

**Commission to End Hunger
Minutes from May 2, 2011 Meeting**

Commissioners in Attendance:

In-Person:

Cristal Thomas, Co-Chair
Kate Maehr, Co-Chair
Marla Goodwin
Grace Hou (ex officio)
Juanita Irizarry
Mark Ishaug
Alham Jbara
Barb Karacic
Dan Lesser
Kerry Lofton (ex officio)
Nicole Robinson
Kathy Ryg
Tracy Smith
Terry Solomon (ex officio)
Esperanza Velasquez Gonzalez
Peter Vina (ex officio)
John Cini Egan (ex officio)

By Phone:

Mary Ellen Abbott
Rance Carpenter (ex officio)
Amy Rynell
Gary Tomlin

Commissioners Not in Attendance:

Joe Antolin (ex officio)
Representative Patricia Bellock
Mark Haller (ex officio)
Senator Don Harmon
Representative Elizabeth Hernandez
Senator John Millner
Kappy Scates

Other Attendees: Theresa Del Vecchio (Food Depository), Dawn Melchiorre (Voices for Illinois Children), Jennie Sutcliffe (Office of Governor Pat Quinn), Lory Mishra (Office of Governor Pat Quinn), Diane Doherty (Illinois Hunger Coalition), Matt Sanchez (Feeding Illinois).

- I. **Welcome and Meeting Goals and Overview** –Co-Chair Thomas called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. and provided an overview of the meeting.

- II. **Commissioner Introductions** – Co-Chair Maehr asked Commissioners to introduce themselves and share their vision for the outcome of the Commission. A quorum was present in the room with 12 of 20 voting members of the Commissioners present in person.

- III. **Overview of Hunger in Illinois** – Commissioner Smith provided a background on the state of hunger in Illinois, where it exists, what resources are currently being deployed, and what work is currently being done in our state around hunger. Commissioners had the following questions and comments after the presentation:
 - Commissioners requested a breakout of this data by race and ethnic groups.
 - How do we look at this regionally?
 - In order to better frame our work, a graphic depiction of how much federal money we're not accessing would be helpful.

Commissioners agreed that quality and nutrition are important for the Commission to address. Commissioners agreed that we need to increase linkages to fresh foods and produce. There needs to be more public education around the public benefits system .

How does the current federal budget situation impact food and nutrition programs?

Follow-Up: *Send Commissioners a copy of the report from the Poverty Commission, a summary of the impact of the FY11 and FY12 budgets on food and nutrition programs, and a breakout of food insecurity data by race and ethnic groups.*

IV. Planning Our Work

- a. **Telephonic Participation in Commission Meeting** – Co-Chair Cristal told Commissioners that in order for them to participate in meetings by phone, the Commission needed to adopt a policy. The proposed policy was that Commissioners may participate in and vote in Commission to End Hunger meetings by phone only if there is a physical quorum was present at the meeting. The Commissioners in attendance unanimously voted in favor of the policy.

Callers had difficulty hearing the meeting today. Ex-Officio Hou offered to host the next meeting since they have a good phone system.

- b. **Steering Committee** – Co-Chair Cristal informed the Commissioners that pursuant to the Commission to End Hunger Act, the Commission members should elect a five-member Steering Committee which must include the co-chairs. Cristal proposed the following Commissioners be appointed to the Steering Committee: Co-chairs, Cristal Thomas and Kate Maehr, Tracy Smith, Grace Hou, and Mark Ishaug. The Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of appointing the five proposed individuals to the Steering Committee.
- c. **Goals and Objectives of the Commission** – Co-Chair Cristal presented the proposed goals and objectives of the Commission for discussion. The Commissioners raised some questions regarding the objectives, including how to measure their work and whether the term “close the meal gap” was the measure they wanted to use. In addition, Commissioners wanted to add another objective around education and awareness. It was agreed that these changes would be incorporated into the objectives and the objectives brought back before the Commission for vote at the next meeting.

The Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of adopting the draft goal which is: Develop an aggressive and achievable two year action plan to measurably reduce hunger in Illinois.

- d. **Working Groups** – Co-Chair Maehr presented the working groups set out in the materials attached to the agenda which were: Children At Risk, Vulnerable Adults; and Access. The Commissioners discussed the working groups and their scope.
- It was agreed that the Children At Risk group would address issues facing families and that the

group would be called “Children and Families At Risk”.

