

Connecticut Food Policy Council
Draft Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 8th, 2014
A quorum was present

Attendees

Members: Linda Hubeny, (DAS); Bill Seedman, (DSS); Steve Anderson, (DoAg: proxy for Linda Piotrowicz); Marcia Maillard, (DPH); Lucy Nolan, (EHC!/Vice Chair); John Frassinelli, (Chair/CSDE)

Guests: Leah Tully, (CHCACT); Martha Page, (HFS); Helana Hoover-Litty, (CAND); Ellen Sloan, (DCP); Jessica Mahon, (EHC!); Peggy Zamore, (DFMCC); Adam Rabinowitz, (UCONN); Jiff Martin (UCONN)

The meeting was called to order at 1:05pm

The minutes from the November 13th, 2014 meeting was approved with the following correction: Marcia Mallard should be recorded as a member of the council and not an attendee only.

Additions to the agenda:

ACA Community Benefits Ruling: Peggy Zamore reported of a new ruling where the IRS is allowing non-profit hospitals throughout the country to “claim the help they provide their communities to ensure adequate nutrition as part of their exemption from federal taxation.” The ruling was just released the week of January 5th, so the council will be convening a group to gather further information and to see how CFPC can become involved in efforts in CT. The group will consist of Lucy Nolan, Marcia Maillard, Martha Page, Leah Tully, and Peggy Zamore. John Frassinelli noted that hospitals can be potential feeding sites for the lunch or supper program.

Community Eligibility Provision: John Frassinelli wanted to commend New Haven and Hartford for taking part in the Community Eligibility Provision and made mentioned of the USDA visit to recognize the achievement.

Report on local food policy councils / Webinar results: Jessica gave a brief reporting from her visits to local food policy councils for the months of November and December. The local councils included Bridgeport, New Haven, and Hartford. Meeting notes from her visits are attached.

Community Food Security Report: Adam Rabinowitz and Jiff Martin gave an update on the Community Food Security Report. They have formed a research team that includes 2 research assistants and 1 program assistant. There will be a series of 3 reports: 1. Population at Risk and Participation in Food Access Programs ranking, 2. Retail Food Availability ranking, and 3. Food Affordability ranking. There will also be an outreach plan that would include presentations to

the community following each report. Presentations will be made to food policy councils, town districts, and members of working groups to gain feedback on the reports findings.

Legislative Recommendations:

Several focus areas were mentioned when it came to legislative recommendations:

- Obesity related issues, in conjunction with what will be recommended by Taskforce Against Obesity
- State Procurement, healthier food available within state owned buildings
- Increasing funding for congregate and home delivered meals for older adults

Agency or Guest Updates:

DAS: Linda Hubney reported that there is a new DAS commissioner. She also shared gratitude towards those who helped in getting the funding for the Unprocessed Produce Pilot program. This program allows farmers to provide unprocessed produce directly to schools. Currently 15 schools districts can put their schools in the program.

HFS: Martha Page reported that the City of Hartford approved their zoning regulations recommendations to support urban farming. It will make it through the approval process and the regulations will be more encouraging and non-restrictive. Hartford Food System did all the supporting research.

DSS: Bill Seedman reported that the Commodity Food Supplemental Program plan was approved in 2010 but there was no funding until President Obama signed a bill to allow funding for 7 states including CT to provide food packages to low income seniors. Currently only 2,400 seniors can receive these packages in CT, CT Foodbank will supply the packages to 1,600 and Foodshare will supply to 800. Food distribution is projected to happen as early as April and will be distributed monthly. The food will consist of name brand canned fruits and vegetables along with other non-perishables. Each food package is worth \$50 worth of food and the food banks will be responsible for determining who will receive the package. There will be an application that the senior must fill out to qualify in addition to going through an initial verification process.

This month over \$57 million was given in SNAP benefits. The limitation of SNAP benefits to 3 months for able bodied adults without dependents will take in affect in 2016, as CT has a waiver through this year.

Redeterminations continue to be an issue at DSS. There has been an approval of an elderly/disabled waiver that removes the need to conduct an interview with an elderly/disabled person for a redetermination. This waiver is contingent upon the satisfaction of certain conditions that must be met by the individual.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, February 26th, 2014

Location: End Hunger CT! 65 Hungerford Street, Hartford, Conference Room

Motion to adjourn was given by John Frassinelli and was seconded by Bill Seedman

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm

Local Food Policy Council Meeting Notes

New Haven Food Policy Council / November 19th

- The council will be meeting with the city planning department to talk about recommendations for the city's comprehensive plan.
- The food assistance group is thinking about collapsing the Witnesses to Hunger initiative with Food Advocates
- The city's board of education applied for funding to improve the summer food program. EHC! also applied for a grant for program support and will soon begin monthly meetings to plan a course of action for next year as well as planning calls to FRAC for tech support
- The board of education will also be doing a supper pilot program in the fall, moving towards the ultimate goal providing 3 meals a day. The role of the council would be to conduct outreach, spreading the word throughout networks that interact with kids and families
- On Dec. 2nd there will be a planning meeting with city officials with help from EHC! to bring together sponsors and parents to discuss sites, hours, quality of food, and other issues that would hopefully be brought up between sponsors and parents
- Youth interns are continuing to work with United Way to create a Youth Map, a map of the City of New Haven and where people can access food
- The city farm and garden working group are continuing work on the Resource Center. It's been difficult getting information from parts of the city that they are not connected to. Having resources available to the underserved is the focus of the resource center. 100-200 surveys have been completed and a group of students will be going door to door to push into other communities that haven't been reached yet
- Work continues with the Food Systems Director position. There was a meeting with the board of alders, the job description has been completed and the work plan is being simplified. Currently waiting on funding and once that is acquired the job will be posted for a nationwide search. Deliberating on having either administrative support for the Food Systems Director or creating deputy position that will help to split the work of the director and help with grant writing, speaking engagements, and other public responsibilities along with the Director
- The council is looking to strengthen the group through checking the attendance of members and creating a welcome packet for oncoming members and getting more affiliate members as well.
- The annual meeting is confirmed for Saturday, March 21st, 2015. The topic will focus on worker's rights and other food issues

