

Joe Lombardo

*Governor*

Richard Whitley,  
MS

*Director*



# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



NEVADA DIVISION of PUBLIC  
and BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Cody L. Phinney,  
MPH

*Administrator*

Ihsan Azzam,  
Ph.D., M.D.

*Chief Medical  
Officer*

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## THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON FOOD SECURITY (CFS)

Date: April 15, 2025

(Draft) Meeting Minutes

Location: Microsoft Teams meeting

Type of meeting: Regular meeting

### Attendance:

#### Members present:

- Amber Torres
- Jeff Duncan
- Dr. Pamela Juniel
- Dr. Dorian Stonebarger
- Dr. Julian Goicoechea
- Dr. Sabina Malik
- Jill Moe
- Marcia Blake
- Tori Lawson-Boffelli
- Vickie Ives

#### Members absent:

- Kelly Cantrelle
- Dr. Muzafar Makhdoomi
- Lisa Swearingen

#### Staff:

- Sarah Rogers
- Lori Taylor
- Other attendees asked to sign in via meeting chat, attached as Exhibit A.

## Guests:

- Tina Dortch
- Sara Ramirez
- Sara Myers
- Allison Herzik

### 1. Call to Order:

Time the meeting was called to order: 1:02PM

Name of the presiding officer: Jeff Duncan (Interim Chair)

### 2. Public Comment:

#### *First Public Comment Period:*

Interim Chair Jeff Duncan opened the floor for public comment. No public comment was made, therefore period for public comment was closed.

### 3. Approval of meeting minutes from January 14, 2025, and February 11, 2025

Interim Chair Duncan called for the Council's approval on the 2025 meeting minutes (January 14<sup>th</sup> and February 11<sup>th</sup>). Meeting minutes were motioned for approval by Interim Chair Duncan. Dr Dorian Stonebarger motioned to approve first, seconded by Marcia Blake. Amber Torres reminded the committee how she will abstain from approving the minutes as she was not a part of the council at that time. Meeting minutes were approved.

### 4. Home Delivered Meals Program Presentation – Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada by Sara Meyer

Sara Meyer, Vice President of Development at Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, provided a presentation about their programs. Sara Meyer stated that Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada has served the region since 1941. They serve about 4,000 individuals every day through their food programs, shelter programs, refugee services, and other comprehensive services. Most services, including Meals on Wheels, and the Kitchen and Tray line are on the main campus, which allows for people to get multiple services at once with no program or income requirement. Catholic Charities has grown the Meals on Wheels program significantly over time. The program provides 7 nutritionally balanced meals to about 2,400 seniors in Southern Nevada. A registered dietician is present who works with the executive chef and helps seniors who may need modified meals (chopped or pureed food, nutritional supplements, and additional medical resources). Our service area is city of North Las Vegas, city of Las Vegas and unincorporated Clark County. Many seniors who receive this assistance, have debilitating conditions and receive deliveries once a week. Staffing includes drivers to provide meals to seniors as well as a call center.

Drivers are paid staff who go into our seniors home and physically place meals into their freezers. This allows our seniors to get to know their drivers and what's going on in their home. Maintaining these visits help identify cases of elder abuse, power outages, and signs of not eating which pose as a risk to seniors. If an issue is identified, the drivers can call the team for assistance or connect them with other resources. Having drivers visit the seniors allows them to have a sense of independence and have animal companions.

The program has received enough funding to increase capacity and add an automated tray line. This tray line provides about 1,500 meals per hour with all food being prepared and packaged in house. Meals are then flash frozen and delivered. Current freezers have the capacity to serve approximately 3,500 seniors. The service area map displays 2,463 seniors who are actively receiving meals on wheels. Meanwhile there are 910 homebound seniors on our waitlist. The average age of seniors receiving assistance is 74, with 60% being female and 43% male. A story was shared about Robert, who retired from playing for the Patriots and moved to Las Vegas in 2006. His health issues prevent him from leaving his house and preparing food. He has received food from the program for 5 years. Meal costs are approximately \$8.90 and goes towards the food, packaging, and the delivery drivers. Operating budget for Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada's Meals on Wheels program is \$7,800,000 which is supported by government and private funds. Applied analysis compared Meals on Wheels costs of \$62 per week or \$3,250 per year versus Assisted Living's \$1,140 weekly and \$59,400 yearly.

