

TOWN OF ROCK HALL, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-05

A Resolution of the Council of the Town of Rock Hall stating the Council's commitment to obesity prevention and healthy eating choices.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, in January 2013, the Maryland Municipal League entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Institute for Public Health Innovation to work collaboratively on the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the Town of Rock Hall (the "Council") has the ability to affect the health of the residents of the Town of Rock Hall (the "Town"); and

WHEREAS, planning and constructing a built environment that encourages walking, biking, and other forms of physical activity can promote health; and

WHEREAS, high rates of costly chronic disease among both children and adults are correlated to environments with few or no options for healthy eating and active living; and

WHEREAS, more than half of the State of Maryland's adults are overweight or obese and therefore at risk for many chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke, and hypertension; and

WHEREAS, Kent County is among just five jurisdictions in the State of Maryland with an obesity rate of 25 percent or greater; and

WHEREAS, obesity peaks between the ages of 55 and 74, and 35 percent of Kent County residents (versus 28 percent statewide) are in that age range; and

WHEREAS, one in three youth in the State of Maryland is overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS, more children are being diagnosed with diseases linked to overweight and obesity previously seen only in adults, such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease; and

WHEREAS, obesity takes a tremendous toll on the health, productivity of all Marylanders; and

WHEREAS, the annual cost to Maryland, such as medical bills, workers compensation and lost productivity, attributed to overweight, obesity, and physical inactivity exceeds \$3 billion; and

WHEREAS, supporting the health of residents and the local workforce would decrease chronic disease and health care costs and increase productivity; and

WHEREAS, adopting healthy eating habits and providing greater access to and incentives to promote healthy foods and healthy eating choices contribute to overall health; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes that obesity is a serious public threat to the health and well-being of adults, children, and families in the Town, and a commitment is needed to put healthy choices within the reach of all residents; and

WHEREAS, the Council further recognizes that, while individual lifestyle changes are necessary, individual effort alone is insufficient to combat obesity; and

WHEREAS, the Council further recognizes that significant societal and environmental changes are needed to support individual efforts to make healthier choices.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ROCK HALL that the Council of the Town of Rock Hall hereby adopts this Healthy Eating and Active Living Resolution.

1. Physical Activity, Active Transportation, and Land Use. The Town shall make reasonable efforts to implement and promote provisions in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan that:

- A. Promote biking and walking;
- B. Include strategies that promote public safety and crime prevention through environmental design; and
- C. Prioritize transit-oriented and mixed-use development.

2. Streets and Roads. The Town shall make reasonable efforts to design streets and roads within the corporate limits of the Town to be safe for all users, including motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians, using one or more of the following strategy(ies):

- A. Adopt a “Complete Streets Policy”;
- B. Promote slower vehicular traffic through traffic calming measures;
- C. Paint bicycle/shared use lanes (“sharrows”) and stripe crosswalks when re-paving or painting roads;
- D. Pursue funding for programs such as “Safe Routes to School” which promote a safer environment for biking and walking to school by expanding and improving infrastructure, teaching walking and biking safety, providing incentives for bicyclists and pedestrians, and promoting walking and biking to school as a healthy and viable alternative to public or private transportation.

3. Access to Affordable, Nutritious Foods. The Town shall make reasonable efforts to:

A. Attract and promote healthy food retail and restaurants using the following strategies:

- i. Encourage menu labeling with nutrition facts; and
- ii. Provide economic incentives for restaurants and vendors that offer healthy foods.

B. Involve the citizens of the Town in determining the Town's policy needs around accessible, affordable, and nutritious foods using the following strategies:

- i. Create a Food Policy Council or Task Force tasked with providing recommendations for the Town regarding accessible, affordable, and nutritious foods;
- ii. Conduct a community food assessment;
- iii. Adopt a "Food Charter"; and
- iv. Create a Community Food System Plan.

4. Implementation. The Council may appoint a designated community representative, who shall report to the Council annually regarding proposed actions that the Town or Council may take to implement this Resolution. The Council may also direct appropriate Town personnel to contact Healthy Eating Active Living ("HEAL") Cities & Towns Campaign staff to discuss potential HEAL policies appropriate for the Town.

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ADOPTED and effective this 11th day of June, 2015.

COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ROCK HALL


VOTE
YEAS 5
NAYS 0
ABSTAINING 0



Brian L. Jones, Mayor



Rosalie Kuechler, Councilmember



Olin B. Price, Councilmember



Brian S. Nessor, Councilmember



Arthur Kendall, Councilmember