



## CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Office of the Commissioner

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# Connecticut Food Policy Council

## MEETING MINUTES

July 10, 2025

1:00 PM- 3:00 PM

Via Zoom

### 1. Call to Order

- a. Facilitator: Hannah Carty, CT Department of Agriculture
- b. Members Present:
  - i. Patrick Doyle (KNOX Hartford)
  - ii. Molly Devanney (Highland Park Market)
  - iii. Martha Page (Consultant)
  - iv. Lynn Peccerillo-Hills (Department of Administrative Services)
  - v. Monica Pacheco (Department of Education)
  - vi. Kafi Rouse (Department of Transportation)
  - vii. Marilyn Lonczak (Department of Public Health)
  - viii. Daniel Giacomi (Department of Social Services)
- c. Members Absent:
  - i. Tida Infahsaeng
  - ii. (United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut)
  - iii. Shawn Joseph (Produce Wholesaler)
  - iv. Bryan P. Hurlburt (Commissioner of Agriculture – represented by facilitator Hannah Carty)
- d. Public Attendees:
  - i. Members of the public introduced themselves in the Zoom chat.
- e. The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM by Martha Page at the request of facilitator Hannah Carty. Attendance was confirmed, and public participants were welcomed.

### 2. Review and approval of meeting minutes from May 15, 2025

- a. Motion to approve: Monica Pacheco
- b. Second: Martha Page
  - i. Motion carried unanimously without objection.

### 3. Public Comment

- a. Michael Puglisi (UConn) announced that SNAP-Ed funding, which had been cut in a recent bill, was restored by the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committee earlier that morning. He emphasized the critical role of SNAP-Ed in food security and nutrition education.
- b. Council members and public attendees expressed relief and appreciation for

this update.

- c. No additional public comments were received.

#### 4. Old Business

- a. No old business was raised.

#### 5. New Business

- a. Presentation: Hartford Food Policy Forum

- i. Presenters: Meg Hourigan (CFSA) and Martha Page (Consultant)

- 1. The Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy presented findings from its community engagement and food system analysis.

- 2. Key themes included:

- a. Definition of “good food”: abundant, affordable, accessible (including in emergencies), ethically produced, culturally relevant, sustainable, locally sourced when possible, and not wasted.

- b. Hartford’s ongoing food apartheid: residents face disproportionate barriers to healthy, affordable food compared to surrounding suburbs.

- c. Community priorities: improved wages, better transportation and delivery access, higher-quality and culturally relevant foods in pantries and schools, affirming and welcoming program spaces.

- d. Concerns about displacement and gentrification from new food businesses.

- e. Support for local food businesses, cooperative models, and food careers as sustainable livelihoods.

- 3. Council members discussed ways to align state-level food policy with the Forum’s recommendations.

- b. Legislative Updates

- i. Kayleigh Royston (DoAg staff) provided legislative updates on food policy.

- ii. Members discussed how recent legislation may impact school nutrition programs and food access initiatives.

- c. Field Trip Planning

- i. Plans confirmed to look into planning for an August visit to a summer meal site.

- ii. Members agreed the trip would focus on learning from site operations and exploring strategies to strengthen summer food access.

- d. Budget Review

- e. Hannah Carty reviewed the Council’s budget.

- f. Discussion included existing commitments (e.g., website hosting), and

the need to strategically allocate limited resources.

- g. Members suggested prioritizing funds for emerging gaps and potential educational outreach to legislators.

#### 6. Board Member Updates

- a. Martha Page stressed the importance of community-informed food policy, highlighting food education as a top priority raised during Hartford engagement sessions.
- b. Patrick Doyle suggested setting aside funds to support legislative education during session and applauded the Forum's work. He also inquired about ongoing budget obligations.
- c. Marilyn Lonczak raised questions about the SNAP-Ed funding announcement, clarifying differences between federal and state funding. **SNAP-Ed** Utilizing Go NAPSACC website for Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care and Farm to ECE cohorts. Partnership with City of Hartford REACH grant, CACFP and Staffed Family Child Care Network who are supporting a cohort of Hartford-based Family Child Care Providers in completing the Farm to ECE module. Expect 4 providers to complete the module this summer. Planning for another cohort to begin in the fall. Continue to partner with OEC Elevate to support providers in utilizing Nutrition and Physical Activity projects for their Elevate program plans. SNAP-Ed is doing outreach to support Employers who have low-wage workers in becoming Breastfeeding Friendly. Referrals welcome. SNAP-Ed can support the purchase of supplies or materials to assist in launching a lactation support program. Redesign of the ItsWorthItCT.org website to align with new creatives and themes of campaign based on feedback received in an evaluation that was conducted previously. SNAP-Ed & WIC are working on implementing another run of the It's Worth It! Breastfeeding Campaign. The campaign will run during Breastfeeding Awareness Month (August) through the end of October. DPH's contractor, University of Saint Joseph, provides Nutrition and Physical Activity education to CT residents who are SNAP eligible, e.g., income less than 200% FPL. Hundreds of activities each year, reaching over 3500 individuals on average. There are 4 other agencies in CT also providing SNAP-Ed nutrition and physical activity education.
- d. Daniel Giacomi clarified DSS's administrative role for SNAP-Ed, explaining that the funding restoration was still only a Senate markup and not final.
- e. Monica Pacheco reported that the Local Food for Schools Incentive Program will shift to the Department of Education in FY26, with expanded funding of \$1.5M (FY26) and \$3.4M (FY27).
- f. Kafi Rouse shared that DOT partners annually with DoAg on a "Harvest Time / Tractor Awareness" campaign, reminding drivers to exercise caution around farm vehicles during the summer.
- g. Molly Devanney was present but did not provide an update.
- h. Other members (Tida Infahsaeng, Shawn Joseph, Bryan Hurlburt) were absent.

7. Next Meeting Date
  - a. The next meeting will be held on September 11, 2025, from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM via Zoom.
8. Adjourn
  - a. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:55 PM.