

09:11:51 From Crystal Lecoq to Everyone:
I know a weenie man, he own's a weenie stand. He sells most everything from hotdogs on down. Someday I'll join his life, I'll be his weenie wife. Hot Dog, I love that weenie man!

09:20:36 From Leena Abouzahr to Everyone:
I'm sorry, my mic and camera are not working, but I am Leena Abouzahr, with MSU Extension. I am a early childhood policy, system, and environment educator, with a focus on food waste and farm-to-table initiatives. I'm based in Washtenaw County, though I work state-wide.

09:20:57 From Keesa V. Johnson, MDes to Everyone:
Where's the link to add work to the report?

09:21:24 From Lauren Marquardt (she/her) to Everyone:
Replying to "Where's the link to add work to the report?":
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iiQ13c8aTP_7eV1E_CqcZ_a1-QFHOMqtByZdm9qEU8w/edit?tab=t.0

09:21:37 From Keesa V. Johnson, MDes to Everyone:
Replying to "Where's the link to add work to the report?":
Thank you 🙏

09:21:48 From Lauren Marquardt (she/her) to Everyone:
Replying to "Where's the link to add work to the report?":
You're welcome!

09:33:54 From Growing Hope to Everyone:
I'm in a full elevator, but Sen. Irwin also wondered about Arbor One and any potential for emergency allotments for SNAP.

09:44:23 From Jae Gerhart, Chair to Everyone:
Washtenaw :: Washtenaw Homepage

10:00:50 From Kelly Wilson (she/her) to Everyone:
Restaurant Meal Program

10:12:40 From Dayna Brimley Washtenaw County Health Dept. to Everyone:
brimleyd@washtenaw.org

10:24:01 From Kelly Wilson (she/her) to Everyone:
Great idea, Andrew!

10:32:37 From Andrew Paniagua (he/él), Food Gatherers to Everyone:

Thanks for your work on this Peter and Julius!

10:44:59 From Crystal Lecoq to Everyone:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M9c6gEmiMOh1ocppQBXw_7e3eSrTklzJ/view?usp=drive_link

10:50:38 From Autumn Rose Eno-Klingler to Everyone:

Most of what Justin sent me are definitely resources more than policies honestly, but we are also going through more this week