Marcia Blake inquired on the length of the wait time to be placed on the wait list. Sara Ramirez clarified that seniors roll off the list for various reasons whether they pass away or live with family. Dr. Sabina Malik offered any kind of support or funding assistance from the Governor's Council. Sara Meyer requested for the advocacy of continued funding or increased funding opportunities. Interim Chair Duncan inquired about the case coordination to learn more about the team and the role they play in the home delivery bill. Sara Meyer stated that this started because of the City of Las Vegas and City of North Las Vegas. The Community Development Block Grant funds started with client eligibility since income verification was required. Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada aims to have a big clientele to help build trust between the community and the team members.

## **5. Nutritional Health Literacy Survey Presentation – Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity by Tina Dortch proxy for Alex Neal**

Tina Dortch from the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity stepped in for Alex Neal and presented information on the Nutritional Health Literacy Survey. In 2005, the mission through Assembly Bill 580 was to address health disparities among minority communities. Then in 2017, Assembly Bill 141 expanded the scope of the office and broadened the definition of minority to encompass many of the vulnerable populations. They work to go above and beyond racial and ethnic minorities to include sexual orientation, gender identity, demographics as part of their identity, the full spectrum of ability status, and other marginalized and under resourced populations. The office is dedicated to researching and making recommendations concerning health disparities, to develop and coordinate plans and programs as well as opportunities for the improvement of health and wellness. They were identified as one of the agencies to support the states actions related to the recent silver state health improvement plan and specifically the social determinants of health and any related goals.

In late 2024, a Nutritional Health Literacy and Access survey was conducted statewide for 50 days. The survey had a positive turnout and provided helpful information regarding nutrition knowledge as well as what resources individuals have access to. The survey asked about the modes of transportation that individuals use, such as private vehicles versus ride share options, and asked them questions about travel time to secure food. In depth questions about economic access, healthcare quality and access, and health and nutritional literacy were also asked. Questions such as meal composition, like servings of fruit versus intake of supplements and frequency of meals per day were included in the survey.

United Way assisted in creating bilingual flyers that utilized a 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level to ensure everyone could comprehend and engage. A QR code was placed on the flyer to maximize participation. It was also displayed electronically, at conferences, food pantries, grocery stores, barber shops, churches and community centers. The final survey report is still being prepared and must be approved by the Public Information Officer with completion to be expected within the next couple weeks. The 333 respondents were from Reno, Sparks, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Las Vegas, Laughlin, Spanish Springs, Mound House, and Elko County.

23% of respondents did not have enough financial resources available to cover basic needs like housing, food and medicine. 62% of individuals experience financial concerns that have affected how they purchase food within the last five years. Individuals were asked if they used the Food Pyramid or My Plate to help with their eating patterns. 47% stated yes and 41% said no that they were not familiar with the My Plate or Food Pyramid concepts. 63% of individuals stated they were not aware of laws or policies created by state or local government to improve access to healthy foods. Individuals also stated they learned about healthy recipes or nutritious meals through the internet and friends as the second source type.

Interim Chair Duncan opened the floor for any questions on the presentation. Dr. Sabina Malik requested information for how individuals got their food. Tina Dortch did not have the full report but convenience stores and some local gas stations are occasionally identified as a source for food. Pantries, traditional grocers, discount grocers as well as farmers markets were included as options which will be published with the appropriated percentages. The report will also explain the percentages of those who used My Plate or the Food Pyramid. Dr. Pamela Juniel expressed interest if there were any geographic ties to where responses came from and how heavy of a population each area had versus rural and remote and the concerns of food sources. Tina Dortch explained that the report does indeed have that information but does not currently have that information on hand.

## **6. Discussion and possible action on NRS 232.4969 Food for People Not Landfill Program – Office of Food Security by Lori Taylor**

Lori Taylor explained that the Food for People Not Landfill Program is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services Director with support and guidance from the Council on Food Security and the Office of Food Security. Food for People Not Landfill was originally created in July of 2019. However, this was dissolved in 2021 due to funding and was reestablished in 2023 to 2024. The Office of Food Security has received some support from AmeriCorps workers to help start up the program again. Efforts have begun to establish goals and objectives to increase the amount of food diverted from landfills, increase food security as well as establishing some criteria for eligibility for food donors to participate in the program along with creating an official seal.

