

Cumberland County Food Security Council Notes

Thursday, October 13, 2016, 9:30-11:30 am

UME Coop Extension, 75 Clearwater Drive, Falmouth, ME

Council Members Attending: Clara Whitney, Mary Turner, Kathy Savoie, Richard Rudolph, Judy Gatchell, Jan Bindas-Tenney, Jim Hanna
Guests: Adeline Browne, GSFB AmeriCorps; Alexandra Mediate, USM Food Studies Program Administrator; Sharon Martin, Community Plates

We began the meeting with the following Desired Outcomes

By the end of the meeting, we will have:

- Reviewed agenda and why we are here
- Identified next steps and tentative plan for CCFSC incorporation.
- Reviewed CCFSC USDA CFP Goals, Objectives and Implementation
- Reviewed results from Feeding the 5000 and determine follow-up priorities
- Learned preliminary findings from pantry client research
- Decided options for next CCFSC policy priorities
- Updated each other on upcoming plans/activities
- Confirmed dates for next meetings

• **Reviewed agenda and why we are here**

Introduced ourselves. Shared reading of CCFSC Mission, Vision and Values statements.

- Identified next steps and tentative plan for CCFSC incorporation.

Good Shepherd Food Bank, CCFSC's fiscal agent, has requested that we become establish independence from GSFB. Fiscally agency is not a permanent relationship, and a few financial issues have emerged, based on our dependency on GSFB's accounting. The initial assumption is that CCFSC would become its own 501c3. After discussion at this meeting, we have decided to consider additional alternatives, as well. CCFSC wants to be sure it can maintain its independence from any single organizational agenda and function well as a "backbone" organization as described by the Collective Impact model. GSFB would like CCFSC to complete its transition by 6/30/17.

This transition will be the main topic of our November Leadership Team meeting, which has a standing date of November 10. We are considering alternative dates of 11/8 or 11/9. We will confirm this with you well in advance.

• **Reviewed CCFSC USDA CFP Goals, Objectives and Implementation**

A four year, \$400,000 USDA Community Food Project was awarded to the Somali Bantu Community Association for their agriculture project. The proposal was written by CCFSC and we are a subawardee. Our portion will be about \$30,000 per year to support and expand our existing work along with helping the Somali Bantu build their capacity. About 5% will go to St. Mary's Nutrition Center to support nutrition education, including connecting the Bantu farmers and their produce with the Somali and larger community.

Kathy Savoie wanted to be sure we connected with Coop Extension's Eat Well Program Coordinator, Ruth Cyr. Jim will set up a system to report on this grant to the Council.

• ***Reviewed results from Feeding the 5000 and determine follow-up priorities:***

Feeding the 5000, by all accounts, was a successful event. CCFSC was one of the three lead organizers and 10 Council members were key participants in the organizing committee and event.

As discussed at our Council meetings, the event was not intended to be an end in itself. With that in mind Jim formulated the questions below to help determine next steps. They are intended for people who participated in the event, as well as people who care about taking action to reduce wasted food.

- What challenges related to wasting food in Cumberland County should we address?
- What opportunities are you aware of that will prevent food from being wasted?
- What resources are you aware of that will support efforts to keep nutritious food in the system?
- What are you doing differently now that you are more aware of the problem of wasted food? Please be as specific as possible.

All Council members are welcome to participate in follow up efforts.

• ***Reviewed summary findings from Lake Region Study and FS Innovation Center plan***

There are some exciting food system developments in the Lake Region.

The Lake Region Food Study conducted by Ken Meter was released. It can be found here:

<http://www.crcworks.org/melakes16.pdf>

Recommendations include:

1. Hire a Local Foods Coordinator for the Bridgton region.
2. Facilitate the serving of locally raised foods at community meals. Community groups in the Lakes Region host nearly four community meals each week.
3. Build Community Networks that foster interest in food produced in the Lakes Region.

Additionally, St. Joseph's College has begun planning its "Institute for Local Food Systems Innovation" Peter Nielsen is leading the effort. It will integrate five existing resources/ new elements/enterprises currently being considered for inclusion in the Institute.

- 1.) St. Joe's crop and livestock farm
- 2.) renovated stone barn conference center
- 3.) commercial kitchen and market/storefront
- 4.) poultry processing
- 5.) educational programs

Also, while there was not an organized Hunger Action Month in the Lakes Region this September, the community is planning a Lakes Region Harvest Supper fundraiser for October 22.

• ***Learned preliminary findings from pantry client research***

Clara and Jan discussed the status of the Pantry Client Survey. Over 2,000 surveys were collected and six focus groups were conducted statewide. Currently, the data is being analyzed carefully. They expect to release preliminary results in a few weeks with a complete report ready for the next legislative session.

The process served as a good organizing model with low-income self advocates identified and relationships strengthened.

• ***Decided options for next CCFSC policy priorities***

It is anticipated that Child Nutrition Reauthorization will finally be complete either in the lame duck session or right after the new Congress takes office. So far, it appears that the progress achieved in the last reauthorization will be maintained, though we are expecting little additional progress.

Economic policy

CCFSC supports the statewide Minimum Wage increase referendum. It is consistent with our support for other policies that support increased income for low income people. We will consider additional proactive economic policies to support.

Senior advocacy

GSFB AmeriCorps member Olivia Dooley is focused on Senior Nutrition, gathering data to inform policy and program recommendations. She will be invited to the next full Council meeting to discuss what she is discovering.

Farm Bill

While unable to attend this meeting, Emily Horton sent an email informing that Rep. Pingree's office has begun considering the next Farm Bill and will be seeking input from the Council.

Homeless Voices for Justice is conducting candidate forums at in Portland this campaign season. Dates 10/20, 10/25 and 11/1 at Preble Street's Soup Kitchen at 9:30 am.

• ***Confirmed dates for next meetings***

Council: 12/8

CCFSC Leadership Team: 11/9?, TBD.

MNCFC Summit: Postponed