

PUBLIC MEETING: Garrett County Food Bank - 2025/01/24 09:44 EST - Transcript

Attendees

Ali Macstudy -MDH-, America's Hauling For Hope, Andrea, Ann Gaydos, Ann Sherrard, Brianna Graham -MDH-, Carly Caro, Cheryl DeBerry - Garrett County, Corey Edmonds, Dana Mason, Emily Alt, Geni Sines, Jill Keefer, John Corbin -MDH-, John Corbin -MDH-'s Presentation, Karen Mager, Kimberly Uphold, Kristen Walker -MDH-, Lorena de Leon, Lydia Yoder, Margaret Paul, Melissa Bolyard, Melissa Clark, Michele Walker, Mountain Haven, Rob Morgan (These Wild Dreams), Ruthie Pritchard, Samantha Flanagan -DHS- Garrett County

Transcript

John Corbin -MDH-: is a working meeting. So, we're going to try our best to collect as much information as we can in the short time that we have together. I'd also like to welcome Chris Bullet beside John. if you want to introduce yourself. I'm the president of community action and we're talking about using our building part of the team. And then also Lorena, she's with Maryland physician. she will probably be joining us in a few.

Lorena de Leon: Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

John Corbin -MDH-: Hello, Lena. Do you want to introduce yourself?

Lorena de Leon: Lorena Deleon, I'm the senior director of population health and social determinance for Maryland Physicians Happy to be part of this and appreciate the partnership with both Chris and Shelley and John.

John Corbin -MDH-: right, thank you. u just a little bit of history before we get started.

John Corbin -MDH-: John and I have been working in the space from a public health perspective to reduce chronic diseases, improve nutrition security, and reduce food insecurity. So we do that in many different ways. And we've had the opportunity to write and win some grant awards that has brought us to this culmination today where we're looking at opening a food bank slashresource center resiliency hub. There's a million different ways we could go about doing it. And so we're really really excited about this partnership.

John Corbin -MDH-: Lorena is our main financial contributor with a grant that she is providing from Maryland Physicians and as Chris mentioned, he has the 360 West Liberty space. and so all the work and all the partnerships have aligned to make something that, Garrett County has been needing for a long long time. So, I did mention the meeting is going to be recorded and we have a set of prompts. So, There's a full house. and then we have several people online. But around the room, you'll see questions and prompts. And so, we're going to start off the meeting by talking a little bit about the strengths of our current food network.

John Corbin -MDH-: And so there have been thousands of dollars and countless hours of volunteerism to help strengthen the food network in the county. People have been doing it for decades. And there's a lot of you that I see here today that have devoted your time and are actively involved in churches, agencies, and just other nonprofits even. And so we want to make sure that we talk a lot about what's working. make sure that we're capturing all the resources that actually exist. and then move from there to figure out what kind of gaps still exist in the food network space and what kind of gaps that the potential of 360 West Liberty could fill. And so we're going to talk about who we want to serve.

John Corbin -MDH-: We're going to talk about how we can ensure that guests that visit 360 West Liberty are treated with dignity and respect. And as a community member, what you all can do to help sustain something like 360 West Liberty. And so we're going to basically use all of this food work and we're going to try to create a hub, some sort of resource center that brings people together around food, but does so much more because we know that people that are food insecure have many other issues and needs. And so it's an opportunity for us to think a little bit broader than just a food bank. And we have a lot of opportunities to talk with our partners from around the state.

John Corbin -MDH-: But Raina's introduced us to several different people. She's doing work across the state, amazing innovation work in food and last week I spent three hours at the Howard County Food Bank with the director. Fred Pulse and Chris have both been there and there's just a lot of models and a lot of good things that we could learn from. So I feel like we have a really good basis to start this conversation. and I'm looking around and I'm encouraged from the people in the room what we're seeing. And so, if we have a technical difficulty, John created a QR code, if something happens and it's like too much, we can just use that QR code and we can do all of this online on our phones. but hopefully we can use the room and kind of do it oldfashioned way. For those online, he will put a link in the chat so you can respond to the prompts.

John Corbin -MDH-: by using that link to fill in those questions and then before we actually get up to start moving around the room. We did promise we had a public comment section up it will remain up but at our open meetings we will read those public comments and so I'm going to ask John if he could start off and read the comments that have come in about this work Absolutely. so, everybody probably saw a copy of will also be some opportunities toward the end of the meeting. Public comments are accepted online at the Garrett County Food Bank website at [garrett countyfoodbank.com](http://garrettcountyfoodbank.com) or. Either takes you to the same place. and there's a couple things on here. It also talks about all of the resources that we are going to be utilizing. Some of these will be temporary because we're going to be additive throughout this process. So, the activities today are for today. There will be more activities in the future and opportunities to participate.

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John Corbin -MDH-: all the public meeting notices are on here. also some of the different funding discussions from the local management board. A lot of history. Things are moving pretty quickly in terms of how we have to plan and how we have to kind of solicit funding and really make sure we have all of our boxes in a row. But all of that recorded on here for Public comment is accessible through this link here. and I will screen share for all the people online. give me We are still getting folks joining which is great.

John Corbin -MDH-: so if you go to the Garrett County Food Bank website, which is [garcount foodbank.com](http://garcountfoodbank.com) or org, you can hit public comment right here and there is a form that is accessible. and

anyone can fill this out at any time. These will all be read at future meetings at the start of the meeting. So that way people can't come. We make sure that their voices meetings and people are still trying to join. So apologies. Okay, I'm going to stop presenting for a second. I'm going to go ahead and read the two public comments that we've received. The first is from Kenny Brightman.

John Corbin -MDH-: I believe the best way to have a safe, healthy food is to grow your own. If each municipality in G County and Watershed along with any residents resident farmers wanted to maintain several food forests with plants selected by professionals with appropriate criteria, we would be well on our way to addressing food insecurity and issues in Hankerstown or otherwise would have sken. and these will also be posted. So, if anybody posts these to our website, they will also be readable as well.

