

## **Buffalo and Erie County Food Policy Council Meeting Minutes**

November 30, 2016

### **Present:**

Sara Jablonski  
Nathan Attard  
Mark Rountree  
Connie Ervin  
Patricia Watson  
Julie Levin  
Kathy Peterson  
Lucia Leone  
Della Miller  
Kelly Asher  
Matt Kauffman  
Rob Free  
Kelly Fletcher

### **Guests:**

Jonathan McNeice  
Beth Machnica  
Heather Helman  
Rachel Chrostowski

The meeting was convened and the minutes were reviewed. There were no revisions or corrections to the minutes, and a motion was made to accept them as presented, the motion was seconded, minutes were approved as written.

### **Working Group Updates:**

#### **1. Healthy Food Retail**

*(Additional detail: The group previously met on November 7. Representatives at meeting from MAP, Grassroots Gardens, Millennium/ECMC, Mobile Safety Net Team, P2, and Erie County Department of Health. Numerous issues were discussed stemming from a survey developed by Lucia for the purposes of determining what Healthy Corner Store Initiatives currently need and want in terms of support and assistance from the Food Policy Council. )*

There was discussion on the reason to convene to discuss some common issues for review. The Healthy Corner Store Initiative was discussed, as well as some of the strengths and weaknesses with that project moving forward. The MAP team spoke of wanting to get healthy food corner stores on to the West Side. There was some interest in convening the group around healthy food retail. There was conversation on licensing and how the mobile food markets with MAP cannot serve samples. Whenever there is a temporary food event at corner food stores a temporary food permit must be obtained. Upon looking into licensing with temporary food

permits, if there is a food processing permit in place with the store, samples can be served as long as the store staff serves the samples and the food is from the store. The group is looking for counsel on what direction to go into. Connie Ervin interjected that if you are a not for profit, (this could be done by going under the auspices of the group that is supporting the event) you can obtain a license from the Health Dept. at no cost. If you use the stores there is a fee. It was suggested that you fold it back into the not for profit institute and proceed in that manner. The discussion was more around to it being cumbersome to have to go through the license process every time you want to do a demonstration with samples. If a demonstration is being done five times at the same place you can obtain a license with those five dates on it. Every time a location is changed however a new permit must be obtained. i.e. temporary food stand permit If you have a commercial kitchen no permit is required.

Perhaps through the Erie County Board of Health this can be looked into further.

The Council needs to establish what the purpose of the group actually is going to be. When this was originally addressed there were two to four related healthy food retail projects going on. Bringing together issues the group as a whole is facing is instrumental. Operating principles and working groups have more of a set goal in mind and then dissolve after the goal is achieved versus a standing committee overseeing something. Perhaps a local procurement guide to sell healthy. At some of the sampling opportunities the food is taken back into the stores to be sold. Doing a sampling of a dish that needs to be created and is placed in a container, nullifies the opportunity to recycle. Developing a policy as to what the sampling opportunities should be and combining those so there is no mishandling.

Lucia Leone responded that a survey was given out in advance asking what each individual wanted to get out of the working group, and on what a good direction for the group to go into could be. The information was reviewed and things began to show up. Policy related needs surfaced that could be brought back to the whole council and decide how they should be addressed. This related to the issue of giving permits for any type of demonstration at the healthy corner stores initiative helping to show people how they could be using fresh fruits and vegetables. Along with the special permit that needs to go along with the demonstration. More research needs to be done before we can develop a policy we can present. Environmental handles the temporary food permits. Is it possible to consider taking just one issue forward for a policy change that corner stores are facing? Some of them might be at the municipal levels, or county level, here is the legislation that we need to support healthy food retail in the city and county. Policy incentives could be put into place. Could there be fee reductions if they allocate a certain square footage towards healthy food retail in a store. There is a list of barriers or costs that go into a corner store, so that we can get an idea of what potentially could be reduced. There are annual license fees that corner store have to pay. In some municipalities this could be reduced to zero if you want to allocate 10% of your floor area to healthy corner stores.

Also discussed was currently the corner stores efforts in Buffalo and not for profits targeting specific stores. This is not really working at the systemic level which is very much like an intervention that sustainability might be questionable. We are looking at making the types of changes that make it so that when people are looking to open a business it is a quick process.

In the working group there will be a consensus on recommendations and then bringing them to the full council. Basically we would formulate a plan to bring to the legislature. Should we go to Environmental Health and indicate the changes that we would like made? Changes from temporary stand permits required for this type of thing and under a draft make exceptions in the Sanitary Code. Maybe we could permit the unit; as opposed to the event would be the way to go about it. Health and safety need to be taken into consideration, the reason this is done is because they are attempting to promote sanitary conditions. Such as a food truck being looked at as a unit wherever it goes. The permit is a safeguard. We could work with them as agencies. The Sanitary Code is on the County website so it can be accessed by everyone. If the working group does meet with Environmental Health and drafts some legislation would this have to be on the agenda with the Board of Health to vote on? The BOH could make a recommendation to change the Sanitary Code. Or perhaps asking a member to join the Working Group. Kelly Fletcher has a contact at Environmental Health that will answer any questions regarding this issue. You would still need to get a permit, but it would be a blanket one for the year instead of individual events for a food demonstration. Perhaps they could turn it into a catering permit.

## **2. Urban Food Production**

Matt Kauffman updated that several members of the Food Policy Council met with Buffalo Environmental Management Commission who are the first ones putting together parts of our license/permit for market gardens. We will be going back to their January meeting to be a part of putting a policy together. Grass Roots garden was there as well as Farmer Pirates. They are consulting to put together a group on food production, as well as putting permits together. The various groups have been getting together a list of policies that we need, as well as looking into what we can do to improve the permit process. They have a policy draft within the group.

