

Minutes

Saint Paul-Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission meeting August 2, 2010, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Rondo Community Outreach Library, 461 Dale Street North, St Paul.

Members attending: Becky Meyer, Bernie Hesse, Colleen Schlieper, Diane Dodge, Hai Truong, Helene Murray, Katie Koecher, Leonard Russo, Linda Littrell, Lynne Rosetto Kasper, Metric Giles, Hadja Berneche, Robert Schuneman, Seth Kuhl-Stennes.

Staff and guests attending: Jennifer Anderson, Lindsey Hoeft, Sarah Jaycocks, Joel Boblit, Anne Hunt, Marijo Wunderlich, Rob Fulton, Laurie Burns, Jaya Ginter, Urvashi Pokhryal, Maggi Adamek

Members, guests and staff briefly introduced themselves with a statement of their interest in the work of the Commission. Rob Fulton, Director of Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health, welcomed members of the Commission and talked about their roles.

The members engaged in discussion in pairs about the following questions.

- What led you to care about food?
- Why are you interested in providing leadership around food and nutrition issues for our community?

Julie Seiber, staff to the Commission, provided context for the commission.

- Original commission formation in the 1980's
- Review of original strategy (reviewed by community forum in 2002)
- SHIP funding and reactivation
- Purpose and intent moving forward

The group as a whole discussed the following questions:

- What would I like to see the food system/food environment in Ramsey County look like?

The discussion included these issues: micro-enterprise, accessibility, affordability, efficiency, based on locally-grown food creating local jobs, food as a community endeavor, abundant community gardens (waiting lists now); need for food literacy, education regarding foods, consumer education; food culture in families sharing the stories, celebrations around food; cultural competency in the food system;

- What role would I like to see the Commission play in achieving this vision?
- Commission members thoughts included decreasing barriers to people having access to good food such as zoning regulations, new farmers markets; help the city and council “get

out of the way”; lobby for creating needed policies; trying to find the balance between the ends of the political spectrum; question what we value in the food system; education; market pressure to make changes such as decreased sugar and sodium; increase the efficiency in the food system; making sure everyone in the community can eat healthful food; looking into the environmental issues such as affordability and profitability; involving local restaurants.

Groups of two or three told brief stories about a group that they participated in that was effective, productive and enjoyable. What made it that way? What were the characteristics of the group that contributed to it?

Based on those conversations, the members created a list of ways the group could function effectively.

- be inclusive in an authentic way
- example/model, walk the talk
- gain the trust of people we are trying to help
- effective discussion, process, listening
- passion
- common purpose
- adventurous, against status-quo
- prepared/do homework/readings before meeting
- not to be assuming/taking things personally
- speak/working from facts
- measurable results
- humor

Members were asked how they would like to receive communication and all agreed that e-mail was the preferred means. Two options were presented for a date for a working conference in October. October 11 was the date preferred by 13 of the 14 members.

Submitted by Julie Seiber

Next meetings:

- **Monday, September 13** (Second Monday due to Labor Day)
5:30 – 7:30 pm, at **Ramsey County Building, Plato Conference Center**, 90 West Plato Blvd., Saint Paul, 55107 (just west of the intersection of Wabasha and Plato, past the large Health Partners building on the corner—ample parking around the building).
- **Monday, Oct. 11**
4pm – 8 pm; location to be announced: Workshop with Branden Born, Assistant Professor, Department of Urban Design and Planning, University of Washington and on the Advisory Committee for Seattle/King County Food Policy Council, a city/county group similar to this Commission