John Corbin -MDH-: The second comment received is from Twilight Bender. my concern does not have an easy solution. Some of our need folks do not have transport or the ability to drive out for the food distribution. Are there any possible delivery options that local churches provide volunteers Adding boxes to home delivered meals? My second thought is how to utilize food being discarded in restaurants or markets. Is there any opportunity for something like that? Second harvest. Using churches, a large

John Corbin -MDH-: a central large food bank idea Rotary Club's the bridges program to distribute question mark those are the two pieces receive everyone yourself I can't mute there we go thank you so thanks for reading those comments I did forget to introduce someone.

Mountain Haven: I wanted to hear about that, please.

John Corbin -MDH-: It's very quiet over here in the room. Fred Co Jr. He is the director of the local management board and local behavioral health authority. And I will say that after Lorena and Chris and I got together and decided how the initial start of this was going to go, we were able to get some further funding from the local management board as startup funds. And so he's here to represent them. And then several of his staff are in the room, too. You guys want to give us the wave? So, we appreciate that financial support and Fred is parked over here and he has volunteered to help us because we're not going to get to everything we need to talk about today in an hour. There's just no way. So, this is very strategically a visioning session. So, what that means is we're going to follow the prompts so that we can get those things done today and then we'll keep doing this.

John Corbin -MDH-: So obviously we're on to something here or you guys wouldn't have come out and we're really pleased about that. And so if you have issues or if you have specific things that aren't on the wall, you can mute the public comment section, but you can also talk to Fred over here in the corner about questions, ideas, or suggestions that you have so that we can try to keep our meeting on task today. All right. And that will be put in a parking lot. Yes. thank you for that, Fred. I appreciate that. And so with that, there's no particular order. There are markers setting at each kind of around the room and, we can just kind of begin putting down your ideas. Then our team will kind of come around when the sheets fill up. We'll be putting new ones up. So don't be shy. Go ahead.

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John Corbin -MDH-: And John's putting the link in there for people online. How are you? That was a great conversation as far as questions. A lot of the smartest people. We're going to go and mute the room. Please continue to use the chat or raise your hand.

John Corbin -MDH-: and we'll continue to monitor that for those that are remote. Thanks,

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America's Hauling For Hope: Good morning. I'm not hearing anything. Didn't this meeting start at 10?

Lorena de Leon: It already started. Hey, Clint. they're doing a work session now. and I think they're going to be sharing back, so everybody's kind of on mute.

America's Hauling For Hope: All right. Thanks,

Lorena de Leon: Of course, for those who can hear, Clint is actually our partner that does deliveries of food across Alagany and Washington County. And he would be our partner to try to figure out how we can get some food from the Western Maryland Food Bank up to the Garrett County Food Bank. Right, Clint? You're a logistics master.

America's Hauling For Hope: That is correct. I apologize. I'm in transit right now.

Lorena de Leon: I see that Clint was out delivering until what 8:30 at night the other night in Alagany through the storm. pretty impressive.

America's Hauling For Hope: Yeah. our windshield wiper decided it didn't want to be in the ice anymore and...

America's Hauling For Hope: flew off the truck.

Lorena de Leon: I don't know

Lorena de Leon: how you do it, man, but we really appreciate everything that you do. is be safe.

America's Hauling For Hope: It's actually very release. I'm an office person, And driving is just relaxing, calm, easy. It's brainless work for me.

John Corbin -MDH-: for those online. We have the link in the chat. We're going to come back together. We have one second. We don't want to lose the folks online.

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John Corbin -MDH-: give us just one second and we'll get back to this very very important discussion. I just don't want to lose our folks online. we're having great conversations in the room. So, looks like seven of you have gone ahead and filled in your prompts. Cheryl de pinned it to the top of the chat. So, go ahead and click that link and you guys can fill your answers in and we're going to come back together in about 10 minutes. And I forgot to be sure to go ahead and introduce or write who you are and who you represent in the chat so we can record that since we're not here to sign it. Thank you. All right, 10 more minutes, guys.

Kimberly Uphold: Good morning everybody. my name is Kim Uphold. I work for Appalachian Crossroads. I'm an employment specialist for behavior health.

Lorena de Leon: Nice to meet you. I think they wanted us to put it in the chat, Kimberly, but it's definitely nice to meet you.

Kimberly Uphold: Okay, I didn't hear that part, so I'll do that. Thank you.

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Samantha Flanagan -DHS- Garrett County: Nice.

John Corbin -MDH-: Okay, We're gonna go ahead and get started again for all of our online silence. So, we'll go ahead and get started. and then we'll hand the floor over to Chris. All right. so, what we're going to do is capture everything that's been written. just kind of go through them, read them off so that everybody in the room and online knows what's been printed here and what's come in on the response sheet online. I wanted to respond real quickly to the couple of public comments that were there when we started this meeting that John read. one is in real regard to delivery.

John Corbin -MDH-: One of the things that we've been talking about we just started having this conversation in December maybe of hey is this something we could do right maybe November and one of the purposes was just from that comment that came in about the lack of transportation how hard it is for people to get there. because this is a huge county, very sparsely populated. the food network is just very dispersed. And so with Community Actions Network, we deliver meals on wheels five days a week. we run our bus service all over the county. We have six head start centers. We are constantly around the county. I think the only corner of the county that isn't covered by what we do is Bloomington.

John Corbin -MDH-: and I drive through Bloomington twice a day because I live down there. so I can transport food. That's so we are committed to offering if there are six families in Kitsm Miller that need food, we can pack up food and our Head Start our Meals on Wheels folks, whoever is going that way, we'll pick up that food and take it there so that there's a central place. and it can be dropped off at the community center in Kiss Miller and people can get there or whatever. if they're way out, you can just deliver it to their house. But there will be a delivery aspect to this. And the other comment about growing healthy food. Yes, please. let's create a network of community gardens and what did he call it? Food forest. that's a great way to meet those needs.

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John Corbin -MDH-: and absolutely it's the healthy way to eat. And we're not interested in just pushing out something that's going to fill people's bellies because there is a lot of bad food that gets pushed out. And we really want to care about people's health. I don't want us giving food away that I wouldn't eat, right? We just shouldn't be doing that. we need to care about people's health. so that's my quick response to those two things. So, we're going to just start reading these. Yes. Thank you for that. All So, we're going to start with the One last thing real quick. If anybody is still filling it out online, go ahead and hit submit so I can refresh here and we'll have whatever you have wrote so Go ahead. All right. So, we're going to start with the strengths of our current food resource providers that includes churches, agencies, etc.

