



WASHTENAW

COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL
HEALTHY. FAIR. AFFORDABLE. SUSTAINABLE.

Washtenaw County Food Policy Council (WFPC)

Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2025; 9:00 – 10:30 AM

Via Zoom

ATTENDEES

Council Members:

Present

1. Crystal Lecoq
2. Peter Lindeman
3. Lauren Marquardt
4. Lunia Oriol
5. Andrew Paniagua
6. Nicholas Pomante
7. Chrissy Taylor
8. Kelly Wilson
9. Noelle Blasch
10. Brian Meko

Absent

1. Ava HaberkornHalm
2. Preety Gadhoke
3. Julius Buzzard
4. Jae Gerhart
5. Justin Hodge
6. Anna Taylor-McCants

WFPC Support Staff:

1. Russell O'Brien – Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD)

Other Attendees:

1. Mitchell Seymour (Pollinators Policy Action Team Chair)
2. Lewis Hughes (MSU Extension)
3. Abby Keel (Intern at Growing Hope)
4. Dayna Popkey (Food Access & Nutrition Co-Chair)

MEETING NOTES

1. Opening/Introductions

9:03-9:14 am

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

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:

- Lauren Marquardt attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Noelle Blasch attending remotely from Plymouth, Wayne County, Michigan
- Crystal Lecoq attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Peter Lindeman attending remotely from Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan
- Brian Meko attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Lunia Oriol attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Andrew Paniagua attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Nicholas Pomante attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Chrissy Taylor attending remotely from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan
- Kelly Wilson attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan

b) Icebreaker – What do you think about cooking and eating as summer transitions to fall? - Lauren

- Anything pumpkin (real pumpkin), Soups, Warm donuts from the cider mill, and Winter squash.

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

9:14-9:16 am

a) Previous Meeting Minutes (July)

- I. Motion: To approve July 9, 2025 meeting minutes
 1. **Motion: Noelle Blasch, Seconded: Chrissy Taylor**
 2. **Approved: Yes-10, No-0** (10 council members present at time of vote)

b) Meeting Agenda (September)

- I. Motion: To approve September 10, 2025 meeting agenda
 1. **Motion: Chrissy Taylor, Seconded: Nick Pomante**
 2. **Approved: Yes-10, No-0** (10 council members present at time of vote)

3. Public Comment - Lauren

9:16-9:17 am

- Lewis Hughes said there will be a Washtenaw Food Summit Friday October 24th. Registration information should go out later this week. Food systems networking event with a speaker from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD). 12-4pm. Materials will be shared with the WFPC.

4. Executive Committee (EC) Announcements - Lauren

9:17-9:19 am

a) Federal & State Budget

- Crystal Lecoq said the conversations are about the federal and state budget.

5. Featured Presentation and Discussion: State Budget and Local Food System Discussion 9:19-9:41 am

- Mitch Seymour said the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission received a \$10,000 grant for a pilot project around composting. Only 3 counties in the country received the grant. People would have to pre-register to be able to take their materials to the collection sites. The sites will be in Ypsilanti, Dexter, and Salem Township. There will be a larger scale phase 2. No financial commitment

from the county beyond 2026. Food waste and paper will be accepted. Mitch will follow-up on how the WFPC can help in any way.

- Andrew Paniagua discussed the school meals funding in the House proposed budget. The line item for free school meals was taken out, more overall funding for students was included, but it will be up to the individual districts to allocate the funding. Many school districts would go away from offering free school meals to everyone. Ann Arbor Public Schools
- Peter Lindeman said the deadline to pass the budget is September 30th. The governor's team is going line by line to reconcile the 3 proposed budgets. There will be impacts on grants taking longer and starting late. Tools for individual advocacy were discussed. Peter will share advocacy tools/templates that have worked in other areas.

