

Minutes

St. Paul/Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission

April 4, 2011

5:30-7:30

Location: Ramsey County Plato Building Star Meeting Room

Members attending: Becky Meyer, Hai Truong, Colleen Schlieper, Diane Dodge, Helene Murray, Linda Littrell, Nadja Berneche, Katie Koecher, Kentale Morris, Lisa Jore, Lenny Russo

Others attending: Julie Seiber (staff), Maggi Adamek (consultant), Anne Hunt, Samantha Henningson, Bonnie Jackelen, Lindsey Hoeft, Vanne Owens Hayes, Mark Granlund, Eunice Abiemo, Sarah Eichberger, Paula Huffman, Megan Davis, Chad Ebert, Michael Goebel, Jaya Ginter, and Sean Berneche

Welcome and introductions: Hai and Becky

Announcements:

- Fargo/Moorhead is setting up a Food Policy Council. This group will model their work after the St. Paul/Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission. They will be following St. Paul/Ramsey County steps and procedures to begin their process.
- April 9th: upcoming event: Alliance for Sustainability (focus- networking, speakers, future of the Twin Cities). Bernie Hesse will be a representative for the FNC at this event.
- April 19th: upcoming event: Will Allen and Seitu Jones will be presenting on urban agriculture issues. Time: 12:00-1:30 (MacArthur Fellows Dialogue), 2:30-3:30 (Reception for students), 5:00-7:00 (Community Reception).

Making Your Case: What Commission Members Need to Know about connecting with Local Policymakers: Samantha Henningson, Anne Hunt, and Bonnie Jackelen

Samantha and Anne provided the Commission with strategies for connecting to City Council members. Some points to keep in mind when developing and presenting recommendations to the City Council are:

- Could present as a package of formal recommendations or, for example, as issues specifically for the Planning Commission.
- Before finalizing the recommendations, meet with Council members first to discuss ideas.
- Address what Council member's constituents want.
- Bring constituents' concerns along with data to meetings with City Council members.
- Recognize what issues can be handled within City Council limits.
- Speak to what would require City Council action.
- Provide education pieces on topics relating to the recommendations, i.e. post on Website.
- Categorize into immediate, short-term goals and long-term goals.

- Categorize into areas of ordinance changes, budget related, etc.
- Recognize the strong Mayor system within St. Paul.
- Work to establish community support behind the work being done.
- Important to get feedback from communities and use their feedback while developing the recommendations.
- Important to have a “campaign plan” where people can rally around some of the final recommendations.
- Try to focus on topics that Council members are passionate about as well as their constituents.
- Could have these recommendations reviewed within City Council offices or within policy work sessions (more informal meeting setting).

Bonnie provided the Commission with strategies for connecting with County Board members. Bonnie echoed many of the same advice for the FNC as Samantha and Anne. She believed it was a good idea to speak with County Commission members and “find champions to push the recommendations through.”

- A place to present and discuss recommendations would be “workshop meetings” – which are informal sessions:
 - This would provide a chance for real dialogue before putting the recommendations on the County Board agenda.
 - Best time for workshop meeting is Tuesday at 1:30 (location: large conference room in Courthouse) (County Board meetings are every Tuesday at 9am)
 - There are no workshop meetings in the months of July and August
- Establishing timelines is important for the work with the County
 - Official Board meeting information should be given to Bonnie 6-12 weeks in advance
 - For the tentatively scheduled workshop on May 24th, should have information to Bonnie by May 10-14
- Bonnie provided a handout with Commissioners contact information.
- Budget work is done in August and September and is a busy time

Bonnie recommended that FNC members to write a short memo (2 pages) to send in advance of a meeting with City or County members (Bonnie could provide a copy of a template for a memo). The months of May and June are the best months to meet with members. It was also recommended that FNC members write their Commissioners as constituents. Anne, Samantha, and Bonnie are willing to look at the recommendations, documents for review.

Open group discussion after presentation by Bonnie, Samantha, and Anne.

Maggie suggested positioning recommendations as a 1st wave, 2nd wave situations. Recognize that right now the context is collaboration and planning, while in the fall the focus will be implementation of recommendations. City and County staff could be invited to a future meeting to help find the key people to implement the recommendations.

A discussion took place on whether any recommendations were budget related. If so, it is important to introduce and address those first because budget planning is being carried out soon. **By the end of April any items with budget issues should be presented to City or County.** Lenny gave an example of a budget related recommendation coming from the Food Literacy Task Force. The Urban Agriculture Task Force will have some tax-revenue items to recommend, i.e. dealing with land issues.

Lightning Review Session: Sharing Task Force Vision Statements: Group work

All vision statements for each Task Force were provided as a handout. Members of the meeting were divided into 5 groups and each group reviewed all vision statements based on the questions: *what works well about this vision statement?, in what ways does it reflect the purpose and goals of the task force?, and what's missing from the vision statement?* The feedback sheets were given to the task force chairs.

Developing a Process to Review and Refine Task Force Recommendations

All Task Force recommendations are due by April 20th to the staff and co-chairs of the Commission. All recommendations will be put in a spreadsheet and divided into City specific, County specific, long-term, short-term, priority issues, etc.

These recommendations will be presented at the larger Community Meeting in draft form. Feedback from community members will be gathered from the large meeting and taken into consideration when developing the final recommendations.

Group discussion was facilitated to answer the following questions: what are important features of a review process?, how do we balance short and long term priorities?, in what ways will fiscal considerations need to be part of our decision-making?, what do we need to consider with respect to policy and initiatives that are St. Paul or County focused?, what will our process look like?, and how will we get the work done?.

Key points developed through discussion:

- Remember we have the support of City and County staff
- Make sure the voices are heard at the Community Meeting
- Present budget related recommendations soon
- Need to develop the short, middle, and long term goals
- Create recommendations based on the feasibility of implementation
- Recognize what resources there are to get the work done
- Place a higher priority on recommendations that cross-over multiple Task Forces
- Make sure the recommendations fit the mission statement of the FNC
- Support for the recommendations from City and County members, their constitutions, and community members must be developed

- Find the supportive data when developing the recommendations, research where similar ideas have/have not worked, learn from others mistakes and use what has worked in the past
- Prioritize recommendations based on potential for impact (large or small)

Questions and things that require further research:

- How will we advertise the large Community Meeting?
 - Kentale's wife, who works as a Community Organizer consultant, can help, list serves within of Commission members, Ning website, Lenny will highlight in the Star Tribune
- Do we have a record of how many people go to the FNC website?
 - Could this website be a site for advertising the large Community Meeting?
- At the larger Community Meeting there should be a documentation strategy to get community input, a step-by-step process to hear all the voices who attend, i.e. having small tables for each Task Force, structured questions for community members to answer, provide sticky-notes for feedback
- Develop a list of City and County members for each FNC member to contact- "who's who, who knows who, and who's in who's district" (contact Commissioners as constituents)

Final discussion:

May 9th: large Community Meeting. Potential to be held at Gordon Parks School. Kentale's wife will check to see if FNC can rent the facility.

May 23rd: FNC members to discuss recommendations and feedback gained from Community Meeting

May 24th: tentative date for Ramsey County Board workshop to present recommendations

Next meeting:

Monday, May 2, 2011

Location: Ramsey County Plato Building 1st floor Conference Center

90 West. Plato Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55107

Time: 5:30-7:30

Area of focus: Reviewing and prioritizing Task Force recommendations