John Corbin -MDH-: And I just want to say that, not all of those people are represented here today. We have just so probably hundreds of people that work in this space. And so, my job and all of our jobs is to make sure we're reaching out to the people we know who do this, and keep inviting them to the conversation. and so we do have a ource brochure. That's something that the Western Maryland Food

Council put together. Willie was in the room. He stepped out. and I think Cheryl's online, Melissa, Bullyard. So, they put that together. It is on the food garrett countyfood.com. it's where you can, sign up for SNAP and all three states as so that needs to be updated, but that is one brochure that we have where there's some things. Someone's holding it up in the back of the room.

John Corbin -MDH-: That's the one. so we do have a start. we need to keep making sure all of those resources are up to date and people know how to find them and, we can utilize that space. So, just wanted to point that out before we start here. So, first on the list is Meals on Wheels. This is the strength of our current food network. Home delivered serves 200 seniors in Garrett County. groceries to go. Shelf stable food boxes serves 100 seniors per month. Learning Beyond the Classroom, five distribution locations, and WIC, women, Infants, and Children program serving 670 participants. The Episcopal Church in Garrett County has Steven's Table, and There's a food pantry at St. John's Episcopal Church, Deer Park. they're in conversation with the House of Hope, Maryland, and I'm sorry, Deer Park is Reverend Chipley. St.

John Corbin -MDH-: Marks Lutheran Church is the Western Maryland Food Council. Published placed the brochure in it's in the bag backpacks. Update question mark. So, we just spoke about that. many great food growers and farmers to work with. Strong ers markets, farm stands. That's our nutrition security. We've got strong connections with local food entities and Garrett growers house of hope sisters Maryanne and Joanna. and it says need to get a person who can tell such I'm not sure what that says. Sorry.

John Corbin -MDH-: and then Western Maryland food collaborative effort to engage and inform cooperative efforts for the food system. so a lot of strengths, a tremendous opportunity with us in the room and our extended network. So that's a really good place to start. I'm gonna kick it over to Chris to talk about something a little more challenging. and before I do that, let me just say that it's impressive to see the full room to know how many growers are in the county, how many people are actively doing this already in a amazing way. U so u go I have the online they have more strength. many more. We've received 11 total responses. I know there's several rooms of people. There's a lot wrote on here. I'm going to read pretty fast.

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John Corbin -MDH-: We will make sure that all this information is available in so under list the strengths of our current food network, what Shelley just read, offerings in lots of different areas for food banks and churches. Western Maryland Food Council has worked for years to help understand all aspects of the food system. Please use those connections and add them as a planning partner to ensure we're not missing anything. Many volunteers and community members that care. This one says, "See a list of resources from the Maryland Food Bank." And it is way too long for me to read. I've already pulled it up, but we'll make sure that that's available. Western Maryland Food Bank Partners, Calvary Tab Tabernacle in Accident, 27893 Garrett Highway. That's an address. I don't know what's there. but we will definitely look that distribution schedule, second Thursday, 2 to 4 p.m. subject to change. to double check day and time. this is a long one. Okay, sorry. I'm just going to skip ahead here. St. Peter's the Apostle.

John Corbin -MDH-: address distribution channel, Oak Park Church of the Brethren in Oakland, Garrett College, Mckenry, bunch of address and information. Ruth Baptist in Friendsville address, bunch of information. Maryland Food Bank mobile markets, Friendsville mobile markets, information about the libraries, mobile markets. it's a long long list. Lockwood Town Hall, that's the one at the end there. to

double check. House Divine Hope Church, Be County Community Action, Mount Laurel Medical, Global Market and Resource Exchange, It's in the Bag, St. Matthews Backpack Program, Lachland Church of God, Mountain Pop Pantry, St. Paul's UMC, Senior Citizen Food Project, other meal sites, GCCA, Friendsville, Christen Church, GCCA Fifth Miller, Bethl UMC, Divine House Pope, Voice United Methodist Church, Lwood Church of God, St.

John Corbin -MDH-: Matthews Episcopal Stevens Table St. Peter the Apostle GCCA SWAT and GCCA home delivered meals nourishing neighbors I'm still learning churches thank you for the person who put the short one in churches sing Garrett colleges food bank and other agencies provide food to people in need willingness to serve the community churches health department mount Laurel Medical Center food council nourishing neighbors local churches food pantry and community members next one real quick right the coordination piece is becoming apparently just glaring at all of our why is anyone so hungry, right? what are we missing? And we have been collecting data for years through the community health assessment. We've been running focus groups since 2016 and we hear every single time about food insecurity, about people not having enough.

John Corbin -MDH-: we see it. Those of us who interact directly with clients and people who are trying to help are often so burdened and overwhelmed. My inbox is full since we started the Garrett Countyfood.com website. People in They do not know where to go for help. And we can do better. We are in this room together. And we are starting out 2025 with a vision here to meet these needs. We are a small enough community and we have clearly enough resources to get this job done. Yeah. So, I am really excited about all of the huge long list. So, go for it. All right. So, one of the things that and Fred has seen this, Shelley's seen it, I've seen Who else did you say has seen the Howard County? That was it. Just Okay. So, Howard County has a food bank.

John Corbin -MDH-: that when you come in you are met with kind of a case management situation. there's an intake and it's not just about food. It's about resiliency just generally. and I think that that's going to be a really important aspect of what happens. because then there will be a central place where we're able to make referrals and when somebody isn't able to when they have other needs, we'll get them connected to those other needs because all of those groups are in this room as well, so we'll be able to get them connected to where they need to be connected. And if the issue is simply we don't have transportation to get to the food, then we can do that, right?

John Corbin -MDH-: who does 360 west Liberty serve? community members who are food insecure or in need of community agency resources. Are there eligibility guidelines? is this for everyone? Frequency of visit proxy to pick up resources. Will users be pre-screened before or will they be screened at distribution? and the idea of ribution. One of the things that we saw at Howard County that we're seeing a lot in more recently developed places is that it's designed like a store.