## **3. Nutrition Education**

There was discussion specifically on the wellness policy review in schools. Sara Jablonski stated that Buffalo Public Schools nutrition committee is involved in making recommendations to the wellness policy. There are issues with healthy vending machines regarding snacks; this is part of the policy. BOCES should be represented. There is presently no uniform policy. The FPC felt that the Education Committee might want to take a look at the various policies, and identify them to come up with best practices. All of the working groups need to come up with strategic planning. A work group is supposed to have a specific task. Kelly Fletcher asked: Are there specific working groups that we want to keep for 2017?

- **Tape cut off – here is a summary of lost content**

## **4. Procurement**

Local procurement survey to school districts will move forward in near future. Procurement initiatives will start with school districts and eventually expand to other institutions.

**Moving forward, the council has to decide on the working groups to keep for 2017.**

## **The following was discussed as a new group to create in 2017:**

### *New member recruitment*

Kelly Asher and Pat Watson to serve as initial members.

### **Review of Operating Principles**

The operating principles are close to being finalized. It was decided based on meeting attendance that a revision to quorum should require a majority instead of  $\frac{3}{4}$  due to pending conflicts. In addition, it needs to be stated in the document as to who should lead the meeting in absence of chair and vice-chair. It was decided that it should be primary secretary, then secondary secretary, and then is up to the chair to designate who will lead the meeting in their absence. In addition, minor edits are needed to fix the wording in the goals section, as well as ensure the operating principles approved by FPC.

### **Operating Principles – Standing Committees**

There are three different committees. Kelly Fletcher placed everyone in one of the three standing committees. In awareness and education we were thinking that we really have not done much with the working group on education policies. Perhaps it does fall under the overall standing committee of wellness and education. This is where this strategic plan is involved.

Membership recruitment for 2017 Kelly Asher is responsible for along with Pat Watson and Connie Ervin. Kelly Fletcher asked if there was going to be a focus group on education.

Someone asked: Are we still meeting with the standing committees on a quarterly basis? Kelly Fletcher answered that the full council year will start in July. There will be a full council meeting in January and the standing committees will be able to use the space in the off months. The full council will be updated on all the various standing committees, and working groups. Working groups will meet outside of any standing committee or full council. Committing to a working group means that you meet separately outside of the council. By January we could go to the structure and move forward. May and June were recruitment months where new members were voted in. Working groups are included in the blanket statement. The majority of the voting membership needs to be present for the full council. Meeting dates will be posted no later than one week prior. Minutes will not be posted.

Committees should have a chair and a secretary for the standing committees and then a staff liaison for working groups. There will be a chair, vice chair, first secretary, second secretary, and coordinator. The chair will preside over council meetings, work with support groups, develop meeting agendas and represent the council at ceremonial functions. The chair will remain an unbiased representative of the council, and essentially the chair will serve as the public face of the council. The chair is responsible to ensure that the vice chair is available to take over in their absence, and if not to designate someone else.

Kelly Asher made a motion to accept the operating principles with the corrections, Pat Watson seconded the motion, all were in favor. There were no objections and the motion was carried.

## **MOU**

All were instructed to look at the MOU. Cheryll Thayer (?), Dr. Burstein and Dr. Hoddick from the BOH will sign. It is anticipated that a paid Coordinator will be hired. An ECDOH staff person will also have a voice to coordinate meeting times, locations, record minutes and to be sure that public notice will be given for full council meetings. Also to track attendance, member eligibility in the operating procedures; provide support for council secretary by proof reading and correcting minutes. And to assist in development of social media. The executive committee will provide clear information, guidance and assistance to the staff support person. FPC and ECDOH will work together to secure funding for a paid Food Policy coordinator. Standing committees will submit attendance sheets and other relevant documentation to ECDOH staff person in a timely fashion. Secretary will submit the meeting minutes to the ECDOH staff person within five working days. Members will review the draft and provide input and feedback resulting in operating principles. Once adopted by the full council operating principles will be adhered to by all members. Kelly Fletcher made a motion to accept the MOU by the ECDOH all were in favor the motion was carried.

## **Policy Monitoring Committee**

Four working groups were previously established, adding to the recruitment would bring it to five. This would suffice to work for the year. Operating principles states that there should be four. Should we table the education policy and have people that are on it go to another. Kelly Asher thought that we could put together a focus group and go from there. It can always be modified. We have policy monitoring committees so this committee is basically responsible for monitoring the policy process in Buffalo and Erie County. Keeping a pulse on what is going on. Identifying issues that the council needs to work on and for hearing voices of individual organizations that are informing the policy process. Also having a presence in the council of supervisors meetings where policy is talked about and decided, and identifying and submitting applicable website and social media content for review. Kelly Fletcher has designated people for this. Applicable government policy making entities should be added to the operating principles.

## **Awareness and Education Committee**

This committee could be tasked with developing a website. The recommendation should then be brought to the full council. Individuals were assigned to the committee as well as the Advocacy and Justice committee.

## **Assignment of members to Standing Committees**

### *Policy monitoring*

Mark Rountree, Kelly Asher, Kathy Peterson, and Rachel Chrostowski (upon approval by Agricultural Protection Board) are to be members.

**Awareness and Education**

Kelly Fletcher, Connie Ervin, Julie Levin, and Rachel Chrostowski to join this group. This group will also be tasked with developing or managing the Food Policy Council website.

**Advocacy and Justice**

Pat Watson, Della Miller, Caleb Graham, Nate Attard, Rob Free, and Sara Jablonski will serve in this group.

The next meeting will be held as a full council meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup> 5:30 to 7:30 with the location to be decided. Kelly Asher made a motion to adjourn, Kelly Fletcher seconded, and the meeting was then adjourned.

/mac