

Food and Nutrition Commission Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 2, 2014
5:30-7:30 p.m., 90 W. Plato Blvd., Saint Paul, 55107

Members present: Bernie Hess, Colleen Schlieper, Diane Dodge, Helene Murray, Metric Giles, Nadja Berneche, Pat Trotter

Others present: Barb Rose, Tracy Sides, Jaya Ginter, Julie Seiber

Nadja Berneche welcomed the attendees who introduced themselves.

Announcements and events:

- Julie Seiber staffed a table for the Commission at the May 17th Food Hub and Plant Distribution Event on the East Side and informally polled attendees about which food topics they consider important.
- Barb Rose reported that the West Side Farmers Market opening day was very successful with farmers, crafts and entertainment and a good turnout.
- The East Side Food and Wellness Hub planned a community meeting for June 3 to revisit how the group is organized, staffing needs, planning for a harvest dinner in the fall, and assessing the need for and interest in classes.
- Tracy Sides had handouts about the June 12 Urban Oasis Event: What Makes a City Grow? Food! to be held at Wilder Center. The film "Growing Cities" is to be shown.
- Julie announced the October 29-30, Food Access Summit 2014: Organize for Equity to be held at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center sponsored by Minnesota Department of Health and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. There is a call for presenters for the summit. Commission members asked if SHIP funds could be used to send members to this meeting.

Tracy Sides updated the group on the progress of the Urban Oasis project. The Lower Phalen Project will be the fiscal agent and Tracy will be the director. The building in the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary is not likely to be the location since the city may raze it due to its condition. Therefore, the project is looking for other East Side locations to become its home. Other plans include a catering service, cooking and nutrition classes, demonstration garden including composting and a kitchen to teach use of the garden produce and/or produce products, work with child care centers, and having earned income streams to make the project sustainable. The essence of the project is that people will come to understand the whole food system—how the broken system can be changed. A kick-off event featuring community coming together to can tomatoes is planned for August 17. Bernie mentioned that he has access to a cooker that could possibly be used.

Nadja led a discussion to prepare for her presentation and discussion with the SHIP Community Leadership Team on June 4 to share learnings and perhaps to identify common strategies. The discussion included:

- Give them copies of the 2012 recommendations and discuss ways to work together on some of the strategies
- Discuss health equity and structural racism and ask them to join together to create a narrative to change health in the community.
- Discuss the condition of the soil in this urban area and identify ways to find funds to amend it for growing food.
- Determine whether there is a way to bridge the gap between kids and their understanding of the food system and the relationship with health.
- Sponsor community seed libraries.
- Work toward livable wages, especially in the food industry.
- Work toward implementing the 1946 World Health Organization public health doctrine. (link added)
http://www.who.int/governance/eb/who_constitution_en.pdf

A discussion followed about forming task forces to help the work move forward faster. The group decided on two topics:

- What can be done about the health of pollinators/bees? This has been a topic highly concerning to the people who have come to the FNC table at Food Hub events. Pat Trotter agreed to convene this group on July 7 at the regular Commission meeting time (5:30).
- Public policy group to craft discussion questions on issues that are relevant to the food system that can be posed to candidates for office this fall. Bernie Hess will convene this group and determine the first meeting time. Questions and topics will be needed by September. Possible topics include food access including locations of supermarkets and quality of food at food shelves, land access, making “specialty crops” a priority in Minnesota.
- Other task forces will be developed as needed.

Nadja expressed an interest in meeting with someone from the city staff, probably Anne Hunt, to discuss progress on food issues. She and Julie will schedule a meeting.

There was a discussion about membership of the Commission. Is having alternates an option? How exactly does the appointment process work?

Julie will also poll the current membership about meeting days and times to see if there is a better time to meet, since the first Monday at 5:30 was a meeting day/time that was set up with the original membership which has changed over time.

There was agreement not to hold a regular meeting on July 7.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.