

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM #318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Chairwoman Addonizio, Legislators Gouldman & Sayegh

Tuesday

6:00PM

May 21, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M. by Chairwoman Addonizio who requested that Legislator Sayegh lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Sayegh and Chairwoman Addonizio were present. Legislator Gouldman was absent.

Chairwoman Addonizio read a letter from Veterans Affairs Director Karl Rohde supporting both Second Chance Foods Executive Director Martha Elder and Putnam County Cornell Cooperative Extension Executive Director Stefanie Hubert into the record. The letter stated both Executive Directors have helped Veterans a great deal.

Item #3 - Discussion/Overview/Second Chance Foods/Executive Director Martha Elder

Executive Director Elder stated Second Chance Foods is a non-profit food rescue organization based in Putnam County. She stated food waste is food that is still safe and nutritious for human consumption but unmarketable. She stated food rescue recovers the unmarketable food. She stated food insecurity is not having reliable access to sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. She stated food waste is also an environmental issue and is important in reversing global warming. She stated when food breaks down anaerobically it produces methane which is a greenhouse gas. She stated food waste is a humanitarian issue. She stated one (1) in eight (8) Americans does not know where their next meal is coming from. She stated in 2018 Second Chance Foods recovered approximately 80,000 pounds of food and over 90% of it was fresh produce. She stated this resulted in a 35.2 metric ton reduction in greenhouse gases. She stated their volunteer program was valued at approximately \$43,000. She stated nobody else has the depth of programs that Second Chance Foods does. She stated they get food from local farms. She stated there is also a pantry garden and a processing kitchen. She stated many people who need to go to food pantries do not have full kitchens. She stated the processing kitchen prepares meals, freezes them, and donates them. She stated about 6,000 meals were made in 2018. She stated Second Chance Foods also gives opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities. She stated the ARC of Putnam donated approximately 750 volunteer hours in 2018. She stated the State has recently passed legislation to increase food donation.

Chairwoman Addonizio questioned which local supermarkets work with Second Chance Foods.

Executive Director Elder stated almost all of the food comes from Trader Joe's in Danbury, Connecticut.

Chairwoman Addonizio questioned if the local Shop Rite has been contacted.

Executive Director Elder stated she has not contacted them because Second Chance Foods needs more cold storage before bringing in more food. She stated there is a local organization that is interested in funding a walk in cooler, which would help.

Chairwoman Addonizio questioned if Second Chance Foods donates to Putnam CAP (Community Action Partnership).

Executive Director Elder stated they are. She stated there are over 20 food pantries that receive their donations.

Legislator Nacerino questioned where Second Chance Foods is located.

Executive Director Elder stated the kitchen that they rent is in Brewster.

Chairwoman Addonizio stated these efforts are wonderful. She stated people do not realize how many people are going hungry in today's world. She questioned if people have to meet criteria in order to receive food.

Executive Director Elder stated Second Chance Foods does not directly distribute the food, it is all brought to various food pantries for distribution.

Chairwoman Addonizio questioned if the meat is prepared and frozen before delivery or if it is raw.

Executive Director Elder stated it is done either way.

Legislator Montgomery questioned how Second Chance Foods is funded.

Executive Director Elder stated their biggest funder is Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley. She stated they just received a grant from the Department of Environmental Conservation. She stated there are also individual donors.

Chairwoman Addonizio thanked Executive Director Elder for her efforts.

Item #4 - Discussion/Overview/Cornell Cooperative Extension/Executive Director Stefanie Hubert

Chairwoman Addonizio stated she asked Executive Director Hubert to speak about food insecurity as well.

Executive Director Hubert stated before she was with Cornell Cooperative, she was a project director for a federally funded nutrition education and obesity prevention program in the Hudson Valley. She stated they primarily worked with schools that provided 50% or more free or reduced price lunch. She stated these schools are high-risk and in high-poverty areas. She stated they worked towards having healthier meals in the schools. She stated they looked to help kids who were on the free or reduced price lunch program eat healthy over the weekends, holiday

breaks, and in the summer. She stated backpack programs and other emergency food programs were utilized. She stated approximately four (4) years ago she partnered with Putnam County to start the summer meals program at Kent Library with the help of the Hudson Valley Food Bank. She stated approximately 16 students were served per lunch meal. She stated the following year it expanded to the Brewster Schools. She stated she is a strong supporter of nutrition and overall health. She stated approximately three (3) years ago Chairwoman Addonizio reached out to discuss starting a backpack program in Putnam County.

Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to waive the rules and accept the other business; seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Item #5 - Other Business

a. Update/Backpack Program/Chairwoman Addonizio

Chairwoman Addonizio stated this idea started because her daughter was teaching in Ossining and there was a backpack program. She stated she has recently spoken with some of the School Superintendents in Putnam County and they are very open to the idea. She stated a backpack program is when food is discreetly put in backpacks for kids to take home over the weekend or holiday breaks. She stated it is done by volunteers. She listed some non-perishable foods that are used. She stated the Superintendents stated they would use students who volunteer for community service.

Executive Director Hubert stated the demographics in Putnam County are changing. She stated in October of 2018 30% of students in the Brewster School District were eligible for free or reduced lunch. She stated these programs exist so that these children can continue to have nutritious food even when they are not in school. She stated the greatest success of the backpack program that she has seen was in the Poughkeepsie City School District, where it has become self-sustainable. She stated almost 150 children are being served and the district only has about 4,000 students. She stated the cost is approximately \$183 per child through the year. She stated the food bank has \$10 of buying power for every \$1 they receive.

Chairwoman Addonizio clarified that there is no request for funding. She stated it would be done through sponsors and donors.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if any of the school districts have brought this program forward.

Chairwoman Addonizio stated not yet but she is going to meet with the School Superintendents.

Legislator Nacerino stated the School Districts could apply for grants to help fund the program.

Executive Director Hubert stated there are many ways programs like this could be funded, it just depends on how much of a priority it is.

Legislator Sayegh questioned what the statistics for food insecurity are in Putnam County.

Executive Director Hubert stated for Putnam County, as of 2017, the food insecurity rate for youth is 14.6%. She stated it is concentrated in certain demographics.

Legislator Montgomery stated she would be happy to, and she believes the rest of the Legislature would as well, write letters of support for any grant applications for the backpack program.

Item #6 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 6:33 P.M., Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to adjourn: Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.