



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Commissioner



Bryan P. Hurlburt  
Commissioner

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**Connecticut Food Policy Council**  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
February 11, 2020

**Members in attendance:** Bill Seedman (DSS), Monica Pacheco (State Department of Education), Flavia Pereira ( DOT), Susan Pronovost ( Brass City Harvest), Marcia Pessolano ( DPH), Robin Lamott Sparks ( End Hunger CT!), Patrick Doyle (KNOX), Jiff Martin ( UCONN Extension), Don Casella, (DAS)

**Guests in attendance:** Jaime Smith (DoAG), Martha Page (Hartford Food System), Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System), Jaime Foster (CT Food Bank), Michael Kiely

1. Call to Order- The meeting was called to order at 2:08 PM by Jaime Smith
2. Introductions: Attendees were introduced by Jaime Smith.
3. Review and approval of regular meeting minutes from November 14, 2019. Motion made by Bill Seedman and seconded by Susan Pronovost. All in favor. Motion passed.

Review and approval of regular meeting minutes from December 12, 2019. Motion made by Bill Seedman and seconded by Don Casella. All in favor. Motion passed.

4. Public Comments- State/ Local Updates

Bill Seedman- Spoke about SNAP rule changes and the criteria for exemptions. DSS thought that cities would not be affected. Effective April 1, 2020- 25, 834 individuals are in jeopardy of losing SNAP. Up to \$5 million per month will be leaving the Connecticut economy. Of this \$5 million, 80% is spent at supermarkets, 19% is spent at corner stores of bodegas, and less than 1% at farmers' markets. Attorney General Tong is in the process of bringing suit against the Federal Government to stop this from happening. Effective August 1, 2020, recipients who participate in a work program will lose SNAP benefits DSS doesn't have the capacity to handle the 25, 834 people who would be affected.

5. Old Business
  - a) Connecticut State Action Plan

Jiff Martin asked to know more about the data gathering and DataHaven's role in that.

Meg Hourigan responded that they are looking at what data can be pulled together. Their group does a lot with health and human services and would be gathering data, not creating it. Jiff asked what the indicators are and Meg responded- Food security regional community

of practice for state food plans. What data exists and how can it be used? No one else has data like DataHaven.

Sue is in favor of the Food Action Plan but would like a more comprehensive proposal addressing all sectors of agriculture. UCONN is left out and this might be best suited for UCONN or Farm Credit East. Farm Bureau is unaware of the proposal. Would like to grab as many of sector as possible to get a better understanding of changing agriculture. A document that is going to influence policy needs to capture more. This plan seems more skewed towards food justice and not reflective enough of the farmer.

Martha responded that this is only part of the total budget being requested for the Food Action Plan. The one year budget is more than \$160/ \$175,000. The \$10,000 is part of the larger whole. This is not a food justice/ food action plan, but will incorporate elements of a food system. Will forward a more wholesome description.

Bill Seedman Brought up the idea of a food action plan summit as a start. Recognizes the value of a food plan as something that needs to be started. And Robin Lamott Sparks responded that the information has been made available and is comfortable getting started. Michael Kielty suggested moving forward with a vote.

Bill Seedman made a motion to approve funding for the Food Action Plan. The motion was seconded by Monica Pacheco. Motion passed.

Comments: Plans to use this money to partner with Data Haven could not be done unless under a PSA. Flavia Pereira noted that contracting exceeds \$10,000 limit- is there a contract in place? Susan abstained from voting.

6. New Business- NONE
7. Next Steps; TBD
8. Don Casella made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting adjourned at 2:58.

Respectfully submitted by Jaime Smith, AMIR 2, March 10, 2020