



## Food & Nutrition Coalition Meeting Minutes

April 11, 2018 8:30am – 10:30am

### **Attendees**

Aj Fossel, Amber Hubbell, Amy Klinkowski, Austin Roelfs, Brandy Alexander, Carola Carassa, Cherie Elahl, David Madiol, Deanna Howland, Eleanor Moreno, Emma Hall, Emily Schichtel, Erin Skidmore, Heather Hughesian, Jeff Hoyh, Jill Myer, Jim Holkeboer, Julie VanGessel, Kari Kroece, Kate Vanderwal, Kelly Hagemeyer, Ken Ford, Kristi Ayers, Linda Jones, Michelle Meulendyk, Nicole Karl, Shay Krick, Stephanie McKendry, Tiffany Page, Wende Randall

### **I. Introductions: Emily Schichtel**

- Minutes, March, 14, 2018

Motion to approve: Jim

Seconded: Shay

Motion Passed, Amendment: Update attendee list from March meeting to include Carola Carassa (HealthNet- Fit Kids 360)

### **II. GRPS Summer Food Programs: Jennifer Laninga**

Jennifer provided a brief overview that the goal of MDE (Michigan Department of Education)'s summer meal programming which is feed the "whole child, the whole year". Two handouts, were provided with Meet up & Eat Up list of summer sites and menu. Jennifer shared the list is tentative in hopes of adding new sites. They are in need of more partners in the Grand Rapids areas, specifically the SE side.

Interested partners will be provided a training and portable refrigeration is available, if needed. The meals are delivered to site between 7:30-11:30AM, regardless of site's scheduled meal time.

Eligible participants are all children under 18 years or individuals under 25 years with a disability, regardless of location with no ID or other verification required.

An average number of 18,000 lunches are provided during school year. However, the summer months only an average of 2,000 are provided. Thus, the need for additional sites to ensure children are being fed during summer months. Group posed some specific questions related to eligibility and logistics of sites. Jennifer indicated each site has flexibility of meal times (i.e. breakfast, lunch, dinner) as long as site indicates meal times for marketing purposes. Sites may do a single day event or a consistent meal offering (i.e. Some libraries are participating during children's programming). Sites may be churches, as long as they are open to community without restrictions. Clarification was made that food must be consumed on-site. Adults who attend with children are unable to participate in meal but local food resources will be provided. Final list should be available in May sometime, based on potential of additional meal sites.

### **III. Kids Food Basket Update: Austin Roelofs, Brandy Arnold, Julie VanGessel**

Austin, Brandy and Julie provided brief overview of Kids Food Basket (KFB) history and mission. Over 7500 "sack suppers" provided annually to children in Muskegon, Kent and Ottawa Counties with Kent



being the largest participant group. Group are focused on three key areas: engagement projects, healthier meal offerings and the urban farming initiative.

- Kids Helping Kids: Offering engagement opportunities to kids through philanthropy, volunteerism and civic engagement.
- Healthy Meals: Changing focus from quantity in sack suppers to quality. Ensuring more nutrient-dense foods and healthy snacks.
- Urban Farming Initiative: KFB purchased 14 acres of historical farm land near Plymouth/Leonard located approximately one mile from KFB current location. The acreage will accommodate a new facility utilizing 5 acres and 9 dedicated acres of land to grow food that will be used in sack suppers. The main goals of urban farming initiative are: 1) to yield- chemical free, local food, 2) provide education to public about urban farming and 3) provide engagement opportunities using an estimated 200 volunteers a day.

Moving forward KFB will be doing a lot of outreach to host listening sessions and speaking with folks individually. KFB hopes to collaborate with more community partners and desires to align with ENTF and KConnect for community outcomes with a strong motivation to move from an emergency response of charity to justice.

Some group questions included if KFB has canvassed neighborhoods on how to integrate in that specific area? They currently work with the local neighborhood association, NECA (North East Community Association) and have attended meetings. Originally, land was intended for apartment/condos but land was preserved through this purchase for urban agriculture. Eleanor inquired if anyone from neighborhood is actively engaged in programming planning. Currently there is representative(s) on board with long-term goal of creating an urban ag committee. Cherie inquired about rural expansion specifically in Northern Kent area. Austin shared that this has been challenging but is addressed in the three-year strategic plan. He shared that it is difficult relying on community support and volunteers (also, funding) and current focus is on Allegan County. Per Cherie, she could love to partner as North Kent Connect can provide volunteers and a space. In addition, Shay mentioned Feeding America can assist with other schools' connections.

