



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Commissioner



Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

860-713-2507
www.CTGrown.gov

Connecticut Food Policy Council

MEETING MINUTES
December 12, 2019

Members in attendance: Bryan Hurlburt (DoAg Commissioner), Bill Seedman (DSS), Monica Pacheco (State Department of Education,

Guests in attendance: Erin Windham (DoAG), Martha Page (Hartford Food System), Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System), Peggy Zamore (Danbury Farmers Market), Jaime Foster (CT Food Bank)

By phone: Michael Keilty (Maple Spring Farm), Susan Pronovost (Brass City Harvest), and Jenna Nicol (CT DCP)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm by Commissioner Hurlburt.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

No quorum- postponed to next meeting

Public Comment

None

Reports

State/ Local Food Policy Updates

Monica Pacheco/ Erin Windham - FTS Action Plan

3 main areas that came out of the Summit. Looking for Team Leaders- will receive stipend. Shared information about FTS Summit, Action plan, etc.

Meg- Hourigan – Reported for New Haven Food Policy Council – Looking at how SNAP cuts affect New Haven. They will be contacting their delegation and would like to speak with DSS regarding how they should navigate the changes.

Hartford FPC will be holding their Feeding Hartford Awards at the Lyceum on April 21, 2020. They are asking for nominations and looking for artists to paint prizes.

Martha Page- The Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy held a meeting yesterday. Chip Beckett attended and made a plea to work for the farmers. Questions about the Regional

Market. There was a discuss Food Hubs and the Regional Market. Chip spoke to the group about a need brokers.

Peggy Zamore- working to move things forward in Danbury. Still focusing on kids and seniors.

Bill Seedman- Spoke about SNAP rule changes and the criteria for exemptions. Exemptions lost statewide in 2016. Last year CT had 106, and this year 110. Waiver only good thru March 31. DSS will request an additional exemption. Connecticut's large cities will still be exempt but NH is a question. DSS is opposing and working to avoid change. Went over stats for those who might be affected by changes. Bill will share information as it becomes available. (Feb/ March) Urban institute published a study on proposed rule changes if anyone would like more information.

Jamie Foster- CT Food Bank is concerned about proposed SNAP changes. She spoke about the food economy being affected by things like the ugly produce movement which is affecting what food banks get. Transportation costs are up which also affect costs. CT Food Bank requested a small increase in CFP boxes. They are receiving trade mitigation foods which is affecting the diversity of what they are able to give to clients. Information was shared about their school based farmers' markets and school pantries opening. (New Haven HS) students are shopping

Sue Pronovost- New equipment is coming in and the Food Hub is looking at 2-3 weeks for opening. There was an article in this weeks' Waterbury paper. Bids open on Monday for food service. Space will be available for meetings of FPC. (Jamie also mentioned that CT Food Bank is also available for meetings).

SCBG was received for branding of Brass City Harvest addressing end-users and farmers. This will also address food safety to get out to farms so that they can use the produce. The Food Hub is being labeled a Bio safe facility and hoping to offer technology that farmers' cannot afford or navigate to influence the supply chain sector wide.

Jenna Nicol- nothing new from DCP

Commissioner Hurlburt- RFP for CT Grown campaign will be going out soon. A request was made to send the CT Grown Survey to the Council to share with their networks. Commissioner discussed the Food Policy Appointments and the Governors' Council for Climate Change also mentioning that the Governors' Council will be forming working groups. If anyone is interested in participating they should email their information to deep.climatechange@ct.gov .

Old Business

Connecticut State Action Plan

A request for funding was received from the Connecticut Food System Alliance. Information was shared with the council.



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Meg Hourigan went over their plan and proposal for funding sharing that other sources were being looked at including the Kendal Foundation, Hartford Foundation, Greater New Britain, and others. This would be first funding from the state. Applied for funding with FMPP

Martha Page shared that this was the third attempt to receive FMPP funding and it is now approved for \$94,000. UCONN Extension got a new grant for Eastern Connecticut Farmers- \$480,000 and this is a good time to be working on this project given the momentum of others. \$5000 was also received from Hartford Pilgrim to sponsor a summit. Taking advantage of data from our six New England states on how to develop this plan.

The Connecticut Food System Alliance has been approached by Merck to develop their proposal by May- June. Merck is focusing on climate change and environmental issues regarding connection with food. This piece is a focus of the State Action Plan. The Connecticut Food System Alliance will develop in the next month- month ½.

Commissioner Hurlburt asked how we can support their efforts and questioned whether a joint letter from Commissioners would be helpful.

Bill Seedman shared that he has been supportive of a food action plan since the beginning and that he is happy to see WIC/ SNAP Recipients targeted. Questioned how long the funding request of \$10,000 was to last.

Jamie Foster- Food Bank would like to be included and people being asked to participate in creation of the plan (Food Bank clients and farmers) should be compensated for their time.

Meg- Compensation has been included in the planning and farmers and clients will definitely be compensated.

BPH- \$ will be PSA b/w DoAg and Hartford Food Systems leading to formal RFP process.

Meeting dates:

Erin Windham- 2020 meeting dates will be sent out soon and posted to the website. As we get closer to market season we will check in to see if meeting dates still work or if they need to be rescheduled.

New Business

None

Next Steps/ Actions

The Department of Agriculture will send out a meeting invitation to discuss goals and priorities for the Food Policy Council in 2020.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:48 pm.