

Steering Committee Minutes

Thursday, September 10, 2015

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Conference Call

Attendance: Kate Maehr, Janice Glenn, Janine Lewis, Karen Lehman, Mike Miller, Bob Dolgan (GCFD) and Dawn Melchiorre (GCFD)

I. Minutes from last meeting and introductions

- Reviewed and approved
- Mike Miller of River Bend Foodbank was introduced as a new appointee, co-chair of Emergency Food System Working Group and member of the Steering Committee

II. Reflections on Sept. 8 visit to St. Francis Xavier Food Pantry

- Kate Maehr, Janice Glenn and IL Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) designee Brendan Dailey visited St. Francis Xavier Food Pantry in LaGrange as part of a Commission orientation. Janice discussed the visit and praised the pantry's efficiency, experience and wisdom in serving people in need in the very affluent LaGrange community. The pantry includes a partnership and coordination with a parish in Harvey, offering a connection between a resource-rich community and one that has many economic challenges. Kate added that visits to the community are very valuable to Commission members, and that we should continue to make opportunities available.

III. New appointments and designees

- Janice Glenn provided an update on the new appointees and designees who have joined the Commission since the last Steering Committee meeting. They include Brian Colgan (Lieutenant Governor's office), Brendan Dailey (IDNR), Diane Grigsby Jackson (IL Department of Human Services), State Senator Sue Rezin, Bridgett Stone (IL Department of Healthcare and Family Services) and Dr. Lynda Williams (Teach for America).

IV. Work Group updates

- a. Benefits Access – Dawn Melchiorre and Bob Dolgan provided an update following a productive meeting earlier in the day with new IDHS designee Diane Grigsby Jackson. The Benefits Access Working Group will be following up with IDHS on a number of issues including implementation of the Integrated Eligibility System (IES) and implementation of SB1847, which expands access to SNAP for 40,000 households on Jan 1., 2016. The BA group will have a work plan developed in time for the November full Commission meeting.

- b. Emergency Food System – Karen Lehman and Mike Miller provided an update on the EFS work plan. There are a number of ideas for the EFS work plan, but primary focus is on piloting an agricultural surplus program. EFS conducted a survey of members on the scope of the Work Group and, while a small sample size, received a mixed response. The group is considering whether to keep its scope to the access and supply of food or to include transportation and a waste reduction effort. Kate stated that the original concept for the group was to strengthen the network for people who do not qualify for federal programs. That could include both transportation and supply. Kate suggested Feeding America would be a potential partner who could help drive the work forward, as in its online marketplace initiative. Mike added that people in rural areas travel to other towns for food because they don't want people to know their business. The EFS group decided it would discuss the group charge at greater length in its regular call.
- c. No Kid Hungry – Janine Hill provided an update and highlighted a state budget situation where federal passthrough dollars were being held back from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. The NKH Working Group was briefed on the situation in August and offered to assist CEDA. The situation ultimately was resolved when state government resumed allowing the flow of funds to WIC. Bob Dolgan provided an update on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) and the introduction of the Hunger-Free Summer for Kids Act into the Senate by Sen. Kirk in early August. NKH circulated a sign-on letter to Sen. Kirk and Sen. Durbin in response. The next step in CNR process is the markup of the bill Sept. 17. The House has yet to introduce its version of the bill, though the Sept. 30 expiration of CNR is looming. Kate noted she is meeting with Sen. Durbin next week and thanked Mike Miller for his letter in support of CNR recently. Janine added that her colleague Jenny Epstein met with Sen. Durbin's staff and discussed CNR.

V. New business/updates

- a. Listening Tour -- Bob Dolgan provided an update on plans for a joint listening tour in partnership with the Commission on the Elimination of Poverty. The two Commissions are planning events in Pembroke Township (10/14), Peoria (10/20) and Glenview (10/29) to hear directly from persons served and community partners. More details will be available as they are finalized.
- b. 2016 Hunger Summit – Bob Dolgan briefed the group on plans for the next Hunger Summit. A planning committee is forming including Commission members and Feeding Illinois. The first call is Wednesday, Sept. 16, where survey feedback from last year will be reviewed.

VI. Next meeting

The next full Commission to End Hunger meeting will take place Thursday, Nov. 5, in Springfield at the Illinois State Board of Education.