



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

Oct 6, 2025, 6:00-7:30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

*Alexis McClain, Farming/Agriculture Representative
Kenny Bailey, Local Government
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
Kyara Crocker*

VISITORS

*Anne Smiley
Demi Tucker*

Item 1. Call to Order:

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

Item 2. Action Items:

- a. Approval of October Agenda.

MOTION: *Shella Korch* motioned to approve the August Agenda.

SECOND: *Shannon Gettings* seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous Approval

- b. Approval of August Regular Meeting Minutes.

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

SECOND: *Joyce Adams* seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous Approval

c. Food Insecurity Saturday Event

Ms. Anne Smiley from Organizing Against Racism (OAR) was the guest speaker and shared with the council a little background on the OAR stating that the organization has been around for about seven years and the goal is to bring awareness around systemic racism. The organization would like to hold a public event to focus on food insecurity in Cumberland County. The goal would be to hold a Saturday morning event with a light breakfast (label some foods to demonstrate the cost), have a guest speaker to speak on the dangers of more people becoming hungry with the changes in the economy, and shared that she would like to have rotating table tops (at least 3 times) with various organizations who will speak on how food insecurity is being affected in their organizations. She also noted that she would like to have postcards available to send to legislators and would like to have resource tables available to share information with the community on resources and food insecurity efforts. The program would then wrap up with closing remarks. She would like to partner with the food council to host the event. She stated that a date, venue and more will need to be discussed or planned. *Clifton Johnson* thought it was a good idea.

Beth Maynard was also in support of the event and asked for additional details pertaining to the breakfast items.

Anne shared that the breakfast items would include coffee, juice, pastries etc. and that items would be labeled with the cost to discuss the cost of food. She would like to have four organizations pitch in to cover the cost of breakfast with each contributing about \$50 each.

Beth Maynard wanted to know who we are targeting for the event and suggested that we need change agents there and to consider how do we market the event? Who do we market the event to? *Beth Maynard* suggested that Brenda Jackson from DSS would be a good person to consider as the guest speaker for the event. *Beth Maynard* is willing to have a table for the event as well as she represents Cumberland County Schools. She suggested reaching out to a local church to sponsor and hold the event. *Anne Smiley* thought that was a great idea and shared that she would reach out to faith-based organizations in the area.

Dr. Jennifer Green suggested DSS and Public Health share a table for the event and supported Brenda Jackson being the speaker. She also mentioned that FTCC food pantry, church/faith base organizations and Second Harvest would be some great table tops to consider for the event.

Beth Maynard also mentioned that having a farmer present would be great as well to provide a table-top with hopes that one of the council members who represent farming could attend (neither member was present to speak during the meeting).

Anne Smiley mentioned that she would like to have a working group work on the planning of the event. *Martina Sconiers-Talbert* shared that she would be willing to work with Anne to discuss details more and share updates with the council via email/basecamp.

Demi Tucker, who is a visitor listening in shared that she will be moving to the Cumberland County area soon and is looking to get involved and volunteer with the event.

Dr. Green and Tamra Morris shared that WIC and the county commissioners could be invited as well to support efforts. Anne shared that the event would be great if it could be planned around November 2025.

d. USDA's Food Security Report

Dr. Jennifer Green shared updates on the food security report slide presentation. She shared that the information is consistently changing but the USDA will end the Household Food Security report which is annual and the report will be cease due to redundancy and cost to keep it going. More information will be shared via webinar schedule for Oct 7, 2025. More info will be with the



council if the webinar is recorded. The request is that the council consider contacting elected officials at the federal level to keep the report in place.

Item 3. Items for discussion:

a. Legislative Updates/SNAP

Dr. Jennifer Green shared that we are officially in a government shutdown and many are concerned although there have been other shutdowns there is not dedicated funding for many organizations and then the time of year for shutdown is concerning. The SNAP program will still function as normal in accepting/processing applications and it is good to go for October but if the shutdown doesn't end the November benefits will be at risk.

Beth Maynard and Dr. Jennifer Green stated that the Child Nutrition Programs are expected to continue operations in October but local agencies will need additional guidance if the shutdown continues through November. Cumberland County Schools *may be able to stretch funds* to December, but this is not the case statewide.

b. Legislative Update/WIC

WIC is discretionary program through the USDA, so it operates differently than SNAP and Medicaid. She shared that WIC does not have a fiscal year 2026 budget and that funds are only available for about another 2-weeks, but it depends on how quickly benefits are spent. WIC vendors and participants have been notified that WIC is still operating, and they will be notified of changes.