6. Round Robin

9:41-9:59 am

a) PAT Updates

- **Food Access & Nutrition (FAN) PAT – Andrew**
 - Andrew Paniagua said they met with Jae Gerhart and are coming up with direction and plans for future meetings that will support the full council. He will reach out to Peter about advocacy for the state budget. Peter said there is an open house and community meetings September 11th & 12th for the Eastern Washtenaw Community Center. There could be opportunities for the FAN PAT to advocate that the community center be considered a resilience hub, specifically around being an emergency food access point. Peter will send information to the group.
- **Pollinators PAT – Mitch**
 - Mitch Seymour said he has an effort related to mapping policies and ordinances across 28 municipalities and that crossed with the database efforts Lunia Oriol is compiling. He is tracking the relevant and separate items related to pollinators. These include backyard beekeeping, rooftop beekeeping, lawnmowing height, lawnmowing frequency, lawn spraying practices, and rain gardens. The database will have links to supporting material and status updates.
- **Farmers PAT - PAT not currently active; looking for new Chair**
 - Crstal Lecoq potentially taking the lead on this. No updates right now. Mitch will reach out about the Farmers PAT.
- **Food Waste & Packaging PAT- Noelle**
 - Noelle Blasch said they are meeting monthly and putting together a resolution to coordinate the donation of surplus food from county events to food pantries. Noelle mentioned one of the members of the PAT works in the food system at University of Michigan. They created a Compost and Recycling Education Center and several are located across campus. They discussed coordination on information with the City of Ann Arbor. Let Noelle know if anyone knows who they could coordinate with.
- **Inclusive Food Justice – Ava**
 - None.
- **Planning & Zoning PAT - Lunia**

- Lunia Oriol said she has been meeting with Peter discuss moving forward with the strategic plan with the ordinance database. They had a great conversation with Beth Gibbons, Washtenaw County Resiliency Office, and came away with good ideas and next steps. In the process of scheduling a meeting with Carlisle Wortman & Associates and scheduling PAT meeting times. Peter said the meeting with the Resiliency Office was very helpful and there will be opportunities to work with them.

b) Things on the horizon, important updates from councilmembers

- Kelly Wilson said she is considering sending out a community survey to find out how nutrition education gaps could be filled. Is there a role for the WFPC to support nutrition education gaps that are emerging? Andrew said this would be a great discussion for the FAN PAT.
- There was discussion about a central calendar for the PAT meeting schedule. Food Waste and Packaging PAT meets the 3rd Wednesday every month from 10-11am. FAN PAT meets the 4th Monday every month. Meeting reminders are sent to the listserv.

7. Open Comment (Council Members and Public)

9:59-10:00 am

- None

8. Adjourn

10:01 am

ACTION ITEMS

- Lewis Hughes will share materials with the WFPC for the Washtenaw Food Summit Friday October 24th.
- Peter will share advocacy tools/templates that have worked in other areas. Budget advocacy.

RECORDED VOTES

1. **Motion 1:** To approve July 2025 meeting minutes
 - a. Approved: Yes-10, No-0
2. **Motion 2:** To approve September 2025 meeting agenda
 - a. Approved: Yes-10, No-0

CHAT TRANSCRIPT

09:15:42 From Lunia E. Oriol to Everyone:

Will there be promotional materials coming out soon that we can share?

09:30:53 From Andrew Paniagua to Everyone:

<https://ctnvideo.a2gov.org/CablecastPublicSite/show/10810?site=1>

09:36:15 From Lauren Marquardt | she/her to Everyone:

Proposed House Substitute (08/26/2025)

09:49:48 From Andrew Paniagua to Everyone:

andrew.paniagua@foodgatherers.org

Peter Lindeman: 👍

09:54:07 From Lunia E. Oriol to Everyone:

Noelle, feel free to send me that info and I'll see if I can search around for contacts/resources.

09:59:00 From Andrew Paniagua to Everyone:
<https://www.washtenaw.org/4218/Policy-Action-Teams>