

DRAFT
Meeting Minutes
Inter-agency Food & Nutrition Policy Advisory Council

DATE: September 30, 2014

TIME: 1:00 PM

LOCATION: 401 Conference Room, Rhode Island Department of Health

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Janet Coit, Director, Department of Environmental Management (DEM); Michael Fine, MD, Director, Department of Health (HEALTH); Allison Rogers, Policy Director, Department of Administration (DOA); Aleatha Dickerson, Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA); John Rogers, Department of Corrections (DOC); Sandra Powell, Director, Department of Human Services (DHS); Becky Bessette, RI Department of Education (RIDE)

ATTENDEES: Lissa DiMauro, Department of Human Services; Ken Ayars, DEM; Christopher Ausura, HEALTH; Kenneth Payne, RI Food Policy Council; Kayla Ringelheim, RI Food Policy Council/Farm Fresh RI; Ann Barone, HEALTH; Christine Ruggeri, DHS; Ernest Julian, HEALTH; Joan Milas, JPM & Associates; Sheri Griffen, Farm Fresh Rhode Island; Carl Borg, HEALTH; Bill Bright, Boys and Girls Clubs of America; Debbie Davis, Boys and Girls Clubs of America; Erin Gilliatt, East Providence Boys and Girls Club

1. Approval of July 21, 2014 Meeting Minutes

- Dr. Fine, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM.
- Dr. Fine called for a motion to approve the July 21st, 2013 meeting minutes.
- Director Coit made a motion to approve, but requested the minutes be condensed into an easier to read format
- Alli Rogers, acting as Director Licht's designee, seconded the motion.
- Dr. Fine called for discussion and hearing no discussion approved the minutes.

2. Public Comments Received

- Dr. Fine called for public comments. No public comments were received.

3. Hope and Main Presentation

- Dr. Fine stated that due to Lisa Raiola's absence the presentation on Hope and Main would be held until the end of the meeting.

4. New Council Member Presentations

- Dr. Fine requested that the new members of the IFNPAC each provide a short presentation on current local food efforts from each of their respective agencies.

- Becky Bessette from the Department of Education stated that in RI 36 of 37 school districts have a food service contractor who provides the food served in school and those contractors facilitate the ordering and sourcing of all food served. The requests

for proposals for the food service contracts all have language regarding the utilization of local food, and that a recent report from USDA showed that all 37 of RI school districts are purchasing at least one product from local sources, and currently approximately 10% of all food purchased comes from local sources.

- John Rogers from the Department of Corrections stated that the DOC serves approximately 10,000 meals per day, and they are currently pursuing small internal programs where low risk inmates are producing food to be served to the inmate population. He stated that the current spending levels for produce are around \$30-40,000 a month for produce, and the cost of much of the local produce would make a major transition to difficult due to budgetary constraints.

- Director Coit asked Nicole Pollock to clarify the current laws regarding state purchasing of local food products, and Nicole stated that the current law provides language about a preference for local food, but without a specified threshold for the percentage of local food which should be purchased.

- Dr. Fine asked John Rogers if there was interest on behalf of DOC to expand the current small scale growing program. John replied that there was, but the interest is not great due to the small impact it has on their food costs, and the high cost it would require to expand to a capacity which would support the DOC's food service operation, mostly due to land and equipment costs associated with growing more food.

- Dr. Fine called on Aleatha Dickerson to present on the current practices at the Division of Elderly Affairs. Aleatha stated that their current work in the local food arena revolved mostly around their partnership with DEM to support the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.

- Dr. Fine called for any additional comments from the Council on member actions to support the local food economy, and Director Powell added that she would like to see additional efforts and programs aimed at developing greater access, and infrastructure within the State's urban core.

5. Rhode Island Food Policy Council Update:

- Dr. Fine called on Ken Payne, Chairman of the RI Food Policy Council (RIFPC), to present on the recent efforts of the RIFPC.

- Ken Payne stated that the Food Solutions New England workgroup has taken on the issue of equity within the New England food system vision; and will be providing periodic updates to the IFNPAC as work proceeds.

- The Food Policy Council is positioning themselves to assemble food access and food systems data to fulfill the request of the IFNPAC last year.

- At the most recent meeting of the RIFPC they voted to develop a new goal health goal, more information will be shared as the specific of that goal are developed.
- Recently multiple food system stakeholders convened at the request of the RIFPC to discuss a RI application for a USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant. Consensus was reached that an organization other than the RIFPC should apply, and that Farm Fresh Rhode Island would create a joint application to increase the reach of their existing “Bonus Bucks” program.
- The RIFPC is promoting another “Relish Rhody” campaign and Ken asked that everyone participate by including sending a picture of one local food related activity to the RIFPC on October 24th, Food Day.
- Ken Payne provided the IFNPAC with a list of strategies and priorities for the RIFPC for 2015:
 - a. Develop movement building communications plan and strategy to address the need to increase understanding of the food system, and to let people know who they are and what they do
 - b. Increase understanding of the New England Food Vision; defining RI’s role in regional food system development
 - c. Coordinate a stronger ecosystem for food sector business development in a manner consistent with economic development plans for RI
 - d. Increase institutional purchasing by working with the State, FFRI, and Food to Institution New England
 - e. Develop a robust farmers market incentive program
 - f. Increase infrastructure and education for food waste diversion
 - g. Implement Health Goal, with specific attention to decreasing diet related illnesses in RI
- Ken asked that the IFNPAC work in collaboration with the RIFPC in the development and issuance of transition documents for the incoming governor to ensure continuity of message from the different leaders both within and without state government who are working to develop a more equitable and robust food system

