**Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy Council Meeting Minutes**

Date & Location: April 15, 2021 via Zoom

Type of Meeting: Voting

Recorder: Elizabeth Wunschel

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| Attending Appointed (Voting) Members | Kimberly PettigrewAdam CaracoVivian WilliamsVictoria RaschkeDaniel NelsonKristen FaerberRhea KinneyElizabeth WunschelBrett Foster |
| Attending Associated (Non-voting) Members  | Fiona McAnallyAmber FordEd CarterAlex CarmackMarsha SpenceJudith PelotAshlyn AndersonCourtney Liles |
| Other Attendees | Sarah GriswoldJenna SanteroTorrie BoggsAmber HeekeMikayla PrinceShep StearnsAlice Allen |

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| 1. | **Review February Minutes:** Brett Foster moved to accept February minutes, Victoria Raschke second. Minutes approved. |
| 2. | **State and Federal Legislative Updates:** * The FPC is subject to the Tennessee Open Meetings Act, which means that every meeting needs to be publicly announced, minutes have to be available, and meetings have to be open and transparent. During the pandemic, the governor put out an executive order to allow groups like the FPC to meet virtually. The current executive order will expire at the end of April. However, there are many groups that have found meeting virtually to be beneficial, so there is discussion about making advisory groups exempt from the Opens Meeting Act or allowing advisory groups to continue meeting virtually. Fiona will share any updates.
* State Level: The state legislature is moving forward with considering the governor’s proposed budget. They expect to adjourn in the next couple of weeks and will not meet again until next January. In the governor’s amended budget presentation this week, he announced there will be a two-week food tax holiday to reduce tax on food for restaurants and for groceries. The dates for this are unsure.
* Federal Level: The city, county, and state are expected to receive a large amount of funds from the American Rescue Plan. Many of these funds will be used for food programs like SNAP and WIC. We are still waiting on guidance about how the funds can be used. Any nonprofits should have a few projects for these funds if there is a call for proposals. The intent is to rebuild parts of the community that have been held back due to the pandemic.
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| 3.  | **Committee Updates:** * *Data Committee:* The committee met and is starting to iron out the proper terminology of how they would like to structure the data report to give it more body this year. They plan to add more headings and focus on a few key topic areas under each heading. In addition, each section will include quantitative data, qualitative data, and policy recommendations. The plan is to focus on two main data points per topic.
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| 4. | **Introduction to Equity and Diversity Statement:**Around the country, Food Policy Councils and other organizations are adding Equity and Diversity statements to their system of operations. Mikayla has been working on an equity and diversity statement for the Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy County, and we will work with Johns Hopkins next month to iron out the details. She has done research about what other organizations have included in their statements and has found that many other organizations’ statements ring hollow if they do not have historical background or action items. The first draft includes ideas from other places about how they acknowledge ways people have been marginalized from political decision-making processes, if people have felt excluded from these processes, and how to address the value of input from community members and make it easier for community members to come into these spaces. We will talk about this more during our retreat next month.  |
| 5.  | **Organizational Updates and Announcements:** * *Knox County Schools:* Currently, the window is open for summer learning camps and the window will close next week. KCS is working with CAC to give updates about the summer learning camp sites. There are less students participating than originally anticipated. The summer feeding program will operate out of West High School. For background information: summer learning camps are required through legislation this summer. They will be 6 weeks for elementary schools and 4 weeks for middle and high schools. KCS will start camps in the beginning of June and end at the end of June for middle/high schools and the beginning of July for elementary schools. As part of that legislation, there is a requirement to serve breakfast or a snack and lunch to be served. P-EBT is continuing to distribute benefits. KCS has submitted all P-EBT data through February. The P-EBT cards are being sent out. The waiver for summer feeding has been put in place until September 30th of 2021. Originally, that would only apply to summer feeding but KCS has been told that this applies to meals through September 30th. This will allow everyone to get settled back into school and give families more time to complete free/reduced lunch applications.
