



Hunger Free Lenawee!

Minutes

from February 2, 2021

Attendance: Madeline DeMarco (LCMHA), Dianne Herr (SVDP), Terrina Liogghio (2-1-1), Vickie Pfeifer (MSU Extension), Frank Nagle (ProMedica Charles and Virginia Hickman Hospital), Connie Beevers (Lenawee County Department on Aging), Debra Davies (First Presbyterian Tecumseh), Heather Pearce (South Michigan Food Bank), De'Angelo Boone (City of Refuge Ministries Intl), Kelly Elliott (Lenawee County Veterans Affairs), Laura Schultz Pipis (United Way of Monroe and Lenawee Counties), Tim Rupple (Neighbors of Hope), Anne Walker (Tecumseh/Kiwanis)

■ Data Collections

- HFL tries to put forward a data sheet each year that contains data touchpoints for our county regarding food insecurity and agency reach. It's time to update that page! The most recent copy of the data sheet has been sent out, so please reach out to Nancy if your agency has any updates!
- Madeline shared some data visualizations utilizing SNAP eligibility data and food retail locations from PolicyMaps. If you have any feedback about those visualizations, or requests for other info you would like to see, please reach out to her!

■ Michigan Health Endowment Grant

- The grant committee is planning to implement community/shared gardens in our community. They would like to use ProMedica farms to help educate community members about how to garden so that they become comfortable with the skills and how to translate them to their own community gardens. The goal is to get fresh food access into neighborhoods that need it.
- Another goal is to create a calendar of events for 2021 containing opportunities people can register for to increase their fresh food knowledge/skills.
- Vickie and Stacey Tilton have been working with staff at Prairie Elementary School, and have received another request from Michener Elementary School, to create school

gardens. Encouraging gardens in schools would be a great way to improve fresh food offerings in cafeterias! Schools and Senior Centers are the foundation for this grant. If schools are interested in community gardening, the grant can help them develop a plan for their garden (layout, water source, sunlight, protection from wildlife, etc.), and potentially provide starter plants and equipment.

- If other groups are interested in starting their own gardens, outline your concept (space available, what we'd like to accomplish, what we have, what we need), send it to the grant team, and resources can be allocated accordingly

- The grant team is looking to hire a full-time farm educator through the grant. This position will be fully supported for 1.5 years through the grant. If you know anyone who would be a good fit for this position, point them in this direction!

- ProMedica Farms Educator & Support Specialist Job Posting -
<https://promedica.hua.hrsmart.com/hrsmart/ats/Posting/view/52960>

- The group meets monthly on the 4th Monday of the month. If you're interested in joining, please reach out to Frank Nagle!

■ Future of HFL-Centralized System

- There was a suggestion to have the executive director of Monroe County Opportunity Program (MCOP), Stephanie Zorn Kasparzak, join our next meeting to give an overview of what their program looks like. Laura will reach out to her about this opportunity.

- It was also suggested that it could be beneficial for some of us to visit MCOP.

■ Information from LENC/CIC

- Project Connect was last week. There were about 70-80 people attending its new format instead of the usual 200. The format worked well, we just need to consider how to better promote this event next year. Some suggestions included sharing more promotional material with churches and mission chairs, as well as maximizing the social aspect of the event.

- The Continuum of Care is receiving \$3.5 million in CARES Act funding to use for rental assistance. They have also received about \$150,000 from HUD to assist housing programs. These are great resources for our community!

■ Agency Updates/Emerging Issues

- If anyone knows of either peacetime or a wartime veteran in need of assistance, Department of Veterans Affairs has resources available for them!
- VITA, free income tax assistance, is now available for those residents making \$57,000 or less.
- City of Refuge is resuming their regular food distributions. They're also in need of volunteers this Thursday @ 3:00pm.
- United Way's 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge began yesterday! If you're interested, you can [visit their website and sign-up](#).
- [Inter-Connections](#) is open again!
- MSU Extension is continuing to teach all of their SNAP education online. Keep an eye out for some upcoming series being promoted soon!
- HEH distribution is back up and running (first Friday of the week, \$1/box charge – have to go with money in hand). Many of the pantries are ordering these boxes and taking on the cost on behalf of their consumers.

The next meeting is scheduled for:

March 2, 2021

1:00PM