Tamra Morris shared that fiscal year funding schedules are different for WIC than other programs. Our WIC program at the health dept is still functioning and working to get the messages out to everyone in timely manner.

The ask is to urge congress to pass a spending bill that invest in SNAP, WIC and other childhood nutrition programs. She encouraged the council to establish a legislative agenda. She mentioned that could be items that the food council would like to support. She shared that the admin team is willing to help draft to assist stating it would be nice to have something ready to share with legislators which shows our support and advocacy on behalf of the food policy council. *Beth Maynard* did support this initiative and suggested involving the local, state and federal legislators. She stated the council could take the list from the health dept admin team and make the needed edits to get things going.

Clifton Johnson asked about staffing during the shutdown and *Dr. Jennifer Green* shared that none of the staff have been furloughed.

c. Library Cumberland Cooks Program

Dr. Jennifer Green shared that the library was awarded a 40k grant to promote culinary literacy and wellness with hands-on cooking demonstrations and tasting. The program will provide teens and young adults with cooking skills and will also provide a fully equipped mobile kitchen featuring a convention oven, induction cooktop, sink and storage. The cooking demos will be implemented at various libraries in the area. *Dr. Jennifer Green* mentioned that we could share info to the participants about WIC, SNAP and the feeding programs. *Beth Maynard* mentioned that the school system is expanding their outreach with the family engagement program using a mobile cruiser and feels that the library program would be great to promote with hopes of

partnership with the schools and libraries. Dr. Green mentioned that someone from the library may start attending the council meetings.

- d. CCF Grant Application Update Collaborative with Er'Body Eatz
Martina Sconiers-Talbert shared with the council that the application submitted on July 31st for the Cumberland Community Foundation Grant in collaboration with Er'Body Eatz had plans to work with the local church providing youth workshops on home gardening, urban gardens and community gardens. She shared that unfortunately the council was not awarded the \$25,264 funds and encouraged the council to seek out other grant opportunities in future. She reminded the council of the grant list shared on basecamp that was reviewed earlier in the year and that the council should take another look to see what opportunities would be a good fit moving forward. She thanked everyone for the letters of support and efforts on the grant. Clifton Johnson expressed thanks for the hard work on the grant application and asked about other opportunities that may be available in the future.
- e. Introduction of WIC Toolkit Director
Tamra Morris shared the WIC CIAO grant funders from Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) were very impressed with the council and work with military families to combat food insecurity in the community so the health dept was awarded additional funds to build a toolkit of best practices and tips and lessons learned on food insecurity among military populations. Ashley Curtice has been hired as the WIC toolkit director and will be working closely with Latoya Bell who is the WIC outreach coordinator. They will be working to build the toolkit, do QI and focus groups as well as work to interview council members throughout the year to gain their perspective on the ideas to address food insecurity in Cumberland County.

Item 4. Conclusion

- a. Introduction of Visitors
Demi Tucker introduced herself stating it was her second meeting. She works in agriculture and has experience working with food policy councils in the Wake County area. She stated that she is a 5th generation farmer who plans to bring all the work she has done in Wake County to Cumberland County when she moves back to the area.
- b. Public Comment
No public comment
- c. Announcements
Beth Maynard shared update on the summer meals program and stated that the goal was to feed 200 children but served 323 children with box food deliveries to their homes. Between the summer home deliveries meals and traditional summer meals program they were able to hit a record and serve 121,000 meals.
Dr. Green asked other members to share data similar that could be useful for the legislative ask. *Beth Maynard* did share that she is concerned about the funding as the program could be affected indirectly as a result of other programs being cut. *Beth Maynard* shared that the schools were a recipient of the Cumberland Community Foundation grant that will help them to purchase another van to continue the work in the community. Clifton Johnson asked if the



council would be open to having another in-person meeting to present to our intern Meredith Thompson to show appreciation for the work that has been done. *Beth Maynard* shared that she is open to meeting in person and giving an official letter to interns for their portfolio. Clifton Johnson suggested a protocol for how to present the letters to the interns.

Dr. Jennifer Green agreed with the idea and reminded the council about the vacancies on the council and that early next year we will expect to hear more about the changes and recommendations for new members.

The council agreed to meet virtually for the November 6th meeting and meet on Dec 1st in person since it will be Dr. Green's last meeting.

Meeting adjourned

MOTION: *Beth Maynard* motioned to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: *Roni Winston* seconded the motion.