6. Regional Food System Discussion:

- Dr. Fine called on Director Coit to present on the Food Solutions New England 50/60 vision.
- Director Coit provided a brief overview of the vision’s goals to develop a food system that would support 50% of all food in NE be produced and consumed within the region by the year 2060. This would require shifts in consumers spending, as well as modifications to dietary patterns, and a coordinated effort across all six New England states.

- John Rogers stated that he was extremely supportive of not only the goals to increase the amount of local production and consumption, but also wants the Council to be cognizant of the impact this will have on the local environment as well.

- Director Coit added that there will be considerable challenges to implementing this goal, but it would be feasible with a coordinated effort.

7. Draft Finding and Recommendation Five:

- Dr. Fine asked that the Council members read the language of Draft Finding and Recommendation Five to consideration. See the following language:

Finding 5: Recently Food Solutions New England released a vision for a regional food system outlining the need for a comprehensive approach to the growing demands for food at both the regional and national levels; and the impact which our current system has on population health, availability of products, strength of the national food supply, and the vulnerability of New England due to the region's position in the food production/consumption chain. This vision calls for 50% of food consumed in the New England region to be sourced from within the region by the year 2060. Although the vision developed by Food Solutions New England is not specific to Rhode Island, it outlines the needs for the region and can be used as a road map for a more sustainable and stable food system for both Rhode Island and the New England region.

Recommendation 5: The Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory Council will endorse the New England Food Vision developed by Food Solutions New England, and will work in conjunction with the Rhode Island Food Policy Council, Farm Fresh Rhode Island, and other partners to develop a Rhode Island specific plan which will support the regional food vision.

- Dr. Fine called for discussion on Finding and Recommendation Five

- Allison Rogers requested clarification on the issue of what would be considered both local and regional, specifically would it need to be grown/complete its life cycle in RI or the NE region; or would products landed or processed here be included in the 50% goal?

- Following discussion on the question from multiple sources, Dr. Fine requested that the language be modified to state that the word "sourced" be changed to "grown or caught"; and asked the Council membership if this would satisfy the issue. The Council unanimously agreed, and requested the change be made.

- Dr. Fine asked the Council if they felt that beyond the support of this Council, the Council should request approval and adoption of this plan by the RI General Assembly, and the incoming Governor.

- Director Powell agreed that there would need to be further adoption, and that this would need to be a recommendation from the IFNPAC to the General Assembly and

the Governor as it impact the State of Rhode Island, not just the agencies represented in the IFNPAC.

- Dr. Fine asked that the language be amended to reflect that recommendation from the Council, and that the word “endorse” be changed to “support” as well.

8. Hope and Main Presentation:

- Dr. Fine called on Lisa Raiola from Hope and Main to present information about the project to the Council.
- Lisa’s full PowerPoint presentation is available upon request
- Lisa stated that the Hope and Main Food Incubator is the end result of a multi year, \$3.2 million loan from the US Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the project was to develop a stand alone incubator where food based businesses can come to a physical location to develop and launch food based businesses.
- The project consists of 4 main components/goals:
 - a. Education
 - b. Job training/creation
 - c. Community food hub development/anchor institution
 - d. Infrastructure to change consumption and nutrition outcomes
- The facility is located in Warren RI, on Main street; and consists of multiple kitchens for a variety of different food service operational needs such as baking, catering, canning, bottling, labeling, storage; and has the only gluten free kitchen in the north east.
- They hope to engage 100 small businesses, and create more than 200 jobs within RI.
- After numerous meetings with different producers, farmers, and fisherman they have heard from the community that a Co-Op model is not the desired approach of the community, but more of a maker’s collaborative that provides opportunity for feedback throughout the food distribution chain. This would allow the different sectors to have the information necessary to react to changes in availability and consumer demand.
- Lisa requested that this Council adopt strategies which would support the growth and development of better nutrition education materials to help the consumer better understand the impact of food choice.
- Director Powell stated that a project like this is a critical component in the development of a more sustainable local food system.

9. Adjournment

- Allison Rogers, as acting Chair, requested a motion to adjourn the meeting
- Director Powell motioned to adjourn.
- John Rogers seconded the motion.
- Allison Rogers adjourned the meeting at 2:29 PM.

DRAFT