

Western Maryland Food Council
Draft Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2022, 4:30 pm, online

Attending: Amanda Rigglesman, Cheryl DeBerry, Jessica Josephson, Leslie Hart, Sherry Frick, Jill Hudson, Willie Lantz, Melissa Bolyard, Theresa Shahl, Daphne Gooding, Jen Thomas, Shelley Argabrite, Lisa McCoy, Amy Ritchie, Allison Boyd, Rachel Forlifer

1. Call to Order and Introductions
 - After a welcome by Chair Lantz, attendees introduced themselves.
2. Minutes from the last meeting
 - Minutes were accepted as submitted.
3. Treasurers Report
 - Treasurer Sherry Frick presented the attached treasurers report.
4. Maryland Ag Council (MAC) Grant Report
 - Sherry Frick reported the MAC grant was approved for additional funding. The group, consisting of Jen, Cheryl, Melissa, Theresa, Sarah Bush, and Sherry, had a meeting today and plans are progressing well for the buy local program for Allegany County, including branding and logo. The roll-out date for the website and social media is June 1.
 - Sherry recently attended the Taste of MD Ag event to pick up the grant award and be recognized as an awardee.
5. New grant opportunity from GCHD
 - Shelley Argabrite reported that the MD Dept of Health Center for Chronic disease, working with the five local health depts and the local health commission, has funding to help with areas without food security councils. Garrett Co. is eligible and our county could receive up to \$20,000 for food security efforts. The application is straightforward. The main need is a subcommittee that addresses food security, which the WMFC could be involved with. The grant work would also include the Maryland Diabetes Action Plan. The subcommittee would conduct a food security assessment of needs.
 - Basic idea – we (WMFC and Garrett Co. Health Dept.) have a lot of things going on that could be moved to this plan and formalized as goals with action steps. Grant funding could help implement one action step within the food security goals.
 - Shelley will double check eligibility for the grant
 - Jessica Josephson moved, Leslie Hart 2nd to explore this opportunity with the health department. The motion was passed by a majority of the vote.
6. County Reports
 - Allegany Co:
 - Sherry Frick reiterated the work on the Buy local grant. The workgroup assigned next steps with logo, website, branding. Once get logo/branding, the group will work on creating promo materials and finish the website and social media pages. Social media ads are included in the plans.
 - Washington:
 - Lisa McCoy reported that the Washington workgroup hasn't met for a while but initiatives are moving forward, including the Healthy Hometowns Restaurant Program. The plan is to meet with restaurant owners next week to get feedback on the draft criteria. The next planning meeting is next month. A soft opening is planned for spring, with the hope to add more participants in the fall. Want to expand the program to include Allegany County in the fall, then expand to Garrett County in the future.
 - Rachel Forlifer reported the VFF Produce Mobile Produce Market was started with grant funding from the state and that dried up. Currently she is working on a healthy food financing initiative grant. They wanted to continue the market money coupons, so if a

customer talked to Rachel or someone from the WIC office at the market, they get a dollar coupon to spend. This helped get people to talk to the education resource people. Rachel asked about sources of funding – if that might be a use of workgroup funding. The Washington Workgroup will discuss at the next meeting.

- Leslie – the Buy Local Event has been turned over to the Washington Co. Farm Bureau – Groundhog Day event will be held next year in January. There are three new farmers markets in the pipeline. Leslie is doing a market manager training next week.
- Garrett:
 - Willie reported the Garrett Workgroup had a meeting last week. They had three requests for WMFC workgroup funding. Rt 40 school, funding for chicken tractor for \$500. Mt Fresh Market matching funds for SNAP plus WIC and Senior FMNP for \$2,000. Garrett Growers requested refrigeration unit on a truck for \$1,000. Voted to approve those funding and our numbers will go down now (on the treasurer’s report). The plan is to meet once a month in spring.
 - Willie reported that Garrett Growers initiatives are going well, including partnering with Turnrow as part of a USDA Local Food Promotion Program grant which continues working in WV. Lately Garrett Growers (GG) has been working on big grant with the Mountaineer Food Bank for weekly food boxes in WV. It is a \$600k grant which started in January this year. GG has worked to secure a lot of potatoes, winter squash, and carrots through the winter/early spring. GG is doing a lot of planning with farmers to fill the food boxes with local foods as soon as possible. GG has provided \$70k in food so far for the food bank.
 - Melissa Bolyard reported on a new initiative, called M3 Beef, a ground beef marketing program starting in MD. A consultant has been hired to do a feasibility study to get started. Mike Koch, one of the owners of Firefly Cheese, developed a label and is selling product in their store. Will be looking for producers in the region to supply the beef.
 - Allison Boyd reported that plans for the new the Deep Creek Farmers Market are progressing. The board includes five members, all farmers and business owners in Garrett County. The market will be held Friday evenings 3 to 7 pm at Garrett College, starting on the Friday before Memorial Day. The group is still working on organizational development. The market is currently accepting applications, with 16 vendors confirmed already. The market will include farmers, crafters, food trucks, and live music and want to include cooking demos and other types of entertainment.