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John Corbin -MDH-: and you get a shopping cart and you go through the store and you pick what you want and then when you check out they roll the cart up onto a scale because they keep track of it by weight, not by dollars or whatever. It's all by weight. and then they bag it and go, but you're shopping, And it's a whole different model than a lot of us are used to. It's called client choice model. There's several different ways to do client choice model, but it does help people. It raises the dignity up and it gives people an opportunity what they want and what they need and what their family's going to eat, not what

we think they need. Right. One of the things that happens through our food distribution with our seniors, we have the hundred boxes to go every month and we have a wonderful team of volunteers that both come and pack it and then deliver it. It's wonderful.

John Corbin -MDH-: But a lot of the feedback we get from the people receive that is that they could build a castle out of all the dry beans that they have because every month they get another two pound bag of dried beans and who's like so they're waiting for a flood to happen so they can,...

America's Hauling For Hope: Can I speak for a second?

John Corbin -MDH-: use them for sandbags in my defense.

Lorena de Leon: Yeah. C can Shelley and...

Lorena de Leon: and Chris can I mean I think Clint and I both have some stuff to add given the fact that we actually have successful programs now in what was it like five counties. and I would encourage that if you happen to be in Baltimore to look at the model that's been created at the food project as well as can really job, having that kind of feel where you walk in and do that shopping. But, Clint is our resident expert when it comes to ensuring that no food goes to waste. he's the one who is manning the program both in Washington County and Alagany for MPC. So Clint,...

Lorena de Leon: maybe you could share a little bit about your choice program because I think it's an amazing model and something that we may want to consider for the food bank.

America's Hauling For Hope: Thank you,...

America's Hauling For Hope: Lena. so we figured out a long time ago that just putting stuff together in a box and sending it out to people was not only a waste of food that people aren't using, but it's also a waste of our precious funds. because people were just taking that food and as soon as we'd have a food bank or something or a food drive or something, we'd get all that food back and that was the only way we were finding out what people weren't eating. So, what we did is we created a very simple online Google form that can be easily texted or whatever to people so that they can fill out and choose how many items they want.

America's Hauling For Hope: I mean, what items they want and what meat items they want and then we can put it into a spreadsheet that Google automatically creates and put the orders together. And the best part about the Google form is that it tracks the percentages of how often somebody picks those items that are available.

America's Hauling For Hope: So you can see in there, black and white, exactly the percentages that people are getting, beans or rice or whatever they're choosing. So that next time when you make a food order, you're not ordering something that 56% of your population doesn't want to eat.

John Corbin -MDH-: True.

America's Hauling For Hope: ...

America's Hauling For Hope: it's very simple processes. I can show anybody how to do this. You could have your high school kids doing this. It's easy.

America's Hauling For Hope: There's no reason for us to be wasting money and sending out food that people don't want to eat or stocking our shelves with food that people don't want to eat. You guys laugh about it, but it's not funny. it's a waste of money.

John Corbin -MDH-: Yeah. Thank you,...

Lorena de Leon: Yeah. Right.

John Corbin -MDH-: Clint and Lena. we don't have to recreate anything, right? We're just going to do what works. We're gonna lean on our collaborators, and we're gonna do that. And that was right.

Lorena de Leon:

Lorena de Leon: I didn't mean to digress. I just thought it was important because there are some models already out there that we can just replicate and move quickly. So, thank you for your leadership, Shelley and Chris. and...

John Corbin -MDH-: Thank you.

Lorena de Leon: sorry I couldn't be there with

John Corbin -MDH-: No, no worries. You are here. So this next statement on the 360 says how do we teach correct track data to demonstrate need intakes demographics captured and part of that is just what Clinton had to say that a lot of that is just happening naturally and then the possibility of resources for specialty diets ten-ree dairy free those are important things too because there are a whole lot of people that are food insecure who have to

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John Corbin -MDH-: eat what they have to eat, but it makes them sick. so if we can do that, that'd be great. These thankfully were a little bit shorter. So as we go, people got their words out. So people who don't qualify for food stamps or who don't get enough food stamps for the family's needs, food insecure agencies, local farms, the hope would be that anyone in need will have a place to go and get help. Alice population, all of Garrett County, more people than you think. point anyone in need, no clue, everyone who needs it can be discovered. So in a perfect world everybody without any strings, No questions asked. But we have funding restrictions. We've got all sorts of hoops to jump through depending on where our resources come from.

John Corbin -MDH-: And so I think the main goal is to understand what kind of food insecurity we're talking about in Garrett County. We've been working on quantifying what food insecurity means and what it looks like. locally we've got a lot of data nationally, statewide, not so much just local data. So many of you have heard about Divine Hope. It's on the positive list. Ron Dit runs that soup kitchen. he couldn't be here this morning because he's literally building right now as we speak a section out to store food from donations and things that they get. They served over 800 people at Thanksgiving. and so he has a group on mycount.com that he submits data to and keeps track and he puts that out. I'm hoping that other people will do the same.

John Corbin -MDH-: you can join that at any time. So that we have an idea. The number unfortunately keeps ticking up. and it of course fluctuates around the seasons and so we need to work together to get a

better understanding of what it looks like when it happens so that we can better tailor the services that we have. So thanks for reading that. the next question is how can we ensure guests are treated with dignity? So some of the answers are possible training of staff in parentheses it says sensitivity training etc. Greet everyone with a warm smile and a friendly greeting create a warm and welcoming atmosphere hiring the right staff. Continuous training community outreach and representatives from community agencies to share resources. Those are all great suggestions. And online online we got some longer comments here.

John Corbin -MDH-: Staff should welcome all people Assist persons with disabilities to get what they need. Have apps on the staff phones for text to speech for hearing impaired folks. Use compassion no matter what the person looks like or acts like. If there are limits to what each person can take, perhaps prebox those items so people can easily take what they are allowed. Everyone will be treated with respect and provided an opportunity to Avoid prepacked boxes, bags of food, and allow neighbors to choose what types amounts of food are right for them and their families. This brings dignity and prevents food waste. Ideally, you would set it up like a mini grocery store. Best practice and a link to best practice. no judgment. provide good training to staff. Allow guests to select their own food. This is how Sing at Garrett College is set up. I did not know that. kindness matters. Proper Exclamation.

