



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

June 16, 2020

MS Teams Meeting

Members Present: Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt (DoAg) Bill Seedman (DSS), Monica Pacheco (State Department of Education), Flavia Pereira (DOT), Marcia Pessolano (DPH), Robin LaMott Sparks (End Hunger CT!), Patrick Doyle (KNOX)

Members Absent: Susan Pronovost (Brass City Harvest), Molly Devanney (Highland Park Market), Jiff Martin (UCONN), Lynn Peccerillo- Hills (DAS)

DoAg Staff: Erin Windham, Jaime Smith, Kayleigh Royston

Guests in attendance: Jenna Nicol (DPH), Peggy Zamore (Danbury Farmers' Market), Julia Sharnberg (NW Community Foundation), Jennie Hirsch (Foodshare), Austin Bryniarski (New Haven Food Policy Council)

1. **Welcome:** Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM
2. **Introductions:** Members and attendees introduced themselves.
3. **Review and approval of regular meeting minutes:**
 - I. May 14, 2020: Motion to accept was made by Robin Lamott Sparks. Monica Pacheco seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
4. **Public Comment:** NONE
5. **Old Business:**

Update from HFS- No representatives in attendance
6. **New Business:**
 - I. **COVID-19 Updates- Challenges and needs**

Monica Pacheco (CSDE) noted that summer feeding sites are busy, but ever changing as the switch to summer meals has been made. CSDE is looking at the reopening of schools and looking at the challenges it presents. They have a survey out with responses due July 24, 2020 from School Food Service Directors.

Commissioner Hurlburt asked if Monica knew the difference in numbers of emergency feeding sites versus Summer Meals sites. **Monica** shared that there are twice as many schools doing Seamless Summer, but wasn't sure of the total number. She will follow up at the Tuesday ESF #6 call.

Bill Seedman: DSS has served approximately 15,000 additional households and 27,000 individuals since March, most of whom are non-exempt clients, subject to the SNAP

work provisions. They are expecting increased participation if/ when unemployment benefits end. P-EBT has been growing. They sent out benefits in three waves- those who were already receiving SNAP benefits, those not receiving SNAP benefits, but were known to DSS, and children that were not known to DSS but receiving free or reduced priced school meals possibly through Universal Certification schools. Emergency supplemental SNAP benefits have been issued each month since March to SNAP recipients who are not already receiving the max benefit. The SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot is up and running and has been going well with Amazon, 12 Walmart stores, and 21 Shop Rite stores. Please check the DSS webpage which is up to date.

Commissioner Hurlburt noted that Dan Gomez at CT Food Bank was working with DSS to get an additional 5.4 million pounds of food in TEFAP and that the Farms to Families Food Boxes have been very successful with only 1 farm and three beneficiaries.

II. **4CT Project- Robin LaMott Sparks**

The project is moving forward in its eleventh week and several people in charge of the proposal. They have been able to stand up a good model for pantries who are ready and have funds to spend. Chris Mesker and Patrick have visited all of the pantries to understand their business models and gather data, and are moving forward with the new 4CT people.

III. **Review Presentation opportunity by Greg Silverman of Westside Campaign. Against Hunger on coordination of bulk purchasing for pantries**

Commissioner Hurlburt shared background information on Greg Silverman and his work with Westside Campaign Against Hunger. He approached Mr. Silverman to request a presentation and Mr. Silverman requested a small honorarium to cover his time. Commissioner Hurlburt asked the Food Policy Council if this was something they were interested in funding and offered \$250.00 to be considered. Commissioner then asked for input from members.

Bill Seedman said he was in favor and reminded the Council that funds had been used in the past for similar presentations, noting Mark Winne as a past presenter.

Robin Lamott Sparks noted that the Council could benefit from hearing his experiences and learning from his challenges.

Commissioner Hurlburt asked for a motion to accept the proposal. **Robin** made a motion to fund the presentation, **Bill** seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Commissioner Hurlburt reported that he will reach out to Mr. Silverman to confirm a date for the presentation and report back to the group.

7. **Next Steps:**



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- Connect with Meg Hourigan or Martha Page for an update on the Hartford Food System project.
- Find information re: Mark Winne presentation to share with group
- Share ideas for upcoming meetings, concerns, or items of interest to Erin Windham.
- Next meeting: September 10, 2020

8. Meeting adjourned by Commissioner Hurlburt at 10:17 AM

Respectfully submitted by Erin Windham, AMIR 1, July 17, 2020