



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

May 14, 2020

Conference Call

**Members Present:** Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt (DoAg) Bill Seedman (DSS), Monica Pacheco (State Department of Education), Flavia Pereira ( DOT), Marcia Pessolano ( DPH), Molly Devanney (Highland Park Market), Jiff Martin (UCONN), Lynn Peccerillo- Hills (DAS), Robin LaMott Sparks (End Hunger CT!)

**Members Absent:** Susan Pronovost (Brass City Harvest), Patrick Doyle (KNOX)

**DoAg Staff:** Erin Windham, Jaime Smith, Kristin DeRosia- Banick

**Guests in attendance:** Martha Page (Hartford Food System), Meg Hourigan ( Hartford Food Systems) Jennie Nicol (DPH), Peggy Zamore (Danbury Farmers' Market), Julia Sharnberg (NW Community Foundation), Patrice Barrett (DPH), Chelsea Gazillo (Working Lands Alliance), Caroline Russell (DSS), Nadine Tulloch (DPH), Fred Goodman (CT FoodBank), Molly Basek- Smith (UCONN), Heather Perrachio (Fairfield County Extension- UCONN)

1. **Welcome:** Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM
2. **Introductions:** Members and attendees introduced themselves.
3. **Review and approval of regular meeting minutes:**
  - I. December 12 2019: Motion to accept was made by Jiff Martin. Bill Seedman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
  - II. February 12, 2020: Motion to accept was made by Jiff Martin. Bill Seedman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
  - III. March 12, 2020: Motion to accept was made by Jiff Martin. Bill Seedman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
4. **Old Business:** NONE
5. **New Business:**
  1. **COVID-19 Updates- Challenges and needs**
    - o **Commissioner Hurlburt:** Addressed the closures and the necessity of additional funds and resources to address food insecurity within Connecticut. Commissioner noted that he has been working with DSS, Food Share and CT Food Bank and that DSS has extended tools and resources. Commissioner Hurlburt gave an overview of the food systems work being done within DoAg to identify gaps in the food supply chain and respond to needs of Connecticut residents.

Several projects were discussed such as the mapping in New Haven, noting that local action will be important to our inventory of what is currently available. ESF #6 calls were also discussed, noting capacity issues, problems with infrastructure.

- **Bill Seedman:** DSS is working with CSDE to get news of P-EBT out to free and reduced eligible families. Info is on their website. Noted suspension of work requirements, time limits, and renewals for SNAP participants. Online purchasing is expected to be up by May 29<sup>th</sup> at latest.
- **Monica Pacheco:** Multiple feeding sites are running- 129 sponsors with 449 sites. Applied for waiver from USDA for bulk pick up. Commissioner Hurlburt asked about how summer feeding will work. Monica will follow up.
- **Jiff Martin:** Extension is posting resources on their website. She is also creating guidance for school gardens in response to COVID-19.
- **Molly Devaney:** Door to door is a struggle. They are using several different suppliers to get stock.
- **Flavia:** Traffic is down but accidents are up. Please spread the word so drivers are more careful. DOT is working with State Police to monitor.
- DPH and DAS are working on procurement of PPE and refrigerated trailers for food pantries. Information was sent to ESF #7.
- **Lynn Pecerrillo- Hills:** New to group. Works on state contracting. If she can be of assistance please let her know.

## 2. 4CT Project- Robin LaMott Sparks

Robin is working to get an accurate inventory of food pantries and banks to present to 4CT in an effort to attract donors to meet unmet area needs. She is starting in Fairfield County where there is a large unemployed and immigrant population. She spoke to affiliations with food banks and those pantries who have none. Work is being done to organize bulk purchasing with the help of Chris Mesker. Waiting on information from one large pantry and then information will be compiled.

Heather asked if there was information being collected regarding food pantries that are closing or modifying services.

6. **Public Comments:** Moved at request of Commissioner Hurlburt. Jiff Martin requested a show of those that wanted to make comments to ensure that time was sufficient. All agreed.
  - Chelsea Gazillo- She is working on a proposal with the CT delegation for a National Health Incentive Program to reimburse SNAP participants for purchases at farmers' markets. MA has a similar program. This would include dairy and meat, but would have a cap. She will share information to the group. Bill Seedman offered to make contacts at DSS if that would be helpful.
  - Fred Goodman asked if any work had been done with food pantries in Northeast. Robin noted that she is trying to make contacts but has been unsuccessful and any help would be appreciated. They will connect outside of the group.
7. **Next Steps:**
  - Share Healthy Incentives information from Chelsea.
  - Connect Fred and Robin, Chelsea and Bill.



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- Next meeting: July 16, 2020
8. Meeting adjourned by Commissioner Hurlburt at 10:17 AM

Respectfully submitted by Erin Windham, AMIR 1, May 28, 2020