John Corbin -MDH-: exclamation the form in which screening is conducted and training and education of program staff. Thank you online folks that's really helpful. We do have on the garrett county.com website that we are continuing to build out there's a few resources books and just best practices that talk a lot about dignity and talk a lot about models they have. There's evidence-based programming and through the local management board funding they have agreed to pay for some of that initial training for our frontline staff to help ensure that people are treated so respectfully. Yeah, you mentioned about some restrictions using funds you Could you publish those so we don't plan on using something that they won't approve?

John Corbin -MDH-: So, it's going to change. so Lena, for example, maybe Lena, you could pop on and talk a little bit about some of your grant requirements. What?

Lorena de Leon: So, I'm sorry. we did a \$25,000 donation to do the startup cost for the location. And Chris and I actually walked through and Chris pointed out that, there needs to be some changes to a wall. And Chris, you might have to help me out here so that you can at least get a pallet through, but for MPC members specifically for ongoing support MPC is reimbursing anybody who gets referred to the food bank is providing a reimbursement for those who have a social risk score of greater than 75 and have a food insecurity as their primary need.

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Lorena de Leon: So, we have eligibility criteria for that. and we have funding that's been set aside to be able to support the program. Additionally, some of us are working on some grants and that's something that Shelley, myself, and Chris are looking at are some additional grants that we could drive to continue the support of the food bank. so I mean our hope is that other payers will come to the table and we will be willing to provide reimbursement and funding so that we have funding support years to come. But I think having the initial funding was the key keep me honest here which was missing to at least get this operation up and going and...

Lorena de Leon: I think we've provided that infrastructure now.

John Corbin -MDH-: Thank you.

John Corbin -MDH-: I would agree with everything. So, nothing is free. I mean, I wish it were, but every single grant that we get in this building has a requirement because we have some accountability to who's giving the money and everybody has an agenda and everybody has a certain thing that they are wanting to address. And so, the beauty and the hardship of a grant writer is to balance all of those things. And the deal is you try to put as much in the bucket as you can and you try to work with funders that don't have as many restrictions. And so far Lena she's been amazing and I've been working at this for this is our fifth year and we've had after hoop to jump through. She's the first one who's come to the table and made this happen.

John Corbin -MDH-: And so, even with her restriction,...

John Corbin -MDH-: it's the least restrictive we've come to so far. So, I can't exactly do what you're asking me to do, Tom, but I will try my best to ensure that everybody understands what you're getting. Yeah, that's right.

Lorena de Leon: And just some clarification,... Shelley, this is a team effort. I couldn't do it without our CEO really putting focus on Garrett County and valuing the needs of Garrett County. So please understand this is not a one-man show. it took a lot of people buying into it and putting the needs of Garrett County before anything else. So,

Lorena de Leon:

John Corbin -MDH-: and we will be publishing a lot of information. There's two websites to watch. Garrett Countyfood.com, which is the totality of the food network that has all of the programs that we currently know of that exist.

John Corbin -MDH-: It has information about enrolling in w get to see Caroline. it has enrollment. There's several ways you can enroll at SNAP. So all of that is on Garrett Countyfood.com. The second website is what we're discussing today which is garcounty foodbank.com specific to this effort to create this centralized location and all of the different aspects that go along with that. Chris has mentioned many but along with that we'll be publishing here's the funders. So, for example, you can actually read what the local management board approved, the actual funding plan, all of that is on that website. so as each piece of this comes together, each funer, all of that will be posted there so that we can better understand how we can braid all of these systems to serve as many people as possible, whether they are an NPC patient or whether they're from a different background or if they're just someone in need, whatever we have in terms of supplemental funds.

John Corbin -MDH-: so that is the longer term goal, but everything we have, every single step is being posted there and anyone at all can see that when they come in. And then there's some historical information on the Garrett Countyfood.com website about the Appalachian farm and food alliance. We've got some fine money that came in a couple years ago. So all of the mobile markets and all the things that we had done, it's there. So everyone can kind of read about what has happened and we'll just keep putting information out as we get it. And then if you guys find information, you see grants, you see opportunities, you have someone that wants to donate, Chris is always available to the nonprofit to take a donation. and so that's another arm that we haven't started developing yet. Of course, it will be an essential one for the sustainability of the food bank. All right, let's get back to our question.

00:55:00

John Corbin -MDH-: All right. So, quickly, as a community member, what can you do to help sustain 360 West Liberty? hands-on volunteer as needed. LBTC designate funds or support from the Judy Center. fundraising activities, keep it in the conversation at agency meetings, volunteer donations, volunteer, help ID funding opportunities, church teams of volunteers and local foods. Absolutely. What do you have? Yes. And whoever wrote LBTC, please make sure you explain acronyms because we have an acronym soup. So, as a community member, what can you do to Help source locally Help make connections with other food council partners. Help with grant letters of support. Always an important factor. volunteer vendor funra. As a Maryland food bank representative, I would be interested in learning if you're willing to partner.

John Corbin -MDH-: Assist in contacting the right people when the food is running low. As a community service provider, I will be referring clients to Volunteer my time. Share information. When I know what it is, I will be able to answer this question. That's always volunteer, allowed to be involved. It's a really important point. and I think by participation we have in this room, this is a really good first step. provide information to bring awareness of this resource.

John Corbin -MDH-: Back to Chris. Thank you. And these letting people know what the needs are. Some friends of mine, I used to run a homeless shelter in West Virginia and, it's not doing the same kind of work that it was doing back then. And so, a couple of local churches have picked up the ball and Clarksburg Baptist is housing 25 to 30 people every night and they need resources and they put that out on Facebook three days ago and yesterday they had to put out, "Please stop giving. So that's an amazing thing. before you continue, LBTC is learning beyond the classroom. that's the bus that goes around in the community to outreach to underserved communities with students and grandparents and care providers. Wonderful. I've been on the busy many times. I just didn't know that that's besides food. What other services should be offered at 360 West Liberty?

John Corbin -MDH-: transportation delivery talked about that. Identify all food providers organizations to avoid duplicating Absolutely. provider information services offered in the community nutrition education. family goal setting. That's something that we've talked about. That's something that we do at community action through our 2Gen work with that is primarily through Head Start, but we piloted that through with families with older children this year. And as we began talking about this process, I said, would doing the life scale assessment with people that come in for food insecurity would probably be really helpful and a lot of those folks would want to do that.