The first virtual meeting has been scheduled for Food for People Not Landfill on July 1<sup>st</sup> from 1PM to 2PM. Lori Taylor requested the Council on Food Security clarify if it is needed to create additional bylaws associated with the subcommittee as well as consider any efforts and or deliverables to be documented in the Food for People Not Landfill's annual report that is due to Legislative Counsel Bureau yearly. Interim Chair Duncan asked for clarification on the request of bylaws and for any insight Vickie Ives had. Vickie Ives clarified that bylaws are not mandatory, but bylaws from the mother committee can be referenced. It was agreed that the subcommittee and finer details would be discussed at the July 1, 2025, meeting.

## **7. Update on Office of Food Security, Council on Food Security, Funds for a Healthy Nevada Annual Reports – Office of Food Security by Lori Taylor**

State Fiscal year 24 annual report for the Funds for a Healthy Nevada track what funds were awarded and leftover balances. A presentation about SFY26 and 27 funds will be given to the Grants Management Advisory Committee on April 22<sup>nd</sup> with results and provide suggestions from the evaluation committee. Then contracts will be executed by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Interim Chair Duncan wanted to know if the funds were subject to the 12% reduction. Lori Taylor and Sarah Rogers stated the hunger funds were reduced by 6.7% for fiscal years 26 and 27 from the previous biennium. Interim Chair Duncan included information on the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division's FHN fundraising efforts due to the decrease in the funding. Amber Torres mentioned that the report indicates Food Bank of Northern Nevada delivered 34,000,000 pounds of food but should reflect 25,000,000 in fiscal year 24. Dr. Sabina Malik questioned how the FHN funds would be distributed and decided upon. Marcia Blake took the question and explained that it's a collaborative effort of agencies working together to not only address food issues but also educate those on financial literacy tactics to improve and not rely on food bank services.

## **8. Discussion and Possible Action on State Health Improvement Plan – Jeff Duncan, Interim Chair**

Interim Chair Duncan stated all the deliverables in strategy 1.1.1. for 2025 have been completed apart from contacting the Legislative Council Bureau by May 31, 2026, and continuing efforts to 2027. Regarding, strategy 1.2., the Council established a work group on February 29, 2024, and started a survey to partners that was completed in May 2024. Deliverables were extended to accommodate Spanish. Southern Nevada conference needs to be completed by December 31, 2027. Northern Nevada's conference would be due December 31, 2025. Interim Chair Duncan sought clarification on makeup of the working group. Lori Taylor informed that a work group has been established and meets monthly. A scope of work and an interlocal agreement was put together between DPBH and UNR.

For strategy 2.1., a presentation to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Health and Humans Services was completed in 2024. Allison Herzik submitted a bill draft review (BDR) in July 2024 requesting to amend NRS 232.4966 to include additional seats, one for someone with lived experience, and two for tribal representation. That BDR was not approved to move forward for consideration during session. However, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada stepped up and switched Charlotte Williams as a Council member to Amber Torres who represents a Tribe and will help support the Council as both a representative of a food bank in Northern Nevada and has lived experience as a Tribal member. Sarah Rogers also mentioned that NRS 232.4966 has a seat, "Such other representatives of State Government as may be designated by the Governor". This seat must be someone who represents a state government, but the Council can think about other state departments like transportation or Native American Affairs to recommend for appointment since the BDR did not go through.

Interim Chair Duncan brought up Senate Bill 78 and the discussion of analyzing and consolidating the Council body structure. Interim Chair Duncan mentioned that we need to ensure that there is representation from those in the profession, individuals with lived experience, and recited feedback to not lose the voice of the people that are served. Allison Herzik emphasized the importance of maintaining this Council and its importance. Dr. Sabina Malik asked if the Council on Food Security was codified into law. Interim Chair Duncan clarified that yes, it is codified, but the Council structure can be adjusted through SB 78

