



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Office of the Commissioner

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer



Connecticut Food Policy Council

MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2025

1:00 PM- 3:00 PM

Via Zoom

Members in Attendance: Bryan Hurlburt, Dan Giacomi, Kafi Rouse, Lynn Peccerillo Hills, Marilyn Lonczak, Martha Page, Molly Devanney, Monica Pacheco, Patrick Doyle, Shawn Joseph, Tida Infahsaeng

Members Absent: none

Members of the Public: Andrew May, Sherill Baldwin, AliGhiorse, Christine Caruso, Gabriela, Heather Peracchio, Holley Atkinson, Jennie Hirsch, Kaitlyn Kimball, Kim Boulette, Meg Hourigan, Nicole Lawton, Daniela Puglielli, Ella Kennen

1. Call to Order at 1:02pm
2. Review and approval of meeting minutes from January 9, 2025
 - a. Approved with an edit from Mairlyn, DPH.
3. Public Comment
4. Old Business
5. New Business
 - a. Presentation by Andrew May University of Vermont, ASPIRES project.
 - b. April council field trip
 - i. 90 mins for Grocery on Broad, Gather 55/Hands on Hartford, potentially add on a visit to KNOX
 - ii. Cyrena to contact site hosts, send out doodle poll of dates/times to council members, and ask site hosts about #s they would be able to accommodate so see if it could be opened up to non-council members.
 - iii. Perhaps a May field trip to CT Foodshare in Wallingford
6. Board Member Updates
 - a. Martha: Working with Hartford HHS on CDC REACH grant, trying to elevate the role of the City's FPC as a convener of conversations. 2-3 meetings coming with City to elevate resident voice and working to encourage the Mayor to encourage the development of another full service grocery store in the City.
 - b. Marilyn Lonczak: SNAP education services talking with University of St.

Josephs and seeing if there can be coordinator between SNAP Ed and WIC. No immediate threat to WIC pending anticipated gov't shutdown, encouraging clients to keep appointments. SNAP-Ed Direct Education Services with USJ have resumed as of this month. If folks would like to learn more about what SNAP-Ed offers, we'd love to share. Contact Jennifer.Vinci@ct.gov
 Kicked off our Go NAPSACC Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Cohort this Saturday with a group of child care providers in Waterbury. There are 9 working through this 5-step quality improvement process to better support families with infants in their care. If anyone has an interest in becoming a Go NAPSACC consultant and conducting PSE activities with childcare providers in their community, we'd be happy to meet and discuss how we can partner. Contact Jen Vinci for more information.

- c.
- d. Monica Pacheco: Newly formed cohort of regional FTS coordinators making connections with schools and farms to make purchases under the local food for schools' program- are the boots on the ground work we needed. 1.8 million that we're working on spending down of the LFS funds. Early May first FTS summit- save the date coming soon. School food service directors- it's a complicated time for them within price increases and are working on figuring out ways to pivot to meet the nutritional needs of students. \$4.6 million for k-12 and a little over a million to Early Child Care providers was terminated.
- e. Patrick Doyle: Continue to move forward and just want to encourage people to act now and not wait. On March 21st our greenhouses are open to community gardeners to start seeds, in the process of connecting with those who need space right now.
- f. Kafi Rouse: Shared out about the public meeting calendar and we do a lot out of community engagement work. Construction season is coming up and we need to hear if it's keeping from getting to where they need to go. [*Connecticut State Agency Public Meeting Calendar*](#)
- g. Dan Giacomini: Notified by federal partners that we are covered through April and would see disruptions after that if there was a prolonged shutdown. In the budget reconciliation there is a potential cost sharing on the SNAP benefit side on the state/federal side, have been some conversation and interviews given that congress would be looking to state sharing. Modeling from 10% would equate to about 91 Million dollars and 25% would equate to about. would have to look into reducing benefits or reducing eligibility. Encouraging people to speak to the council members about what are the impacts of cost sharing. Have been no changes at this point though so are working on the Summer EBT program and have been notified that benefit amount will remain the same at \$40/month. \$36 million distributed last year and we hope to meet this amount

or exceed this year.

- h. Tida Infahsaeng: Encouraging people to file taxes early as the potential to get funds back through the earned income tax credit. Can get assistance for free to help people pay their taxes. Launched the ALICE fund which a direct cash assistance fund- <https://www.unitedwaycwc.org/alice-fund> which provides debit cards. Looking for referral partners currently. \$600/participant. Just announced our new grant cycle for this year and are adding Civic Engagement and Advocacy <https://www.unitedwaycwc.org/grant-opportunities>
 - i. https://ctproject.org/eitc?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=21900809238&utm_term=&utm_content=&hsa_acc=3457880333&hsa_cam=21900809238&hsa_grp=&hsa_ad=&hsa_src=x&hsa_tgt=&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwhMq-BhCFARIsAGvo0KepzqosIOSSEU5x_CCZXmKMtvuZ0XSfFM24_9fdq7VoqIT98ZfiGaIaAuMSEALw_wcB
 - ii. [Welcome to Direct File | Direct File | Internal Revenue Service](#)
- i. Molley Devanney: in CT is that we have had two weeks without an out break for the bird flu so we are thrilled. Prices are still going to be crazy especially with the demand this time of year. Grateful that we have a later Easter holiday to hopefully see a small decrease in prices.
- j. Bryan Hurlburt: Was at our Farmer Market Manager meeting today was a shift of getting ready for Spring and what we can do to meet the needs of residents for the FMNP. Last year we had 1M in redemption, which was the highest yet, lots of partners and relationships needed to make this happen. Very concerned about a federal shutdown and what it means for the ag community, there are many farmers who rely on direct grants and loans from USDA. LFPA25 was terminated, was \$3.7 million in CT, really surprised and disappointed that this will not continue. Current contracts will continue through October 2025. Ag Day at the Capitol next Wednesday

7. Next Meeting Date

- a. May 15, 2025, 1-3pm

8. Adjourn

- a. Dan motioned to adjourn and seconded by Patrick. Meeting Adjourned at 2:25pm

Meeting minutes submitted by Cyrena Thibodeau, AMIR 2 on 3/20/25.