John Corbin -MDH-: How can you help my family over time rather than just this time so that it becomes rather than transactional? We really want people who come to be served to eventually become partners and volunteers and part of a community because I really believe that community is what heals people and where we find what we need through each other. so we want this to become that. and talk about something else in that basic gardening skills. Yes. veggie containers gardening. also on package. Not sure what that is. Hopefully we'll figure it out and it will be published. can preserving parking What's that? I think it says Also on parking lot. Thank you. canning and preserving. Yes. meal planning and prep workshops.

John Corbin -MDH-: Repository to contribute surplus. That's a great idea. cooking lessons. one of the things that facility comes with is a space that used to be a commercial kitchen. And we plan on restoring that and creating a space where there'd be classes and people can learn how to cook. And we really

would like there to be a little cafe cups of coffee together. because I think that, if I want to go out for coffee with somebody, I can just do that. But a lot of people can't. Yeah.

01:00:00

John Corbin -MDH-: And I think when I need to have coffee with a friend, I really need to have coffee with a friend. and other people have those needs as well. It's not just about the coffee, right? So funny. My son is very for gave me a birthday card the other day that had \$5 in it so that dad would go get a cup of coffee because he knows life and healing to me. Go ahead, Any comments on that? We sure do. And Chris, Sam has a question in the chat for you. she wants your contact information. So, can you go over that one more time? yeah. can you put my QR code up on or is that possible? probably not while I'm recording I'll read while. Yes. So, Samantha Chris will get with you and make sure you have all his contact information. besides food, what other services should be offered at 360 West Liberty?

John Corbin -MDH-: cleaning supplies and hygiene products, diapers, wipes, resources for emergency housing, child care during the appointment, health department, and Mount Laurel resources for affordable health care, list of the food resources/pantries, something I'm proud of. We at the Western Maryland Food Council originally created this that's been talked about a lot today and has been updated repeatedly throughout the years. It's certainly a vital resource. Maternal and infant support, nutritional education, vital records support, workforce development, financial and health literacy assistance, partner with GCCA services, question mark, Medicaid, AEC West, community action services, DHS services, homeless services, peer support for substance use, case management exclamation, the possibility shop in Cumberland provides a great model for that.

John Corbin -MDH-: fuel vouchers, question mark, anything that helps address needs of individuals using it, hygiene, laundry, baby food, pet food, and healthy options. And just one last comment. So, as we continue to put more and more opportunities for feedback, please explain all the acronyms because these will be posted without context. Thank you. And so, just a few other things. Chris mentioned there is a commercial kitchen. I mean, there's a stove And it has good bones. and so the site needs a little love and it needs brought up. And so, we've been talking about this. I don't know. It's maybe late November is when we started.

John Corbin -MDH-: I don't remember when the first meeting was, but in that short amount of time, we have a restaurant tour who is donating a kitchen designer to us who's coming in. I'm meeting them Sunday evening and going to take, measurements, go through the space and so we have some incredible talent being donated to us Sunday. to talk a little bit about that. And then in the space as well, there's a place for two separate bathrooms, shower facility we've talked a little bit about. There's a place for a washer and dryer. So, we're really looking at some meeting needs across all the needs. So, people can perhaps do their laundry, people can bathe, there's hygiene things.

John Corbin -MDH-: and so the sky's is the limit here. And so it really does depend on how much money we can gather and what we can start doing, but it has good bones. Do you have a projected estimate of yearly costs? We do not. Nope. We do not because this is a visioning. So what's possible? and we have to work with what we have. So we're not going to spend money.

John Corbin -MDH-: we don't have, but we're going to try to understand what the need is and what we can immediately do with the money we have. And then obviously this will be an iterative building on type of project. and we also have a couple years of other programs that will continue to operate simultaneously.

this is really the catalyst came together, Chris came together, all of these pieces, years of work that we have been working on trying to materialize this into a permanent facility. we have other plans as well that will continue as well. so if you look at the garrett countyfood.com website, you can see programs thatll to operate. there's just many things that will continue to exist for probably at least the next year or two because have already been submitted. Many of those grants are already under development or already implemented. so that's just an important note.

John Corbin -MDH-: This is really the timing of all the stars aligning for this to be able to happen. so we are capitalizing on the opportunity. so this is the last question. What gaps in the food network can 360 West Liberty fill? So is a community garden possible? I think we've got a few gardeners in the room here. So I hope so. Demos and supplies for teaching how to can and preserve Demos for preparing meals with provide recipes with uncommon items to encourage use as well as cooking demonstrations using healthy food. Is the farm community involved? Logistics. Thank you. And logistics. What does it say?

01:05:00

John Corbin -MDH-: Is the farm community involved involved in logistics of this program? local food production into local food bank northern end of Garrett County and consistent supply of food for those in need. I think we have a couple more online here and then there's just a couple in the parking lot for the next one as So people need food immediately more timely access. I think it could serve as a hub for food bank delivery pickickups, locally produced food pickups, deliveries, and a staging area for pantry deliveries. Centralized hub to store staples and services that could be distributed across Garrett County. So, also a major theme we're seeing being open to the public on the weekend or in the evening would help people who need food but work traditional 9 to5 hours. Food stamps enter usually at the beginning of the month.

John Corbin -MDH-: So any food towards the last few days of the month would be amazing. Needs of homeless assistance when food stamps aren't enough. 360 West Liberty could have more available hours than the churches. Could serve as a resource hub both a physical building and online. Could provide fresh produce, dairy, and meat in addition to cannedboxed foods. Availability of food pickup during non-working hours evenings in parenthesis. need to collaborate to see what the Could fill the gap at the end of the month needs after SNAP benefits run out. Folks who do not have SNAP and are on the cliff and do not qualify but can't afford. Consistency, geographic location, distance between service providers and residents. Thank you guys. Anything to say that I might have forgotten about the questions, Chris? I don't think so.

John Corbin -MDH-: I think the only thing that is in my mind at the moment is anyone who feels like they've not been part of the conversation early enough this is as early like we are this is the conversation number one up till now it's just been a few people kind of dreaming and visioning about it and this was the first opportunity we've had to get everybody in the room to begin talking more robustly about it. So, I am incredibly grateful to see the interest. I think we had 22 online and I'm not sure how many are in the room, but that's an amazing turnout.

