



# MEETING MINUTES

## HEAL Work Group Meeting

September 21, 2023 | 12:00 – 1 pm

Staff support: Mindi Garrett, Donna Perkins (DOH)

Co-chairs: Mizetta Wilson (Partnership), Ann Heiser Buzzelli (DOH)

Attendees: Jodi Risse (AACP), Shana McClendon (Maryland Physicians Care), Leah Paley (AACO Food Bank), Carol Cason (AACPL), Bill Martin (Rec & Parks), Debbie Wood (Chesapeake Children's Museum), Kristin Coleman (DOH), James Merritt (Merritt Health Clubs), Kea McCoy-Farr (AACO Food Bank), Kia Holder (AACCAA), Kristy Alvarez (County Exec), Eona Harrison (DOH)

### Meeting discussion:

Welcome and introductions led by co-chair Mizetta Wilson. The meeting discussions were focused on the goals of the HEAL work plan 1) Sharing healthy living resources and 2) Sharing policies that support healthy living. We addressed the objectives for sharing resources first.

### Sharing Healthy Living resources

Social Media ideas to post/ share:

- "Walktober". October 4th is Walk Maryland Day. [Create](#) a walk or [join](#) an existing walk for Anne Arundel County. Walking is the official state exercise! Additional information can be found on MD Department of Transportation's [web page](#).
- October is also Health Literacy Month. The Institute for Healthcare Advancement has a series of short PSA [videos](#) we can share.
- September is Hunger Action Month. Food Bank shared their [landing page](#) which links to the action calendar for this campaign. There is an interactive [Zoom session](#) on 9/28 to help people understand the difficulties that many people face in making ends meet.
- Looking ahead, November is American Diabetes Month. Details on the campaign can be found on the American Diabetes Association [website](#).

HEAL resource platform (FindHelp)

- We have secured FindHelp (formerly Aunt Bertha) as the vendor to develop a web-based platform for health-related resources throughout the county.
- Elevator speech:  
The Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Workgroup for the Healthy Anne Arundel Coalition is building a database of local resources which will be available for public access on Healthy Anne Arundel's website. These resources include food pantries, nutrition education, fitness classes, and many other free and low cost services to support the health and wellness of county residents. HEAL would appreciate your

support in collecting the resources that can be included in the database and, once published, by sharing the website with your network.

To suggest resources, please complete the following Google form:

<https://forms.gle/yxGiyLw48F5SYuyy5>

- Promotional materials for the HEAL resource database will be coming soon!

Healthy Anne Arundel Day (April 7)

- James Merritt gave an overview of the Healthy Anne Arundel Day observance. We hope to improve upon last year's event with early planning and increased community participation.
- The first planning committee meeting will be in December. So far, the planning committee includes DOH, Merritt Clubs, Rec & Parks, Library, South County Alliance, Food bank, and the County executive's office. Others are welcome: contact Mindi at [hdgarr01@aacounty.org](mailto:hdgarr01@aacounty.org)

Partner Showcase options

- We considered 3 options for HEAL members to present their programs to each other:
  - 1) Bimonthly meetings on alternating months from the regular meeting (3 partners, 15 min each, recorded/ posted on HAAC site)
  - 2) 10 minutes extended after each HEAL meeting (spot recorded/ posted on HAAC site)
  - 3) individually recorded, posted on HAAC site, shared by email (follow-up contact info)

The most popular option, by vote, was 2) to extend the regular bi-monthly meeting to allow one presenter at the end of the meeting. First to volunteer to present was James Merritt, for Merritt Health Clubs!

Next, the work group shifted to the objectives of the second goal, sharing policies that support healthy living.

## **Sharing Policies that support Healthy Living**

Federal [PHIT](#) Act

- James Merritt provided a brief history and background of the upcoming legislation, emphasizing that there is only one Maryland legislator co-sponsoring the bill so far. The PHIT Act would expand eligible expenses for FSA/ HSA accounts to include fitness-related spending such as sports equipment, youth camps, gym memberships, and many other purchases made for the exclusive purpose of participating in physical activity. Follow the legislation [here](#).
- We have developed an informational one-pager about the PHIT Act for HEAL members to distribute.

Healthy Food policies

- Kristin described healthy food policies that have been passed in surrounding Maryland areas. The reported effect of credits against property taxes for grocery stores/ supermarkets is greater retention of those stores in priority food areas. \*\*The term "priority food area" is now preferred to what has previously been called a "food desert".
- Ann discussed the Food and Physical Activity Policy Scan
- The first meeting of the Food Council is next Thursday 9/28 at 9:30. [Zoom link](#).

## Healthy [meetings and events](#)

- Very few HEAL partners have a written policy on how to have a healthy meeting or event. Bill from Rec & Parks shared [this link](#) with many useful guidelines. Partners are encouraged to review the guidelines.
- Additional discussion topics about healthy meetings were how to have a zero waste event and building in physical movement. We reflected on how nice it was to have the May retreat at an outdoor pavilion.
- Helpful contacts who have been holding healthy events are [Leadership Anne Arundel](#) and [Annapolis Green](#). Mindi will reach out to these organizations to ask about written guidelines.
- Policies/ guidelines adopted by HEAL partners can be included in subgrantee agreements to further encourage healthy eating beyond the typical reach of our organizations.

## Info sheet for facility/ [field rental](#) and use

- In researching the costs and requirements to reserve or rent a sports field or recreational facility, it became clear that we will need to include private entities in addition to Rec & Parks. Suggestions for private and non-profit organizations to ask include Annapolis Rec & Parks, Moose Athletics, API, Salvation Army, AACCC, Odenton Sports Center, Benfield Sports Complex, and YMCA.

## Disability Inclusion committee

- Although the Disability Inclusion grant has not yet been released, the HEAL subcommittee has already met once, with a meeting scheduled on October 4th to write a mission statement, invite new members, and look at existing projects in the county to promote.
- HEAL partners suggested organizations that may have an interest in helping with this project: Arc of Severn, Bike AAA- John Korin, Maryland Hall, ASA (Athletes serving Athletes), County Exec Office- Pete Baron

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## What's Next?

- September 28, 9:30am, Food Council meeting
  - September 28, 10am, Food Bank's 30/30 Experience
  - October 4, 10am, Disability Inclusion meeting
  - November 16 meeting. 12pm - 1:15pm
    - Merritt health Clubs: James Merritt presenting
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