7. MAERDAF Grant Report

- Willie reported on the progress on the grant’s five goals so far – Jill Hudson is doing making great progress. The grant ends June 30. Jill Hudson shared:
 - Restaurants Buying Local: the restaurant list is fairly accurate/updated. Created sample questionnaires for farmers and restauranteurs. With the info gleaned from the questionnaires, hope to encourage local or making connections with local farmers. It may include training restaurants how to buy local, what’s available, what it means, etc. It’s up in the air what the restaurant forum will look like.
 - Agriculture Education Resources – lots of people contributed resources to the list, which is broken down by categories, such as local, federal, and state. We want the list to be useful for all, so it may be posted online.
 - Community Gardens Inventory – working on this – some counties have them, some don’t – some individual gardens are in flux with the pandemic.
 - Food pantries list and needs – need to contact six more to confirm they exist and get basic info. Some have merged with other pantries or went out of business, such as churches that closed.
 - WMFC Organization – working with the executive committee to explore options.

- Willie Lantz thanked Jill for her hard work. He mentioned that as we've gotten into the weeds, we have found other issues – want to still do the refrigeration survey for food pantries but it may change from our original thought – those with perishable offerings should be approached.
8. Maryland Food Resiliency Council (MFRC) Update
- Theresa Stahl reported that the MFRC submitted preliminary recommendations in November (this was shared at the last WMFC meeting). Some of those recommendations are moving forward in the current legislative session.
 - Montgomery County Food Council put together a letter requesting that Maryland's Federal Recovery (ARPA) funding be used for cold storage for food assistance providers. Theresa asked if the WMFC would also like to write a letter. Consensus of the group was to draft a similar letter from WMFC to send.
9. Frostburg Grows De-Commissioning
- Willie Lantz reported that Frostburg Grows was a grant-funded project on five-acres of former mine land south of Frostburg from 2012 to 2018. The location made it difficult to be sustainable, lacking access to water and other contributing factors. Over the years, five high tunnels, community gardens, and other activities were held there. In 2019-20, it was only used for community gardens. In 2021, nothing was done at the site. The current owners have plans for the property as the Frostburg Grows lease ends, so the site needs to be decommissioned. WMRC&D owns the assets. They're looking at what can be done with the equipment, facilities, etc. per the funding source. An advisory council is working to come up with a plan. They have created forms for item requests. Five high tunnels, 30x120, could be made shorter for smaller spaces. They want assets to go to nonprofits, like community gardens. There is also a storage container and some miscellaneous equipment. The difficult one to relocate is the building, a 24x40 modular. ARC and RMC funded the assets, and they want them to be used for similar purposes. Everything needs moved, and the cost to move will be burdened by the receiver. There's potential for the building to be potentially used for a food hub, hemp processing, herb drying, value added production, etc. Just need someone to champion the project and move forward. Let Willie know if someone interested. They are supposed to remove everything by end of June but will likely be ok if it takes longer.
10. Election of Council Members
- Theresa Stahl moved, Lisa McCoy 2nd to accept new members in red on the attached list. The motion passed by a majority of the vote.
11. Other business:
- Leslie Hart mentioned that SB121 is supported by Maryland Farm Bureau.
 - Maryland Market Money matching (MMM) at farmers markets – in 2021, Garrett had over \$6k, Allegany had \$6k, and Washington had \$17k
12. Adjourn
- Vice Chair Theresa Stahl adjourned the meeting at 6:11pm.

<u>Allegany County</u>							
#	<u>First</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>Office/Member</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Last Elected</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Notes (max of 7 per county)</u>
1	Katie	Stone	Member	Allegany	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
2	Theresa	Stahl	Vice Chair	Allegany	2/11/2021	2/11/2024	officers elected 2/20
3	Jen	Thomas	Member	Allegany	2/11/2021	2/11/2023	Was: Kate Livengood elected 12/4/17 for 3 year term
4	Sherry	Frick	Treasurer	Allegany	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	officers elected 2/20
5	Shirley	Guinn	Member	Allegany	2/11/2021	2/11/2024	
6	Amanda	Riggleman	Member	Allegany	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
7	Dan	Fiscus	Member	Allegany	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
<u>Garrett County</u>							
#	<u>First</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>Office/Member</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Last Elected</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Notes (max of 7 per county)</u>
1	Bill	Bishoff	Member	Garrett	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
2	Cheryl	DeBerry	Secretary	Garrett	2/26/2020	2/25/2023	officers elected 2/20
3	Willie	Lantz	Chair	Garrett	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	officers elected 2/20
4	Tonya	Sherrill-Kuhn	Member	Garrett	2/11/2021	2/11/2024	
5	Melissa	Bolyard	Member	Garrett	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
6	Allison	Boyd	Member	Garrett	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
7	Jessica	Josephson	Member	Garrett	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
<u>Washington County</u>							
#	<u>First</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>Office/Member</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Last Elected</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Notes (max of 7 per county)</u>
1	Rachel	Forlifer	Member	Washington	2/14/2019	2/13/2022	
2	Lisa	McCoy	Exec Committee	Washington	2/11/2021	2/11/2024	
3	Caroline	Selle	Member	Washington	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
4	Leslie	Hart	Member	Washington	3/10/2022	3/9/2025	
5	Jill	Hudson	Member	Washington	7/1/2022	3/9/2025	ad hoc until finish contract
6							
7							