John Corbin -MDH-: so obviously our strength is that there are a ton of people in this county who care about people who are food insecure and standing together pulling our resources we can meet this need and overcome that people who are on the edge. Thank you. So we're gonna take a minute and read our parking lot and other questions or ideas or suggestions. So this says, "How would you like to collaborate

with local food pantries? Who will maintain the actual parking lot and building maintenance outreach to food suppliers, grocery stores, restaurants, caterers? Where will the foods be collected stored? And what other than parking lot will be used and located in Garrett County?"

John Corbin -MDH-: cold or frozen items taken, coordination with other agencies and organizations, the Maryland Food Bank connection and coordination, more funding to butchers for farmers deer program, feeding the hungry. and then on the side here, it says Google forms, the online ordering and food to keep track of the food friends. and do we have any parking lot issues online? We had four parking lot issues that were submitted online. Post ours widely, have an active social media presence, as you always do, to get the word out when there is food available. And manage expectations exclamation point. Starting a grant workshop might be a good idea to ensure we are applying for a continued source of funding for support services. Definitely agree with that.

01:10:00

John Corbin -MDH-: work together with all agencies to be efficient. What is the process to access question mark are proxy options available? Thank you. So everything online we do have a grant curator in the room with us. That's another one of John's jobs. So on mygarcount.com he basically sends out any available funding. You can sign up for that. you can join the group and you get those automatically in your inbox. and if you've never written a grant, just try. It's not that big a deal. And you might, get an award. So, we're obviously available to help you. There's also the community needs assessment. I mentioned it at the beginning. We published it Wednesday of this week. And thank you. That's the action group.

John Corbin -MDH-: so you can join mycount.com, set up an account, get logged in, but the assessment has every piece of data you could possibly imagine. We have zip code level data this year for the first time ever. so that's to write your grants so we continue to try to just put together information and resources for our community to benefit from.

John Corbin -MDH-: And do you want to show them where the assessment Go for it. So if you go to biker county.com under my community, if you go all the way down, you can see the 5 through 2027 assessment. This is just hot off the presses this week. it is 3,000 pages of painstaking labor. So please use it. there's a lot of stuff here, but it's all broken down for everyone. And you can also go back for previous years. So if you're interested in how Merit County changes over time, that is And if you're writing grants, there is actually a really cool tool over on the right where so you can build those custom reports that again also showcase some of the year-over-year change of the internet cooperates with us. Yes. So you can see over time how food has become more of a priority. All right. Any questions about any of those things? Resources. Yes. It's really great to hear all these great ideas.

John Corbin -MDH-: so many people involved in this is such an important thing. But I'm concerned because that you got a \$48,000 distribution for this year. Is that right? through Ahack. So Ahack is a separate grant. I understand they gave you \$48,000. Is that Distributed among the three or four subgrantees. So Melissa Clark can speak to that grant. myself, our unit did not get \$400,000. The money was distributed to Garrett County and there are four sub grantees that's distributed and yours is about \$118,000. Is that correct? It's approximately that. Yes. how are you going to prioritize those in terms of the money you've got for this particular year?

John Corbin -MDH-: So, we are in the process of building out different funding forms so that people can respond to those things. We did a food distribution around Christmas time and as we're because this just

came to fruition, we have yet to get everybody around the table as far as decision makers and kind of have some of those discussions. So, that's probably a next step. But I'm saying within this particular fiscal year, how will you meet the needs? What will you prioritize them?

John Corbin -MDH-: what you're going to do this year and then hopefully in the next year you can carry it over because it says it here that the county health department will expand access to food offer peer support services exercise classes cardiac health interventions establish the guide hire a PRS and assist with data analysis and align county health department will train staff to administer that's what in between. Yeah. So we're doing those things currently and I can talk a little bit about that too. So that is what I just addressed earlier. So we have some programming that before the food bank is fully operational will continue to meet emergent needs. So in the first food distribution we sold out within less than three hours. Our list because people can actually put their email in to be notified when future food distributions are available.

John Corbin -MDH-: We are up over 400 people that are already on that. That program has just soft launched. We haven't even fully launched that yet. We've been building infrastructure because a key piece of that grant is really chronic disease prevention, which is broader than food. So, a lot of it's physical activity. We're paying for yoga classes, pickle ball. there's a whole bunch of investments that Shel's been making on that side of the house because we already have some of that infrastructure in place. All of the food work is really kind of being reconstructed. We've had smaller grants that we've done with the harvest hub. We partner with some of the farmers to do different outreach activities in remote communities. And the other important part of that grant at the moment it is still a remote communities grant in Garrett County. It's not an Oakland grant. so there's several pieces of work that will follow with that.

01:15:00

John Corbin -MDH-: there's not to my knowledge and Shel can correct me if I'm wrong for this fiscal year we are going to continue to meet the needs that were originally identified for that funding source. it's going to take a little bit of time for us to really figure out what support the food bank needs. I think a lot of that is actually going to be continued grant development. and that's where that group is. I post grants almost every single workday. sometimes even on the weekends. and I would say probably 99% of the grants that I post that Garrett County, either agencies or organizations or nonprofits are eligible for do not even get applied for. and that's really one of the root problems, I think, is that we just do not have broad capacity for grant development in the county, particularly at individual nonprofits or agencies.

John Corbin -MDH-: and we don't have the ability to just write and write and write and write because people who write the grants oftentimes then have to implement the grants which is where we have found ourselves at the moment because I'm a data person and I'm setting in a food meeting. that's kind of where we end up, right? So, the money follows that. But I think for this particular effort, while that will support food insecurity, I think that at least at the moment, that has a different focus. The focus of that is really getting resources out because in Oakland, we have a whole map on countyfood.com, and I can pull that up and share that link with folks. but you can see that we have a huge right here under food resources.

John Corbin -MDH-: So, the brochure is on there and then there's a map that has most of the information from the brochure. It's hard to figure out where all my food council folks are. but that brochure is in there.

