

Steering Committee Minutes

Wednesday, November 5, 2014

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Conference Call Information:

Conference Dial-in Number: 1-773-648-4300

Participant Code: 3578#

Attendance: Kate Maehr, Cristal Thomas, Frank Finnegan, Mark Ishaug, Diane Ware (IDHS), Steven McCullough (GCFD) and Bob Dolgan (GCFD)

I. Minutes from last meeting

- Reviewed and approved

II. Work group updates

a) Benefits Access

- Steven reported on Benefits Access Working Group, which has been working with IDHS and USDA on data collection and identifying opportunities and improvements to expand SNAP knowledge, accessibility and administrative efficiency.
- Benefits Access Group has met multiple times in recent weeks and is in final stages of editing its work plan in advance of the 11/12 full Commission meeting.
- Kate added that she attended the most recent meeting and that there were new faces at the table—Northern Illinois Food Bank, Age Options and Legal Assistance Foundation.

b) Emergency Food System

- Frank reported that the Emergency Food System Working Group has had two conference calls in recent weeks.
- An agricultural surplus program has been an objective of the Working Group, including identifying grower interest in such a program.
- The group has reached out to the Illinois Specialty Growers Association to include a survey at the association's conference in January.
- Survey to be provided to growers and farmers of specialty crops and whether they would be willing to participate in a hunger-relief program.
- The group is finalizing survey instrument and will distribute soon.
- Kate added that the recommendation of an agricultural surplus program is resonating with a new group called Farm Illinois, which includes University of Illinois, Lori Healy of Tur Partners and Chris Kennedy. Farm Illinois is positioning the state as a leader in ending global hunger and aims to drive economic benefit across the state. The ag surplus pilot is on the group's list for spring conversation and there is a potential push with corporate CEOs and foundation heads.

- Mark asked about how the surplus program would work. Kate stated that the program would harvest products, at below market labor rate, that would otherwise be plowed under. Food would be provided directly to food banks around the state. In Ohio, for example, a similar program provides 30 million pounds of fresh produce, with state government investing \$12 million. The crops would be specialty crops, rather than soybeans and corn, and there would be an economic benefit for both individuals and communities.

c) No Kid Hungry

- Bob reported on the No Kid Hungry Working Group, which is close to finalizing its work plan for presentation on 11/12.
- Per the request of work group chair Janine Lewis, work group member Tom Browning has become co-chair.
- The work group met in September and focused on activation around the Rise and Shine Illinois school breakfast campaign, which launched in September.
- Share Our Strength and the Greater Chicago Food Depository have resources available to launch an at-risk, after-school meals initiative and the group has discussed rollout, including an after-school summit that is scheduled Dec. 9.
- Child Nutrition Reauthorization is the chief policy priority, but the work group is studying any legislation that would expand access to child nutrition programs and is seeking new members from child advocacy groups.
- The group also recapped summer meal programs in 2014 and members participated in a summer summit in southern Illinois Oct. 16. A Southern Illinois Summer Food Working Group was organized coming out the summit.

III. Rise and Shine Illinois

- Bob reported on progress with the Rise and Shine Illinois school breakfast campaign that launched this fall. The campaign launched with ads in the following communities: Chicago, suburban Chicago, Champaign, Rockford and Springfield.
- The campaign and its website have generated 136 inquiries from community members regarding school breakfast.
- The campaign has garnered 402 Twitter followers, 380 Facebook likes and 90,268 page views.
- Media impressions include: 16.2 million “out of home,” 8.2 million digital and 3.9 million social.
- Work group members EverThrive, Illinois Action for Children and Illinois Hunger Coalition have shared Rise and Shine content through their networks. Share Our Strength, Illinois Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics and Illinois School Nutrition Association have shared with their partners as well.
- Next steps for the campaign are an early 2015 phase.
- The group also helped identify breakfast research partners and is looking ahead to Illinois School Breakfast Week, likely in February.

- Kate added that we will bring advertisements to the 11/12 Commission meeting and remind Commission members to activate around the campaign by sharing information through their networks.

IV. New business/updates

- a) Steven reported on the USDA child nutrition grant proposal that was submitted by the Illinois Department of Public Health in July. The grant would establish child nutrition pilot sites in two communities in Illinois. USDA conducted a conference call with IDPH in October, asking clarification questions regarding the application. IDPH and other partners are awaiting a final determination from USDA.
- b) Kate mentioned that the Commission would be setting its calendar for 2015, including Steering Committee meetings and full Commission meetings. Kate will follow up with Commission members regarding scheduling.
- c) The Committee reviewed the agenda for next Wednesday's Commission meeting, which includes the Illinois profile for the Hunger in America study, work group updates, Rise and Shine Illinois, the Illinois Hunger Summit, and the Child Nutrition Reauthorization.

Co-chair Cristal Thomas, deputy governor, joined the conference call and commented with regard to the outcome of the governor's race. Cristal shared her gratitude to the Commission for its collaboration and its accomplishments. Steering Committee members are grateful for Cristal's leadership and offered their support to her. Cristal pledged to assist in moving the Commission's work forward during the transition period in the Governor's office.

- **Full Commission Meeting: Nov. 12, 9-11 a.m., Thompson Center, 16th Floor, Chicago**