



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

May 5, 2025, 6:00-7:30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

*Dr. Clifton Johnson, Cumberland County Co-Chair
Shannon Gettings, Healthcare Representative
Beth Maynard, Cumberland County Schools
Roni Winston, Food Insecurity Representative
Joyce Adams, Higher Education
Shella Korch, Public Health Representative*

MEMBERS ABSENT:

*Alexis McClain, Farming/Agriculture Representative
Kenny Bailey, Local Government Representative
Melissa Pennington, Food Insecurity
Robert Elliott, Farming/Agriculture 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:

*Jkwan Fulmore
Patrick Crockett
Kyara Crocker*

Item 1. Call to Order:

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

Action Items:

Approval of May Agenda.

MOTION: *Roni Winston* motioned to approve the April Agenda.

SECOND: *Shella Korch* seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous Approval

Approval of April Regular Meeting Minutes.

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

SECOND: *Shella Korch* seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous Approval

Item 3a. Legislative and Federal Funding Updates

- a) *Dr. Jennifer Green* provided a comprehensive update on state and federal legislation impacting food access. She clarified that local zoning restrictions likely cannot be used to ban the construction of gas stations, due to recent limits on 'down zoning' authority. Instead, the County Planning Director recommended exploring positive incentives, like tax credits, to encourage grocery stores to locate in underserved areas. *Dr. Jennifer Green* also reviewed legislation currently under consideration: House Bill 807, the 'Strong Public Schools for a Strong NC' Act, which would provide free breakfast and lunch for all public-school students; House Bills 774 and 713, which expand universal school breakfast; and Senate Bill 564, which would reinstate SNAP eligibility for individuals with prior drug felony convictions who complete substance use treatment. She also noted the Governor's budget includes funding for universal school meals, while the Senate budget maintains current co-pay coverage for reduced-price meals.
- b) At the federal level, *Dr. Jennifer Green* discussed FDA efforts to ban harmful food dyes such as Red Dye 3 and Red Dye 40. These ingredients, often found in snacks and sports drinks, are being reconsidered for removal due to emerging evidence of negative health impacts. She also shared that she had recently met with a staffer from Congressman Hudson's office and highlighted the Council's ongoing food security work.
- c) *Beth Maynard* added that most Cumberland County schools are expected to qualify for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) next year, allowing universal free meals at nearly all school sites. She emphasized that participation in school meals typically increases by 10–15% when CEP is implemented.

Item 3b. Community Garden Collaboration – *Erbodyeatz*

- a) *Roni Winston* introduced *Jkwan Fulmore*, founder of *Erbodyeatz*, a local nonprofit committed to addressing food injustice through hands-on education in urban agriculture and culinary skills. *Jkwan Fulmore* shared that the organization has launched a community garden on donated land from Cliffdale Community Church. The site emphasizes container gardening and hydroponics, serving as an outdoor classroom.
- b) Starting June 7, *Erbodyeatz* will host an eight-week Urban Agriculture Workshop series. Each workshop includes gardening and food literacy education, cooking demonstrations using homegrown produce, and a free community barbecue. *Jkwan Fulmore* also aims to involve other local organizations, such as small-scale farmers, butchers, and nonprofits, to expand residents' awareness of available food resources. He highlighted barriers to scaling up the initiative, including zoning challenges and limited funding. Despite being a 501(c)(3), *Erbodyeatz* has operated largely from personal funds and in-kind support. *Fulmore* expressed hope that stronger partnerships with local institutions could help build sustainability.
- c) Council members expressed interest in supporting *Erbodyeatz*, including through grant collaboration and outreach support. *Dr. Jennifer Green* suggested a potential partnership for the Cumberland Community Foundation's upcoming summer cycle, with a focus on youth-targeted programming. She offered that the Health Department could serve as fiscal agent if needed. *Meredith Thompson* and *Tamra Morris* will coordinate a follow-up meeting to explore next steps and proposal development.

Item 3c. Support Letter for Federal Food Access Programs

- a) *Meredith Thompson* noted follow-up was needed with *Robert Elliott* on a support letter. A draft will be prepared for review at the next meeting.

Item 3d. PWC Project 2025

- a) *Dr. Clifton Johnson* brought forward concerns from residents regarding the financial burden posed by PWC's sewer and water infrastructure expansion project. He explained that homeowners in annexed areas are being charged over \$7,000 in assessments, which is particularly difficult for seniors living on fixed incomes. This development could exacerbate food insecurity as families redirect limited funds toward utility fees. *Dr. Jennifer Green* and others noted that while financial assistance programs may exist, they are not well-publicized, and community outreach is needed. *Dr. Clifton Johnson* emphasized the potential ripple effects on food access, particularly in areas already identified as food deserts. He encouraged the Council to monitor this issue closely and consider including it in their advocacy messaging. *Dr. Jennifer Green* agreed to seek more information on financial assistance through PWC and suggested that GIS mapping could help visualize the overlap between affected areas and existing food insecurity zones.

Item 3e. Food Desert Map Updates

- a) Council members discussed the need to update local food access maps. While USDA food desert maps have not been updated recently, members suggested creating a local version using data from the community health assessment and other ZIP-code-level data. *Martina Sconiers-Talbert* and *Meredith Thompson* will work with the Health Department's GIS team to explore mapping food insecurity indicators alongside infrastructure developments like the PWC project.
- b) *Tamra Morris* noted that a previous grant-funded food access study may contain useful data and tools for this purpose. She offered to review archived materials and work with staff to identify resources that can be repurposed for current mapping needs.

Item 3f. Cumberland Community Foundation Grant

- a) *Dr. Jennifer Green* proposed applying for the upcoming July grant cycle from the Cumberland Community Foundation, which is focused on improving outcomes for children. She recommended exploring a partnership with *Erbodyeatz* to support their planned urban agriculture and nutrition workshops. Funding could support materials, supplies, and outreach efforts. *Dr. Jennifer Green* explained that while the Health Department could serve as the fiscal agent. Council members agreed to pursue the opportunity, and a follow-up meeting will be scheduled with *Jkwan Fulmore* to discuss roles and finalize a proposal. *Dr. Jennifer Green* emphasized that the foundation prioritizes actionable projects, so the proposal should include both program delivery and measurable community benefits.

Item 4: Conclusion

- a. Introduction of Visitors – *Jkwan Fulmore* presented on behalf of *Erbodyeatz*. *Patrick Crockett*, MPH student from UNC Gilling's, introduced himself and shared his upcoming Fort Bragg nutrition rotation.



- b. Public Comment
- c. Announcements – **Mayor’s Coalition Meeting: Mayor’s Coalition Meeting** will be held Friday, May 9, 7:30–9:30 AM in Spring Lake. *Dr. Jennifer Green* and *Dr. Clifton Johnson* will represent the Council.

ADJOURN

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

Monday, June 5th, 2025, 6-7:30 pm

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