There's also all the application information for SNAP and for Wick for Maryland and for West Virginia. The Pennsylvania is still a little bit complicated. but you can actually go in this map and you can zoom in and you can see, okay, so we have some resources that are up towards Grantsville. We got a couple things at the lake, couple things in Oakland. So, we're really focusing at the moment for the first distribution on Friendsville because there's just not a lot there. in Oakland, we have huge churches. There's still other churches in other communities doing it, but at very large scale, particularly in Oakland. It's also where there's a lot of walkability for affordable housing. All kinds of different factors are contributing to that. But we will definitely be posting a lot more. I think that the HERK, at least in my mind, is really focused on the application that we submitted.

John Corbin -MDH-: it is very much a health grant at the moment, but food is where we are seeing the huge need. So, we're trying to address that as best we can within the confines of what that grant is because our arm is really chronic disease prevention. So, if we're able to serve food through that, that's great. But I think that what we really need to do in the longer term, we had this fantastic investment by Lena, by the local management board. Shelley and I have already submitted several other grants to fund the food bank. is the specific line item in those grants. And I think that that is where we're going to continue to look. So, anytime a grant allows not for capital infrastructure because that was what was really holding us up over the last couple of years, we can't buy buildings, right? That's usually excluded from most applications. But what we have been doing is we've been writing in these yearly grants. So, we've submitted a three-year grant. We've submitted some five-year grants.

John Corbin -MDH-: And in those grants each year we are writing in a specific amount of dollars if approved that can then be directly invested into a food bank once it exists. we've already submitted the grants hoping the pieces came together. so does that I assume that...

John Corbin -MDH-: what you're saying is you have collateral sources which you might be relying on to carry out some of these objectives. Very good.

Lorena de Leon: John, and...

Lorena de Leon: maybe I can add to that. I mean, I could tell you right now that, MPC has committed to having a community health worker being on site, a couple times a week to make sure that we're coordinating resources so that we can continue to advocate to bring money to the local community to support, the food bank. Additionally, I have a health educator that will spend time drafting grants and applying for grants. As a matter of fact, we're already in conversations about a \$75,000 grant that would bring funding over the next 18 months, So, please know that this isn't an effort only, from we're not putting all the effort on the health department or on Chris.

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Lorena de Leon: we're going to continue to try to figure out what are additional funding sources that we can bring to the table. The other thing is once we've got an established location, even though we're a Medicaid plan, there is funding through Medicare that we could look at to bring in. but part of this is getting the infrastructure built and what has happened over the last six weeks is incredible. And I think we need to give Shellyley and Chris and John, a hand here because none of this would be happening. So, I mean, part of it is just getting an infrastructure and then figuring out, okay, what else is needed at the table. So, we've made tremendous progress in six weeks. and I don't want to take away from that, but please know that we're committed to being a long-standing partner in the community as well.

Lorena de Leon: I hope that helps.

John Corbin -MDH-: It would just be a real shame to lose all these good ideas for lack of money and...

John Corbin -MDH-: so I have one final question in terms of providers. what part does the farming community play in this distribution? So I think that that's a really important question that we've seen on several different things. We've got some of our great farmers in the room today all over the place and online as well. notice. I think that that is going to be a question that we probably have to address a little bit later because the health department will not be a procurer of food for a food bank. What we can do is we can write the food bank into grants, but it would be too logistically challenging for us and our documentation purposes to pay for individual food items and then transfer them to another agency. I would not do that to our fiscal team because I would probably get run down in the parking lot and folks, but that would be terrible.

John Corbin -MDH-: so what we are doing in the grants that we are writing is we are writing in specific dollar amounts to be given to a food bank entity. So whoever qualifies under a true food bank, then we can do that and we can do our regular requisitioning process and all of the fantastic paperwork that you also get in those daily emails from me that we send out regularly. but the other thing I also want to mention is that, we already have the investments to get this off the ground. We've already paid for all the websites. So all this stuff will be posted and it will be there for quite some time. so I went in and I purchased all of that like that will be there for a long time. so hopefully within the next 5 to 10 years we can figure out how to sustain this and how to make this a long lasting program. But I mean we wrote this into quite a few grants. What we really need is we need a stronger network of partners that can also do that. because we can't write in food bank into every single grant that we submit.

John Corbin -MDH-: and I think that that's an important conversation that needs to happen is how do you fund this and how do you fund all of these other services because what Chris talked about all of these really key needs and Shelley did as well and they're wrote on the boards, So we know that we have a homeless population. What are we doing? that's a really valid question, So how are we making sure that they have access to hygiene that they have access to a warm place, So for the first time some sort of warming thing happening. Got to be careful with the language on that.

John Corbin -MDH-: but there's a lot of pieces in motion. and I think if we can come up with what the vision looks like for this, we can start writing it into grants. Hopefully other agencies can write it into their grants and we can figure out a longer term support system. But, we've had this idea for a long time, but if there's no infrastructure, you can't apply for grants for infrastructure that doesn't exist. we had to demonstrate that there will be something in order to actually apply for the grants to fund it. and there's a lot of money out there. I think that there's a little bit of a misconception because we want money to do really specific things. but there's a lot of programs that you can write food security into that may not necessarily just be food security.

John Corbin -MDH-: our fantastic partners at Ahack. I know Missy had to hop off there, but they have done everything possible to try to help us meet that need because in our assessment efforts and in our surveys, we were like, "Okay, this says chronic disease, but food is one of our biggest problems, right? people are hungry. That just blows all of our other things so apart." So, I think if we can continue to have those partnerships and have these discussions, I feel like I spend an inordinate amount of time in food, but it's where there's momentum.

John Corbin -MDH-: is where there's funding and it's what we need to do because we have the opportunity to do it now and if we wait that could change and I think that's a really important consideration. I appreciate what you said there and I'll get in touch with we'll talk about the community because I think that's a very important component and one final thing this gentleman is absolutely awesome to work with. he's absolutely amazing to acknowledge you because I worked with you before I

John Corbin -MDH-: I appreciate that and also I forgot one of my points all day. I want to go back soon. We are working on other applications for other funding as well so that we can continue to do local sourcing. So that's still something we want to do with health department programs. It's just we will not be the sourcer for the food bank. Thank you. I think we have to kind of wrap up because we have another meeting starting in here at 11:30. but the next meeting will probably be at 360 West Liberty. that more to come. So, I really appreciate everyone coming out today and thank you for all of your time. Public comment stuff will be open. Please pass it along. keep talking about this and we'll keep working together. So, have a great day.

Meeting ended after 01:33:16 🙌

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