Bridgeport Food Policy Council / November 19th

- The council is looking to host community suppers along with showing a food justice video in the 2 most violent neighborhoods in Bridgeport. This is to spur some conversation
- Council will look into revisiting Bridgeport's school wellness plan, using the Rudd Center rating sheet as a tool to assess the content of the plan and make a recommendation to add some measurable goals.
- The nutrition center will be taken over by Sodexo
- The farmers market has been closed out for the season. The Bridgeport Farmers market collaborative along with Wholesome Wave will be funded by FINI. They will also find other fundraising opportunities for the farmers market managers because they are currently not paid. Possibility of adding it as a line item in the city's budget. The farmers market made about \$80,000 in doubling of SNAP benefits. Next year council may take a health approach at increasing SNAP use at the farmers market.
- The council is looking into having a food summit/expo on school food, presenting information on school district information.

Hartford Food Policy Council / December 10th

- The council overviewed the workshop with Mark Winne. Some take-aways from the workshop included having a small group re-evaluate the mission statement and explore ideas that would clearly state the council's role. Work towards developing a shared vision that people can easily latch onto. Maybe looking at other models from other food policy commissions.
- It was suggested that the CFPC can invite food policy commissions from other states to contribute to the webinar series
- The commission will work towards collaborating and sharing ideas and initiatives with other hunger actions teams in the Hartford area doing food systems work. This may include inviting them to meetings and sharing policy recommendations. City officials and department heads should also be present at the meetings as well
- There will be a film showing on January 20th of Hungry in America. Will be at the Hartford Public Library. The council will work to invite hunger action groups, councils, and department heads. The film may be followed up by a discussion
- The council will be reviewing policy recommendations from last year for the annual report. The report will be more specific and measurable this time around. Some ideas that came up:
 - Increase number of gardens at Hartford schools (especially in middle and high schools)
 - Focus on neighborhood schools with low academic performance and high hunger prevalence
 - Allow kids to eat from school garden during lunch or snack time
 - Support the use of vouchers and SNAP benefits at farmers markets
 - Hartford should provide summer meals 7 days a week
- The council discussed inviting Comm. Bremby to talk about SNAP participation and Redetermination processing. Brian Johnson from EHC! explained the issues that have

been occurring with client's benefits being disrupted because DSS is not processing the Redets on time. It was suggested to have all the local councils join together under one voice and advocate for better processing of the redeterminations. Each council can make a call to the Commissioner's office

New Haven Food Policy Council / December 17th

- The City of New Haven Youth Services is continuing to work with the United Way on the Youth map. Gathering sources and keeping information updated will be an important factor
- Thanks to the hard work of the council and the food assistance working group, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which brings a monthly food package to low income seniors, will now be available in CT. The funds will be made available through the USDA, which is then provided to the 2 major food banks, who then distribute the packages to the food pantries.
- The City Farm and Garden group is working on an Incubator Pilot program with New Haven Farms and the New Haven Land Trust.
- The New Haven public library will be hosting a series of workshops that will feature cooking demos with the Master Cooks. It will be held in January and the library will be giving away free copies of the cookbook Eat Good and Cheap
- There is currently a fundraising campaign going on for the "Public Mobile Kitchen" which can be set up anywhere. The money will go towards building the kitchen
- The final draft of the council's comprehensive plan was sent to the city. The council worked with 2 students from the Yale law clinic and it has been vetted through each of the working groups. The 2 students will be presenting the plan to city planning in January
- The council is creating a work plan and adding graphics with percentages of time given to certain tasks for the Food Systems Director position.
- The council has met with the Kendall Foundation, they have committed to providing \$150,000 to fund the position if the council can provide a match. The Foundation would like the position to be more focused on hunger and food access, but they are open to it perhaps changing if need be. If the money cannot be raised in 3 months the council may have to do some redirection and figure out how to make it happen. The hospital has only given them \$5000
- The council would like to see more investment/ownership coming from the mayor's office
- Money given to two major soup kitchens in the city has been cut from the discretionary funds. The council will try to figure out how to get that money back
- The annual meeting is scheduled for March and will be held at the Parish House. There will be a planning meeting in January. The keynote speaker will be Eric Holt-Jimenez, and the council will be meeting with him to discuss the focus of the meeting and some relevant topics. Some options include workers rights, immigrant farmers, and food justice

- During this year's annual meeting the council discussed engaging in a multi-media project that will involve a filming of the meeting then making it public by doing a showing at the library. This will help to extend the conversation into the community.
- The council will start pulling together a draft of their annual report and follow the same process they had last year.
- Cityseed farmers market remains open on Saturdays, will be indoors.