



Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Food Security Committee

Virtual via Teams

August 29, 2024, 10:00am-11:00am

Minutes

Members Present:

Erin Ashinghurst, Accessible Resources for Independence
Genesis Caplan, Maryland SNAP-Ed Program
Loni Cohen, Community Ecology Institute
Nathan Glenn, Agriculture and Food Systems Educator
Courtney Harangozo, Howard County Office on Aging and Independence
LaTonya Love, Howard County Health Department
Rachel Krut, Johns Hopkins Howard County Medical Center
Lauren McGee, Chase Brexton Health Care
Reena Rambharat, Howard County Health Department
Geneva Rieu, Howard Co Dept of Social Services
Carrie Ross, Community Action Council of Howard County

Staff Present:

Janet Afoakwah, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition
Ashton Jordan, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition

Topic/Agenda	Discussion	Action / Follow-up
Welcome and Introductions	Ms. Janet Afoakwah, Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC), called the meeting to order at 10:18 AM. 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.	Members are asked to review previous meeting minutes: https://www.hclhic.org/home/meeting/2024?categoryId=365

Presentations

Ms. Janet Afoakwah introduced Ms. Loni Cohen, Program Manager, Community Ecology Institute (CEI) for a presentation “Nourishing Gardens; Grow Food. Cultivate Community. Protect The Planet.” Key takeaways from the presentation:

- The Nourishing Gardens program is a program of the Community Ecology Institute.
- Roots and Wings – Based on the properties and is Home School Co-op group
- Green Seeds Internship – High School students sign up and learn about Agroecology and Eco stewardship
- Agroecology Program – Primary growing food program at the farm
- Nourishing Gardens – Established in 2021
- Sustainable Skills Workshops

Two Properties:

Freetown Farm (6-acre educational farm where food is grown using regenerative agriculture practices)

Freetown Farm grows over 5000lbs of food. Support for the farm comes from dedicated volunteers.

The Green Farmacy Garden (focuses on plants that can be used for herbal medicine and research).

- 600 volunteers worked with CEI in 2023
- Food is donated to Columbia Community Care Food pantry and Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services (LARS) Food Pantry
- Other organizations have farms on the property: NAACP, HopeWorks, Grow it Eat it, Youth Garden, Climate Victory and UME Master Gardeners.
- Nourishing Gardens has training program – Community members can sign up and learn how to grow their own food (5 weekly classes and a weekend session)
- Over 50 community gardens (many at schools that offer additional education and learning).
- CEI works with schools to determine the benefits of helping students learn to grow their own foods and provides outdoor classroom learning.
- 20 additional schools are interested in partnering with CEI.
- CEI offers Community Installation days where parents and the community can come out and assist with installing the garden in their community.
- Master gardeners help to sponsor gardens, Interfaith centers have been really involved in fundraising.
- CEI has applied for additional grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, which will help them to continue working with Swansfield Elem. School and offer additional trips to Harpers Choice.

Key notes:

- Nutrition-Getting fresh produce to student, families and Howard Co. communities without stigma
- Community Education-Nourishing Gardens Trainings help community members learn how to grow food in any space
- Community Gardens-Supports the development, installation and maintenance of food gardens in every community.
- Education-Community workshops that utilize garden spaces as a

Link to Presentation:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGPDyed120/sgG15H7N_4YQP_0MNaacfw/view?utm_content=DAGPDyed120&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor

<p>Presentations</p>	<p>teaching tool to enhance the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least twice a year, CEI reaches out to all of the schools (beginning of spring and beginning of fall-biggest replanting seasons) • Biggest need of CEI is trainings – trainings also help to fund. Enrollment in the trainings help to fund the gardens and funding helps to pay (in part) for some of the gardens. <p>Ms. Janet Afoakwah introduced Ms. Carrie Ross, Director, Community Action Council for a presentation of Pop-up Pantry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three mobile pantries were scheduled on 8/09, 8/16 and 8/23 at Deep Run Elementary, but because of tornado weather warnings/events, the 8/09 event was cancelled. The 8/16 event was held with less turnout due to miscommunication. • 22 families (95 individuals) were served at 8/16 event. • The 8/23 event was scheduled on the same day as a Back-to-School event so in the interest of providing quality services, this event was rescheduled. Looking to have the make-up event on evening closer to the holiday. • Ms. Ross and Ms. Rambharat will have a meeting with the Supervisor of the Hispanic Liaison program to see how the organizations can work better together to reach more families effectively and how to have a little more control over the advertising to eliminate miscommunication. • Ms. Genesis Caplan held a demonstration during the 8/16 event that was well received. • Ms. Caplan mentioned that she was able to reach out to the Community Schools Coordinator and through that channel, she was able to connect with all the schools instead of each individual school principal, which wasn't as successful. 	
<p>Updates</p>	<p>Few announcements were shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next full LHIC meeting will be on October 7, 2024 from 9:00am-11:00am. • Encouraged meeting participants to participate in upcoming Walktober events 	<p>Register for full LHIC meetings here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-hclhic-full-coalition-meetings-tickets-726290964827?aff=oddtcreator</p> <p>Walktober events link: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/walktober</p>
<p>Wrap up and Next Steps</p>	<p>Ms. Afoakwah announced the conclusion of the discussion and thanked the participants for joining.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared plans to distribute meeting minutes and updates for the upcoming meeting. • Expressed gratitude and bid farewell. 	<p>Email lhic@howardcountymd.gov with any questions.</p> <p>Minutes will be posted: http://www.hclhic.org/</p>

Next Food Security meeting will be held on October 21, 2024 from 10:00am-11:00am	Ms. Afoakwah adjourned the meeting at 10:58 AM.
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Respectfully submitted by
Ms. LaTonya Love
APC Administrative Specialist II
Howard County Health Department

Website: <https://www.hclhic.org> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HCLHIC/> Twitter: [@hclhic](https://twitter.com/hclhic)