## **9. Discussion and Possible Action regarding CFS Goals – Jeff Duncan, Interim Chair**

Interim Chair Duncan opened the floor to the Council to bring up any focus points. Dr. Dorian Stonebarger mentioned number 6, the State Emergency Food Plan with the hopes that it will be updated. Marcia Blake agreed with Dr. Dorian Stonebarger but encouraged further discussion regarding food hubs in Northern and Southern Nevada due to the loss of The Emergency Food Assistance Program and other federal food programs affected by budget changes. Dr. Dorain Stonebarger suggested to tier each emergency response varying from Catastrophic level to loss of funding. Marcia Blake believed number 7 and 8 would be incorporated into the plan by prioritizing food distribution support, food access, addressing how to deliver food to hard-to-reach areas. Interim Chair Duncan wanted to know how this idea came about, and Sarah Rogers informed that this idea came about during COVID upon realizing that there was no state food emergency plan. Interim Chair Duncan also stated that there were federal regulations and requirements to take into consideration along with being efficient and strategic to make the food emergency plan seamless. Dr. Sabina Malik requested clarification on when this discussion would be and Sarah Rogers stated the Division of Emergency Management, would not be available till October's meeting to assist with planning. Lori Taylor offered the Food Security Conference in October as it could be a helpful collaboration with research students from the University of Nevada, Reno and the Council to create an emergency crisis plan. Interim Chair Duncan began a motion to close item 9, Marcia amended the motion to include Division of Emergency Management along with UNR and Dr. Malik seconded the motion.

Discussion and Possible Action for 2025 State Legislative Session – Jeff Duncan, Interim Chair  
Interim Chair Duncan opened the floor to Council members if they wanted to raise any attention to bills or further information. Allison Herzik brought up Senate Bill 282, to create a grocery initiative and was amended to recognize the Office of Food Security and not Council as being the overseeing body of the program along with a \$10 million appropriation. Senate Bill 233, Home Feed Nevada Program would create a sustainable funding mechanism and \$800,000 is appropriated for this bill. Marcia Blake had not heard any updates regarding Assembly Bill 268 which involved universal free breakfast and lunch, Dr. J.J. Goicoechea clarified that there have been no updates, and he will keep an eye on the bill to see where it goes.

Assembly Bill 474 would utilize Artificial Intelligence to help people plan and locate food. Assembly Bill 345 regards food security for higher education which shifted to being a study instead of a program and was passed. Assembly Bill 405, the bill that advocated for community gardens and urban farms, did pass and will go to Senate for review.

## **10. Discussion and Possible Action of CFS 2025 Goals, Food for People Not Landfills, the SHIP Action Steps**

No further discussion was made regarding Item #11. The Council was content with the previous items as no one brought up issues or concerns. Interim Chair Duncan motioned to discuss previous items in the July meeting. Marcia Blake motioned to approve the items listed on the agenda and the 12 previous topics for meetings moving forward in Fiscal Year 2026, Vickie Ives seconded.



## 11. Public Comment:

### *Second Public Comment Period:*

Jeff Duncan opened the floor for public comment. Jenny Yeager from Food Bank of Northern Nevada wanted to make a few requests. Senate Bill 233 is expected to be heard by Senate Finance the week of April 21st and wanted to hear support from the Council showing support for the bill. The second request was to have the Council define what is a food hub as the Food Bank of Northern Nevada is opening a rural food hub in Northeast Nevada with support from Nevada Department of Agriculture.

## 12. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Interim Chair Duncan, seconded by Marcia Blake.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:19 PM.

## Next Meeting:

### Special Session Meeting:

Date: May 13, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Teams Meeting

Meeting agenda and packet (posted online and at physical locations in accordance with Open Meeting Law).

\*Minutes prepared by Anais Infante using the following reference:

Robert, H. (2020). *Robert's rules of order: Newly revised (12th ed.)*. Da Capo Press.

Nevada Revised Statutes. *Open Meeting Law (NRS 241)*.

## Attachments:

## **Exhibit A: Others present that signed in via meeting chat**

- Allison Herzik, Dignity Health
- Jenny Yeager, Food Bank of Northern Nevada
- Nikolai Apilado, Three Square Food Bank
- Allison Gonzalez, DPBH
- Alexis Hogan, DPBH
- Dillon Winkelman, DPBH
- Roxana Cambara-Glowski, DPBH
- Darlene Douthitt, DPBH
- Oscar Fernandez, DPBH
- Linda Anderson, Nevada Public Health Foundation
- Bjorn Blomquist, DPBH
- Tammera Brower, DPBH
- Taylor Moseley, DBPH
- Troy Lovick, DPBH
- Taliman Afroz, DPBH