#### **IV. Food Policy Council Update: Jill Meyer, Eleanor Moreno, Brandy Arnold**

Subcommittee groups recently met. There has been discussion around possibly partnering with the City of GR urban ag survey to join forces. During the months of May, July and September the City of GR urban ag will be in community. Food policy council will give continue to give an update on what's happening with sharing of info in July at meeting. Survey will be on the Cities website for urban ag to move forward discussion to engage communities. Jill will forward information to Wende to distribute to group.

Eleanor shared that she is fully funded for her project with the goal of "how do we story tell differently and collect data differently". She will be asking to come to organizations to facilitate to conversations with real people one-on-one vs a traditional survey model.

Brandy provided an update from the survey subcommittee. Brandy shared that feedback from community will set agenda for council. Then engage members from that process. The focus will be inclusive of all Kent County not just Grand Rapids. The subcommittee is looking at different ways of collecting data (via focus groups, surveys, translation services and one-on-one conversations).

## **V. Continue to Work On Leverage: Connie Bellows & DeDe Esque**

We are at the point of “finding connections and contributions” on the Systems Process Course. Last month the group discussed finding leverage and identifying the four key groups strengths and hopes in the process. Reviewed the FNC narratives and went over feedback from the four key group activities to begin developing strategy for forward movement.

Today’s work will consist of an hour of work time to find connections and contributions between identified leverage points of the system; Media, Local/Regional Expertise, Community Organizing and Data Evaluation/Research. The goal is to provide specific tactics for identified intersections based on sub-groups (Education, Activism/Advocacy/Community Engagement, Health and Policy).

Finding contributions and connections of leverage using statements such as, “If we do X, then we will affect the system in Y way”. Members then split into one of their preferred groups: Policy, Health, Education, Activism/Advocacy/Community Engagement and identified tactics through that groups lens.

Groups then each gave a brief overview of their conversation.

Education: Some specific tactics included harnessing power of media through recipe swaps, Tasty-style videos, YouTube channel with local connection to retailers/farmers. Having an ENTF presence at summer festivals (i.e. Rock the Block, Hispanic Festival, Festival of Arts) by hosting booth at community events to share local expertise. A concern was mentioned of fighting perception of knowledge vs fads (diets: Keto, Paleo).

Health: If groups promoted prevention, this will influence healthcare costs and an overall healthcare savings to individuals. A goal is to have a shared language around health for less confusion. Opportunities to educate healthcare force on nutrition and food as medicine models. Engage established community organizers for an authentic community voice to create culture of health. Also, work towards a common dashboard for upstream & downstream information sharing.

Advocacy: “When we put people first, good ideas follow. Showing solidarity by partnering with current campaigns and using the local-on-the-ground experts to support and promote media campaigns.

Policy: Group discussion primarily focused on livable wages leveraging current campaigns and people engaged in this work. Identifying the difference in generational news sources such as younger generations using social media for news purposes vs traditional news channels or papers. However, group felt the common ground is livable wage for bringing people together. People can easily make the connection between poverty and food. Connecting data to people through humanizing stories. Ensure there is a clear, two-way communication between activism efforts and policymakers. A suggestion was made to place organizations in the hot seat to take a stand on important issues for a potential media campaign.

DeDe advised there will be an equity and data team in the future and to keep this in mind as we continue through this process. Also, anyone interested in helping the action team, please contact Connie or DeDe.

## **VI. Updates: All**

- Reminder Citizens’ Climate Lobby will take place tonight, 4/11/18 at the Wealthy St Theatre



- North Kent Connect is looking for program committee members. If you know of someone please contact Cherie.
- Fit Kids 360 is starting Spring sessions and are looking for volunteers/mentors to work with children and families on fitness goals. Requires a 2-hour commitment. The focus on healthy lifestyle changes, not diets. Perks include a free ½ workout (i.e. Zumba, Tabata, Spin) and snack. Classes begin on 4/12/18. Also, you do not need to speak Spanish if interested in helping with FitKids360 en Español, as many participants have an English-speaking child or adult with them. If interested, please contact Carola.
- Shay with Feeding America that she has filmed 10 Tasty style videos that will be available to all partners that includes recipes, prep videos as well as tips & tricks from actual food found in FA pantries. Rough cut may be available next month to group.
- Update that Dana Eardley with Local First is going to Fulton St Farmers Market

**VII. Next Meeting/Adjourn: Emily Schichtel**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 9, 8:30am – 10:30am.