* *CAC:* In the process of preparing for summer foodservice. Working on getting staff and drivers for the program. Planning on doing the grab-n-go program again this year. The state put a waiver in place for the grab-n-go program through the summer. Mobile Meals is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. They are doing throwback Thursdays and selling t-shirts to highlight the program. They are also working on plans for a celebration of the program in the fall. CAC’s restaurant program began in August and served 10,000 meals purchased from restaurants in the first 6 months of the program. There are another 10,000 meals to go. The program has benefitted restaurant partners and clients have enjoyed the program. CAC is also working on vaccines for homebound clients. They are waiting on information from the state, who is working on contracts for giving vaccines through home health agencies. They were hoping to give the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, but that is on hold since the vaccine is on hold. CAC did a survey with a sample of 100 homebound clients and about 1/3 of clients wanted the vaccine. Commodities: May 1 at the Ross building (2247 Western Ave) 9-1, O'Connor Senior Center (611 Winona St.) 8:30-11:30 am, May 3 at the South Community Center (522 Maryville Pike) 11-1
* *Beardsley Farm:* 500 clients who will be picking up plants at the end of the month. They are working on a number of community gardens. If anyone knows of places who need assistance establishing a community garden please let Adam know. Plant sale on April 24th. https://www.beardsleyfarm.org/seed-and-plant-distribution
* *Vivian Williams:* Mt. Zion Baptist Church is working on getting a garden started behind the church. Hopefully the beds will be ready for soil next week. Vivian is also working with Golden Age Retirement Village to help establish a flower garden along with the vegetable garden that is already established at the site. Vivian is on the Extension Advisory Committee and has been working with 4-H to try to increase 4-H programs in more inner-city schools. Austin East Community Garden Workday Info: Austin East Youth Garden needs your help moving stock tanks and bagged soil to the courtyard garden. We would appreciate any helping hands (and extra wheelbarrows too!) Thursday April 22 3:00 pm- 5:00 pm. Email rebeccamattinglyharman@gmail.com for details
* *WIC:* We are still operating with the Federal waivers and have not heard yet if they will be extended past May. We are currently gearing up for Farmers Market Nutrition Program which will provide $30 for each qualifying individual to spend in July or August with partnering farmers. Please send questions about FMNP to sarah.griswold@knoxcounty.org and I will forward to the appropriate team member
* *UT Public Health Nutrition:* Dr. Spence is teaching a public policy course this semester with nutrition and public health students. These students will be presenting their policy briefs on May 4th from 11:30am-12:30 pm about public broadband, food swamps vs. food deserts, and community engagement. Anyone that is interested in hearing those presentations is welcome to join. Dr. Spence will send the Zoom link to Kimberly to share with the group. In addition, the undergraduate program has changed over the past year and Dr. Spence will be placing dietetic students for the new 5-year program. Dr. Spence will have 13 students to place with agencies for 1 or 2 weeks. If you have any projects that you may need dietetic students to assist with contact Dr. Spence. mspence@utk.edu
* *Salvation Army:* Food box distributions have been steady. Mostly receiving rent and utility assistance calls.
* *UT Student Basic Needs Coalition:* Ashlyn Anderson is now the president of the coalition. Ashlyn is also on the End Hunger Feed Change Coalition. The coalition is hosting a SNAP Access Day on Wednesday, April 21st. There will be 3 sessions from 12-4 p. The event will be virtual and everyone is welcome to join. If you are interested, fill out the registration form. Kimberly will send out the flyer with the minutes. Registration Link: https://tiny.utk.edu/SNAPaccess
* *UT Extension:* UT Extension is still continuing to offer programs virtually and in-person.
* *WUOT:* WUOT is still doing media sponsorships. You can find information to apply for media sponsorships at wuot.org.
* *Knox County Health Department:* KCHD is still mostly in vaccine mode. Anyone over the age of 16 is eligible to get a vaccine. The KCHD website has changed so people can sign up for an appointment time. There is a CDC vaccine finder tool that can help people find appointments. (<https://vaccinefinder.org/>) KCHD is releasing vaccine education videos in a variety of languages. https://covid.knoxcountytn.gov/vaccine-info.html
* *Nourish Knoxville:* New Harvest Farmers’ Market launches next Thursday. In addition to Nourish Kids and SNAP doubling, Nourish is launching a walking program where people receive a pedometer and receive produce bucks for walking at the market. The Mary Costa Farmers’ Market will still take place on Saturdays, and the Wednesday farmers’ market will move back to Market Square. The local food guides have been sent to the printer, so they should be ready by the end of the month.
* *Jenna Santero:* Jenna is making a documentary about food access in the Knoxville area. If anyone is interested in talking to her for her documentary, please contact her. 843-655-4493, jsantero@vols.utk.edu
* Our next meeting will be our annual retreat on Thursday, May 20th from 8:30-10 am. TBD about whether it will be virtual or in-person. The Johns Hopkins Center for a Liveable Future will be facilitating the retreat. The meeting will be mostly for appointed and associate members, but others are welcome to participate. The next Food Access Meeting will be on May 4th. We will focus mostly on food pantries and the legislation around that.
* If anyone has any other updates, please send to Fiona and/or Kimberly.
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| 6.  | Meeting adjourned. |