Connecticut Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 11, 2013

Members Present: John Frassinelli (SDE-Chair), Bill Seedman (DSS), Marcia Maillard (DPH), Linda Drake (UConn), Rick Macsuga (DOAG), Gloria McAdam (Foodshare)
Guests Present: Helana Hoover-Litty (CT Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics), Jean King (consultant), Mary Parizo (EHC!), Susan Dang (DPH), Tyshaundle Wiley (DPH), Teri Dandeneau (SDE), Martha Page (HFS), Meg Hourigan (EHC!), Ellen Sloan (DCP), Jiff Martin (UCONN Ext.), Linda Piotrowicz (DOAG), Jason Bowsza (DOAG)

June 13, 2013 meeting minutes were approved unanimously. Approval moved by Bill Seedman, seconded by Teri Dandeneau.

Additions to the agenda:

1. Meg Hourigan is a VISTA worker at EHC! who is working for the State Nutrition Access Committee. The purpose is to identify barriers to federal food assistance programs in CT and collaborate with state departments to create a single multi-benefits application. The summary of this work is attached.

2. Bill Seedman reported on the new DSS task based service delivery model that was implemented this week: 230 DSS staff are answering phone calls; residents can get help from any person they talk with on the phone(no longer required to only talk to one worker); 2 new FNS waivers were implemented; emergency food assistance can be granted prior to completing an interview. There are 11 new farmers markets with equipment to accept SNAP benefits; new guidelines allow individual farmers to secure equipment where markets do not have it.

   Bill also described a project of West Hartford residents seeking incentives for schools to purchase local produce (Grow Great Schools).

Agenda Items:

Governor's Council on Agricultural Development

Linda Piotrowicz provided an update on the work of the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development; current work of task forces; and plans for next report in the fall. Some CFPC members are participating in task forces.

October 17 CFPC Forum with Local Councils

Strengthening Connecticut's Food System with Local Food Policy Groups --Mary Parizo reported on the subcommittee work planning the October 17 forum. We want the event to be an interactive training; Mark Winne will be the major presenter; we will also have case studies of effective local policy work. We discussed the possibility of a lunchtime speaker. We will do a "save the date" mailing soon and an

invitation around Sept. 1. Tagen Engel from New Haven Food Policy Council has offered to have their interns help contact local groups. Jean and Helena will put together a background script for them to use. Jiff Martin suggested that we might want to seek input from Rhode Island or Masschusetts' state councils – we discussed our interest in focusing on local councils – but perhaps those state groups would have case study ideas.

Strategic Planning

Information had been forwarded to Council members about other state food policy groups and actions. Jean King pointed out that when you review the past work of the CFPC we have tackled many of the issues discussed in the ideas about policy work. Now we need to think about where we want to focus activities next. The Council talked about whether we might want to recommend changes and expansions to the membership – either through legislation or by Council action. There are many others in state government who are working on issues related to food policy. Are we considering changes to the function of CFPC, if so, do we need to look at the form? Perhaps one starting point is to measure the dollars and people now working in state government that affect food issues.

The Council agreed to hold a special Strategic Planning meeting on August 22 from 12 p.m to 4 p.m We will not hold the regular meeting of the Council scheduled for August 8. The location for the August 22 meeting will be announced later.

State Nutrition Access Committee

Purpose: To identify current barriers to federal food assistance programs and collaborate with multiple state departments (DSS, DPH, SDE) and nonprofits to create a single multi-benefits application.

Steps:

1. Focus groups – survey of the following:

	SNAP	WIC	Child Nutrition Programs	TANF/TFA
Eligible recipients	x	x	x	x
Current recipients	x	x	x	x
Staff	x	x	x	x

   Surveying these groups will help us identify barriers in these application processes. Find who is using multiple benefits and who isn't and why. Participants can be surveyed in office, or special focus groups can be invited using social media and traditional media, mailings, etc. Incentives to participate could include promo baskets from farmers' markets (farmers' market gets to advertise, participant gets food in exchange for time).

2. Cross-departmental analysis of eligibility requirements. I've started to do this, and my goal is to make a table comparing programs – what has an age requirement, what the verification process is, etc. What's the minimum data required to make a multi-benefits application? **I need paper application samples from each program to do this.**

3. Once we've laid this groundwork, it may be necessary to get an outreach grant from FNS to create the application itself – look into this. A contact at Food Research and Action Council suggested this may be necessary.

Can this be done?

- Pennsylvania's COMPASS system allows residents to apply for social service programs ranging from health care access and heating assistance to food assistance. The system has been in place since 2001.
- California has approved a multi-benefits application but has not yet implemented it.

More information

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