



Food & Nutrition Coalition Meeting Minutes November 8, 2017 8:30am – 10:00am

Attendees

AJ Fossel (Community Food Club), Amy Klinkoski (No Kid Hungry), Austin Roelofs (Kids Food Basket), Brandy Arnold (Kids Food Basket), Cherie Elahl (North Kent Connect), Christina Flier (Baxter Community Center), Colene Johnson (?), Connie Bellows (Systems Change), Danielle Simmons (Meals on Wheels), Emily Schichtel (United Way), Erin Skidmore (Access of West MI), Eleanor Moreno (Heartside Gleaning Initiative), Heather Hughesian, Jim Holkeboer (Eastern Ave Christian Ref. Church), Kelly Hagmeyer (GR YMCA), Ken Ford (Flat River Outreach), Kristi Ayers (Kent County), Linda Jones (GR Food Coop Initiative), Mark Lubberts (Spectrum Health), Nicole Hansen (GR YMCA), Shay Krick (Feeding America West MI), Teresa Hendricks (Migrant Legal Aid), Bree Butler (ENTF), Chelsea Totten (SECOM), Dawn Davies (KCHD), Katarina Oblinger (Revive & Thrive Project), Jeff Hoyh (CC West MI), Joanna Bascom (Calvin), Nancy Ullrey (Feeding America West MI)

I. Introductions: Emily Schichtel

- Minutes October 11, 2017

Motion to approve: Dawn

Seconded: Eleanor

Motion passed, with amendments: Correct Eleanor Moreno's place of business.

II. Root Cause Coalition Conference: Conference Attendees

The Root Cause Coalition Conference was held in Louisville Kentucky in October, which a few of our Food & Nutrition Subcommittee members attended. They were able to speak about their experience and give the group an overview of what they learned. One theme from the conference is the need for cross sector collaboration amongst organizations. Another theme is the need for policy and advocacy, there is a need in all areas but particularly around SNAP. There was a sense during the conference that SNAP benefits are under attack. Moving from outputs to outcomes was another theme covered at the conference.

There is a clear connection between quality of health and food security. This year there were more health care providers who attended as well as spoke at the conference in contrast to last year. One take away regarding healthcare is how valuable the use of a screening tool can be. Screening tools are a key factor early on to look at how we can impact healthcare cost. Healthcare providers have the ability to screen their patients for a food insecurity which may tie back into some of their healthcare issues. Physicians frequently go over what diet their patients need to be eating for their health issues, but don't often give thought to whether they can afford such a diet. There are links between eating a poor diet or a diet high in preservatives and medical care costs. The east Michigan and Toledo area surveyed the population who sought healthcare and found that 54% had a social issue which may include food security. While the information at the conference was very valuable, the question of the systemic nature of food security was not directly addressed, but social groups were identified and discussed regarding food security issues specific to them.

The Root Cause Coalition Conference website:

www.rootcausecoalition.org/nationalsummit/presentations has all the PowerPoints available online.



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III. Andy Fisher Event Reflection: Event Attendees

Author Andy Fisher talks about his book “Big Hunger” and discussed how charity food groups work off of the corporate food system, he also talked about the definition of “charitable food”. There was local panel present to speak as well. Teresa was on the panel and was able to bring awareness to the plight of the migrant worker in our food system, especially in Michigan. Migrant workers are an imperative part of the food system and do not usually benefit from equitable wage and fair practices. One issue brought up was about policy regarding a livable wage in our community. There was further discussion around how minimum wage is not a livable wage. It was noted that there were quite a few attendees from the Kent County area who are not present at ENTF committee meetings. This was encouraging since the message of food security and lack thereof was heard by a larger community audience. It provided a valuable opportunity to advocate for policy change and educate community members who may not be aware of these things. One comment was that it would have been heartening to see more big business present at the discussion. It can be difficult to broach the subjects discussed at this event with larger corporations. Small organizations typically have to depend on corporations to receive funding. There may be struggle with working within food rescue without depending on large corporations. Further comments included the possible fear of confrontation and how this fear may hinder progress and the need to move past the uncomfortable feelings and work to solve the problem. Further comments also included the motive behind big businesses and how their main care is about their profit line and their image. There was a group discussion around what would be the outcome of small organizations not taking funding from big businesses. There is the possibility of a future book club being formed to discuss the book to facilitate further conversation. Mark ‘B’ on the roster to indicate if you are interested in joining a book club.

IV. Policy Council Updates: Food Policy Council Member

Going forward, there will be regular updates regarding the Food Policy Council during the monthly Food & Nutrition Coalition meetings. A formation team is working together to develop the Food Policy Council in Kent County. This is currently an informal group, but they are working with Connie and DeDe to form a community engagement aspect. If you are interested in joining the Food Policy Council or attending a meeting, please contact Emma or put a ‘P’ next to your name on the sign in sheet.

V. Exploring Forces in the Food System and Feedback Loops Continued (Workshop): Connie Bellows

The discussion from last January has really changed and developed into a narrative. Looking forward, this upcoming January through February, the narrative that the groups have built will be knit together and worked on further to develop the guiding star, near star, and framing question.

Our roles as attendees today:

- Engaged Participant
- Prepared Facilitator

Up until now groups have worked together to address the challenge question. Our Challenge: Elevate Justice and equity in the local food system through good food practices (fair, affordable, healthy, green)



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to ensure equal access to good food for all residents of Kent County.

Guiding Star – A vision of the desired future state.

Near Star – A 5-10 year outcome that is a foreseeable step to goal (aka guiding star)

Framing Question – the question that will help focus efforts to understand the system we are going to engage.

During today's meeting groups will continue to work on the challenge question addressing the following themes:

- 1) Access/Poverty/Racism/Culture (Facilitators: Emma and Tiffany)
- 2) Activism/Advocacy (Facilitators: Cherie and Emily)

These themes will be discussed regarding the following process steps:

- 1) Review the theme
- 2) Modify / Amend
- 3) Identify / List Key Factors
- 4) Step Back and Review

VI. Next Meeting/Adjourn: Emily Schichtel

For updates, please refer to Trello.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13th, 8:30am – 10:30am.