WMRC&D Account					
Date	Deposit Description	Deposit	Debit Description	Debit	Balance
6/21/2021	WMRC&D account after deposits and debits from the 2021 conference				\$10,472.06
6/29/2021	Salisbury University 2021 conference sponsorship – late arrival	100.00			10,572.06
6/29/2021			WMRC&D 10% mgmt. fee	-10.00	10,562.06
7/6/2021	Turning Point Energy Grant, Garrett Co. work group	\$2,000.00			12,562.06
7/6/2021			WMRC&D 10% mgmt. fee	-\$200.00	12,362.06
2/1/2022			Payment to CurlyRed on behalf of Allegany Co. workgroup	-\$600.00	11,762.06
2/1/2022			Check cutting fee	-\$1.00	11,761.06

University of Maryland Account					
		deposit	NOTE	debit	balance
4/29/2021	Eventbrite fees collected for 2021 WMFC Conference; Event# 140997949663	\$2,005.96			\$2,005.96
	Summary				
	Garrett County EAC/UMD Account	\$2,005.96			
	WMRC&D Account	\$11,761.06			
				Grand Total	\$13,767.02

2021 Conference Revenue & Expenditures

Deposit Description	Deposit	Debit Description	Debit	Balance
Conference Sponsorships	\$3,750.00			\$3,750.00
Garrett Co. Econ. Dev. Sponsorship	\$1,000.00			\$4,750.00
Eventbrite Fee Collection	\$2,005.96			\$6,755.96
		ACM Conference Fees	-\$481.00	\$6,274.96
		Repay Garrett Co. Econ. Dev. For books purchased	-\$1,621.01	\$4,653.95
		WMRCD 10% Mgmt. Fee for deposited funds	-\$375.00	\$4,278.95

County Work Group Discretionary Spending

Washington Co. Work Group Project Budget		
	2020 Ending Balance	\$1,098.00
6/21/2021	2021 Conference Allotment	\$1,500.00
	Ending Balance	\$2,598.00

Allegany Co. Work Group Project Budget		
	2020 Ending balance	\$198.00
6/21/2021	2021 Conference allotment	\$1500.00
2/1/2022	50% payment to CurlyRed	-\$600.00
2/1/2022	CurlyRed check cutting fee	-\$1.00
3/ /2022	MD Ag Council Grant	\$1600.00
	Balance	\$2,697.00

Garrett Co. Work Group Project Budget		
5/1/2019	Beginning Balance-generated from 2019 conf.	\$1,500.00
4/28/2021	Turning Point Energy-for Garrett Co.	\$2,000.00
4/28/2021	WMRC&D %10 fee	-\$200.00
6/21/2021	2021 Conference allotment	\$1,500.00
7/7/2021	Turning Point Energy - Garrett Co.	\$2,000.00
7/7/2021	WMRC&D %10 fee	-\$200.00
	Balance	\$6,600.00

Western Maryland Food Resiliency Project Grant

Amount Requested: **\$26,300**

Total Match: *Partnering Organizations will provide office space and project support valued at \$9,600.00*

Total Project Budget

- Personnel – 40 hrs per week at \$20/hr for 6 months (24 weeks) = \$ 19,200
- Fringe - \$2,170 (*Social Security - \$1,190.40, Medicare - \$278.40, MD Unemployment - \$350.00 Worker’s Comp. -\$350*)
- Travel - \$1,000 Printing - \$1000 Indeed: \$300
- RC&D – 10% overhead - \$26,700 = \$2,630 Total = **\$26,300**

Project Summary

The Western Maryland Food Council (WMFC) serves Garrett, Allegany and Washington counties. The council assists organizations with planning and implementing food system projects by bringing organizations together to discuss and plan projects. The council is made up of 14 individuals from a variety of backgrounds from across the three counties. At the WMFC spring conference, the following topics were identified as needed projects in the region: communication between farmers and restaurants, greater information about community gardens, a better understanding of agriculture education in the region, an understanding of the needs of food pantries and more coordination of the food system in western Maryland. The WMFC proposes hiring an individual for six months full time to *create a Farmer to Restaurant Forum, create a directory of community gardens and resources, create a directory of agricultural education resources and conduct a survey of food pantries. The WMFC will pursue non profit status to better be able to assist with food system projects.*