The Commission discussed where farm workers, immigrants, and individuals with issues surrounding documentation status fit in and whether or not a separate work group should be created to focus just on immigrant populations. It was agreed that considering barriers was a part of every working group’s charge and that each of the working groups should consider implications for immigration and documentation status. The Steering Committee was asked to ensure that each working group have individuals that could provide expertise on these issues. It was agreed that the title, “Access” did not adequately define the third group. It was discussed that the intent of the third group was to address populations that are traditionally underserved and could include geography, transportation, and language. There was a discussion that we should focus on populations that statistically are underserved and it was noted that Latinos are underserved in all federal nutrition programs. It was agreed that this group would be changed to “Underserved Populations”.

The Commission agreed that strategies around education, awareness and developing partnerships are critical components that should be included in all working group discussions. It will be the job of the Steering Committee to make sure information is flowing between working groups in order to ensure that all issues are adequately covered without unnecessary duplication.

The following Working Groups were created and chairs appointed by unanimous vote of the Commission: Children and Families at Risk (Chair: Kathy Ryg), Vulnerable Adults (Chair: Dan Lesser) and Underserved Populations (Chair: Marla Goodwin).

Follow-Up: *The Steering Committee will send an email by 5/10 to all Commissioners to ask them to sign up for a group(s).*

Commission members should also think about other individuals and organizations that could provide an additional voice and insight to the working group discussions.

- e. **Listening Tour** – Co-Chair Maehr presented the proposal that the Commission tour sites throughout the state to get a better picture of service delivery systems and the challenges facing food insecure people in the state. The goal is to have 4-5 listening tour events between June and October. Commissioners voted unanimously to host a listening tour as proposed.

Initial suggestions: East St. Louis, Beardstown, Round Lake, Aurora, Fairmont, Rockford, Quad cities. Mary Ellen Abbott serves counties in Southern Illinois and can help setting up events in those communities.

IAACOMA’s (IL Association of Agencies & Community Orgs for Migrant Advocacy) annual conference is next week of May 12-13 in Springfield. IDHS Secretary Saddler, among others, will be in attendance. Contact Esperanza Velasquez Gonzalez for more details.

The Rantoul Farmworkers Harvest Festival is on July 10. The Steering Committee will follow-up with Esperanza on the details of this event and if it makes sense for this to be included in the

listening tour.

Other key partners should be invited to these events, but the purpose is not necessarily for these to be advocacy events – it will be more of a learning opportunity for the Commission.

Follow-Up: Commissioners should send their recommendations (for particular events to attend, organizations or cities the Commission should visit) to Cristal and Kate as soon as possible.

- f. **Timeline** – Co-Chair Maehr reviewed the proposed work plan attached to the agenda. Based on this work plan, the Commission report will be released in March 2011. The motion to adopt the proposed timeline was approved unanimously.

V. Future Meeting Dates and Locations. Co-Chair Maehr proposed that full Commission meetings be scheduled during the following weeks. Exact dates during those weeks will be established via email.

- a. September 2011 – Week of Sept 26th
- b. January 2012 – Week of January 16th
- c. Hold dates for report release in Springfield: March 6-7 and March 27-28

VI. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 4:45 p.m.

Assignment	Date Due	Assigned to
Revise the Commission Objectives based on comment and present at the next Commission meeting.	9/26/2011	Feeding Illinois
Send Commissioners a copy of the report from the Poverty Commission, a summary of the impact of the FY11 and FY12 budgets on food and nutrition programs, and a breakout of food insecurity data by race and ethnic groups.	5/13/2011	Feeding Illinois
Send a form to all Commissioners so that they can sign up for working groups, suggest other working group members, and suggest listening tour locations and events.	5/10/2011	Feeding Illinois
Choose the working group you want to serve on and suggest other working group members.	5/15/2011	All Commissioners
Recommend particular events to attend, organizations or cities the Commission should visit on the listening tour with an emphasis on geographic diversity.	5/15/2011	All Commissioners
Provide working group chairs with Commissioner responses regarding working groups.	5/19/2011	Steering Committee
Schedule initial working group meetings	5/31/2011	Working Group Chairs
Schedule full Commission meetings.	5/31/2011	Feeding Illinois