



# CITY OF HARTFORD ADVISORY COMMISSION ON FOOD POLICY

c/o Hartford Food System, 190 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114  
Phone: 860.296.9325 Fax: 860.296.8326 Email: hartfordfood@hartfordfood.org

## Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy Virtual Meeting Minutes May 11, 3:30 PM

Present	Absent	Guests
Val Bryan, Mary Cockram, Angela Colantonio, Valentine Doyle, Martha Page, Stef Robles	Benjamin Dubow, Andrew May, Sofia Segura-Pérez	Chris Goodwin (Knox), Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System), Adam Murphy (City of Hartford Office of Sustainability), Billie Scruse (Hartford Food System)

### Topics

#### Introduction and Official Business

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 PM.  
Valentine moved to approve the meeting minutes from April; Angela seconded. The minutes were approved without amendment.  
Adam provided an update on the status of the Commission's proposed changes to its founding ordinance. The Mayor's office has signed off on the proposal with a few modifications and is coordinating with Corporation Council to prepare the document for City Council consideration. The changes will also get a public hearing.

#### Feeding Hartford Awards

Commissioners discussed final details for the May 17 Feeding Hartford Awards. The Commission will also interview awardees after the event to get their input on food policy work.

#### Food Policy Advocacy

The Commission will prioritize its policy recommendations in upcoming monthly meetings and identify community events to attend and promote the recommendations.

#### General Updates

Urban Alliance is distributing garden kits to partner organizations to distribute to the community.  
Angela Bermúdez-Milan's research team is studying farmers' market customer priorities.  
Val and other school garden volunteers are getting input about school garden needs.  
Development on the Regional Market may move forward soon.  
The food business working group of the Commission is supporting the Healthy Hartford Hub effort to bring a grocery store to the North End. The City and the developer are interested, an operator search has been launched.  
Forge City Works, Hartford Food System, and other partners are collaborating on a grant proposal to develop a winter farmers' market.

#### Wrap-up, Adjournment, and Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be June 8 at 3:30 on Zoom.



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## Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy Virtual Meeting Minutes June 8, 3:30 PM

Present	Absent	Guests
Val Bryan, Angela Colantonio, Benjamin Dubow, Martha Page	Mary Cockram, Valentine Doyle, Andrew May, Stef Robles, Sofia Segura-Pérez	Gilma Galdámez (Hispanic Health Council), Chris Goodwin (Knox), Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System), Ponita Khoy (City of Hartford Health and Human Services), Adam Murphy (City of Hartford Office of Sustainability), Luis Rodriguez-Porter (CT Foodshare)

### Topics

#### Introduction and Official Business

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 PM.  
Approval of the meeting minutes from May was tabled since there is no quorum.  
Adam provided an update on the status of the Commission’s proposed changes to its founding ordinance. It is being reviewed by Corporation Counsel and some modifications have already been made. The most significant change is that the new ordinance would not include an increase in Commission seats. Adam will follow up with the Mayor’s Office and include Martha and Meg.

#### Feeding Hartford Awards

Commissioners and guests had positive feedback about the Feeding Hartford Awards. Concerns raised were low attendance/limited outreach; the City of Hartford could help promote the next event to reach more people. Commissioners and guests who represent organizations with distribution lists in Hartford should also promote the event via social media and newsletters.  
Several accessibility issues were also identified, including the need for Spanish interpretation and sign language interpretation. The Commission wants to learn more about how other city commissions are addressing accessibility in their events and materials, and whether the City can provide technical support in furnishing these services.  
To advance the policy priorities of the Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy, the Commissioners will interview nominees and awardees about their priorities for food in Hartford. Meg will draft interview questions.  
Capacity to review and individually fact-check the nominations is limited but some verification is needed to confirm details. Next year, nominees will be asked to complete a follow-up form to verify the details of the nomination. Meg is developing a process/procedures document for next year’s Awards.

#### Community Resilience Assessment (New England Feeding New England)

The Connecticut Food System Alliance is a partner of New England Feeding New England, a group dedicated to ensuring 30% of the food eaten in New England is produced in New England by 2030. To strengthen the regional food system, they are developing a tool for communities to assess resilience to climate change and other factors. Meg will share the draft tool with commissioners to share feedback with the development team.



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### **Community Action Task Force / North End Grocery Store Updates**

The Commission reviewed a letter from the Community Action Task Force about their priorities for grocery store development in the North End. Their request included three main priorities for any development proposals:

- Store should be 48,000 square feet instead of 20,000 square feet; the proposed 20,000 square feet would not sufficiently address food security;
- Complementary policy must be implemented alongside grocery store development. Policy that ensures development does not cause further harm in predominantly Black North Hartford. Racial equity should be considered in any assessment. Policy areas identified include: food ordinances, incentives for BIPOC residents; and zoning restrictions to address food swamps.
- Targeted small business financing and support, including direct grants for businesses with fewer than 20 employees, flexible programs and program outreach, and disaggregation of program reporting.

The letter further emphasized support for inclusion of arts and cultural spaces and recreational spaces alongside development.

The Commission will support these priorities as well as emphasize the need for living wages throughout the city. Martha volunteered to draft the letter.

### **General Updates**

Connecticut Foodshare raised over \$130,000 at the Walk for Hunger. They are developing improvements for the 2-1-1 services line. They are also partnering with Doordash to deliver food from pantries directly to homes. The Mayor is seeking representatives of the Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy to participate in the Human Relations Commission.

