



CUMBERLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH FORT BRAGG & CUMBERLAND COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 2nd, 2025, 6:00-7:30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

*Dr. Clifton Johnson, Cumberland County Co-Chair
Shannon Gettings, Healthcare Representative
Beth Maynard, Cumberland County Schools
Melissa Pennington, Food Insecurity Representative
Robert Elliott, Farming/Agriculture Representative
Joyce Adams, Higher Education
Shella Korch, Public Health Representative
Kenny Bailey, Local Government Representative*

MEMBERS ABSENT:

*Alexis McClain, Farming/Agriculture Representative
Roni Winston, Food Insecurity Representative*

STAFF PRESENT:

*Dr. Jennifer Green, Public Health Director
Tamra Morris, Deputy Health Director
Martina Sconiers-Talbert, AO III
LaToya Bell, WIC Outreach Coordinator
Meredith Thompson, FPC/UNC Intern*

VISITORS

*Anisah Ahmed
Kyara Crocker
Patrick Crockett*

Item 1. Call to Order:

Dr. Clifton Johnson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Action Items:

Approval of June Agenda.

MOTION: *Beth Maynard* motioned to approve the June Agenda.

SECOND: *Shannon Gettings* seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous Approval

Approval of May Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: *Shannon Gettings* motioned to approve the May Regular Meeting Minutes.

SECOND: *Melissa Pennington* seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous Approval



Discussion Item 3a. Legislative/Federal Funding Updates

Dr. Jennifer Green, Public Health Director

- a. *Dr. Jennifer Green* provided an overview of recent changes to federal nutrition and healthcare policy, including administrative shifts that will likely result in reduced access to SNAP, Medicaid, and school meal benefits. She noted that under the House-passed reconciliation bill, state administrative costs for SNAP would increase from 50% to 75%, with counties expected to absorb the remaining burden. Additionally, eligibility requirements would tighten, impacting seniors and families with children over the age of seven. These changes are anticipated to reduce enrollment and increase administrative strain on local Departments of Social Services.
- b. *Dr. Jennifer Green* also emphasized cuts to school meal programs, which could undermine participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and reduce the number of schools where all students eat free. *Beth Maynard* elaborated that increasing paperwork requirements would deter many eligible families from applying, posing further risk to food security in local school communities.

Discussion Item 3b. Cumberland Community Foundation Grant Application

Dr. Jennifer Green, Public Health Director

- a. *Dr. Jennifer Green* discussed the upcoming July grant cycle for the Cumberland Community Foundation (CCF). *Dr. Jennifer Green* shared details about a collaborative proposal being developed with *Erybodyeatz*, a local nonprofit focused on urban agriculture and community education. The proposed project would fund garden supplies, soil testing kits, hydroponic systems, culinary workshops, and community engagement days designed to serve youth and low-income families. The Council voiced strong support for this initiative, and members of the Cooperative Extension, including *Kenny Bailey*, offered technical assistance for garden education. The grant application is scheduled to be submitted between July 1 and July 31, with an estimated request of \$30,000 to serve over 350 children through eight workshops.

Discussion Item 3c. Support Letter/Federal Food Access Programs

Robert Elliot, Farming/Agriculture Representative, Meredith Thompson, FPC Intern

- a. *Meredith Thompson* created a draft support letter advocating for continued federal food access funding, with contributions from *Robert Elliott* and others. The letter outlines the positive impact of past investments in local food systems and highlights the importance of maintaining funding for programs that benefit both farmers and families. Council members agreed to circulate the letter for tracked comments before finalizing it for distribution.

Discussion Item 3d. PWC Project 2025

Dr. Clifton Johnson, Cumberland County Co-Chair

- a. *Dr. Clifton Johnson* introduced a critical discussion regarding Project 2025, led by PWC, which involves annexation and water infrastructure expansion into previously unincorporated areas. Residents in these neighborhoods—many of whom are elderly and on fixed incomes—are now facing steep water connection fees, including a \$5,000 assessment and an \$1,800 plumbing connection charge. Council members raised concerns about how these unexpected costs may exacerbate food insecurity and displace limited household resources. *Dr. Jennifer Green* agreed to follow up with Cumberland County’s DSS and Community Development offices to identify potential financial assistance options and educational outreach for affected residents.

Item 4: Conclusion

- a. Introduction of Visitors
- b. Public Comment
- c. **Announcements –**

Beth Maynard provided an update on Cumberland County Schools’ 2025 summer meal program. In compliance with USDA regulations, non-congregate frozen meal bundles are being distributed to families in rural ZIP codes, following a targeted pre-qualification process. Over 150 children have already been enrolled in the home delivery program, with additional outreach occurring through school social workers. The schools also continue to partner with Second Harvest for backpack meals and United Way for literacy donations.

Tamra Morris invited Council members to attend the Environmental Health Division’s upcoming Food Safety Forum on August 13, 2025. She noted the possibility of Council involvement in educational sessions related to zoning, food sharing, and community gardening ordinances. Council members expressed interest in attending future grant-seeker training sessions hosted by CCF in July.

Dr. Jennifer Green formally announced that she would be stepping down from her role as Health Director at the end of 2025 due to military relocation. Council members expressed deep appreciation for her leadership, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and in advancing food access initiatives in Cumberland County.

ADJOURN NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

Monday, August 4th, 2025, 6-7:30 pm

@ Cumberland County Public Health Department
(1235 Ramsey St, 3rd Floor Conference Room)