Herb Virgo of Keney Park Sustainability Project set up 16 garden beds plus herbs at Annie Fisher STEM and production is underway. No one has been hired for the school garden coordinator position yet.

Forge City Works is planning to open a new restaurant in the former Firebox space by late fall or winter. It will have a new name and have more relevance/accessibility to Hartford residents while also being a “destination restaurant.” They are also developing plans for a small pay-what-you-can grocery store in Frog Hollow.

Forge City Works also submitted a proposal to the USDA to develop a winter farmers’ market. Forge Hands on Hartford, Hartford Food System, and Hartford Hospital are in a partnership that submitted a proposal to the USDA for local food procurement.

### **Wrap-up, Adjournment, and Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting will be July 13 at 3:30 on Zoom.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50.



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## Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy Virtual Meeting Minutes September 14, 3:30 PM

Present	Absent	Guests
Mary Cockram, Valentine Doyle, Martha Page	Val Bryan, Benjamin Dubow, Andrew May, Stef Robles, Sofia Segura-Pérez	Sahar Amjad (Hartford Office of Sustainability), Shana Brierley (Hartford Health and Human Services), Cecilia Drayton (Director, Hartford Office of Sustainability), Violette Haldane (Advocacy to Legacy) Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System), Audra Panciera (UConn), Jackie Riberdy (Foodshare), Luis Rodriguez-Porter (Foodshare), Victoria Sklepinski (UConn)

### Topics

#### Introduction and Official Business

The meeting was called to order at 3:35.  
Due to a lack of quorum, approval of the May, June, and July meeting minutes was tabled.

#### White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

The White House is hosting the first hunger conference since 1969. The original conference spurred major changes to SNAP and other nutrition programs.  
The conference will be September 28. The Commission is following the recommendations of the Food Research and Action Center, Hunger Free America, National Sustainable Agriculture, and other food organizations that have put forward recommendations for increasing access to and the overall value of SNAP and other recommendations. Following the conference, the Commission will support efforts to implement the recommended changes.

#### 2023 Farm Bill

Congress is preparing to pass the next Farm Bill. The Commission is hopeful that many of the recommendations from the White House Conference will be included in the bill. The Commission will advocate for improvements to SNAP and other programs as part of the Farm Bill.

#### 2023 Feeding Hartford Awards / Hartford Good Food Awards

The Commission is considering a new name for the Feeding Hartford Awards: the Hartford Good Food Awards. This is a more positive/proactive title and reflects the work of more of the awardees. The timeline for soliciting nominations needs to start earlier; the Commission aims to open the nominations form in November.

#### General Updates

Selling Healthy Food Working Group: Recently met with Semilla co-founder Aimee Chambers about how the city can support food businesses. There is a lot of interest both in the Hartford Regional Market and the Commission's policy recommendation of establishing a Hartford Food Business Concierge.  
The City is trying to purchase the church on Ely Street as part of the Downtown North economic development work.  
City Council passed a resolution calling for a grocery store in the North End by July 2023.

**2022 Food Policy Commissioners:** Valerie Bryan, Hartford Resident; Mary Cockram, Frog Hollow Consulting; Valentine Doyle, Hartford Resident; Benjamin Dubow, Forge City Works; Andrew May, Hartford Resident; Martha Page, Hartford Food System; Stefanie Robles, reSET; Sofia Segura-Pérez, Hispanic Health Council



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Forge City Works, in partnership with Hands on Hartford, Hartford Food System, and area hospitals received a Local Food Purchasing Agreement from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). This will enable the partner organizations to distribute locally produced fruits and vegetables. Forge City Works is also waiting on a decision from the USDA on their proposal to establish a winter farmers' market.

### **Wrap-up, Adjournment, and Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting will be October 12 at 3:30 on Zoom.  
The meeting adjourned at 4:45.



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**Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
October 12, 3:30 PM**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Val Bryan, Mary Cockram, Benjamin Dubow, Martha Page	Valentine Doyle, Andrew May, Stef Robles, Sofia Segura-Pérez	Shana Brierley (Hartford Health and Human Services), Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System)

**Topics**

**Introduction and Official Business**

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 PM.  
Approval of meeting minutes from May, June, July, and September was tabled due to a lack of quorum. Proposed ordinance changes will be raised at October 24 City Council meeting and there will also be a public hearing. The Office of the Mayor made some changes to the original submitted language, with the most substantive change being no increase in the number of commissioners.

**2023 Feeding Hartford Awards / Hartford Good Food Awards**

The Commission is planning next year’s awards and will reintroduce them as the Hartford Goodd Food Awards. The Commission is considering soliciting support from the Greater Hartford Arts Council to support artwork for the awardees. The award categories previously used will be dissolved; the Commission will accept nominations and select award titles based on the work of the people or organization(s), such as “Distributing Good Food Award”, “Growing Good Food Award”, etc.

**2022 Annual Report**

The Commission is developing its 2022 annual report. Commissioners agreed that this year, we will not develop new recommendations but update information about the 2021 recommendations.

**Wrap-up, Adjournment, and Next Meeting**

The meeting was cut short at 4 PM due to technical difficulties. The next meeting will be November 9 at 3:30.