

MINUTES
Mayor's Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food System
January 18, 2013
City Hall, Room 209, 10:00-11:30AM

1. Introductions of meeting attendees

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and introduced themselves. Present: Mayor Michael Brennan, Councilor David Marshall, Ralph Carmona (Maine Global Institute), Sam May (MOFGA, Slow Money Maine), Kyle Moulton (Rep. Pingree's Office), Lisa Fernandes (Eat Local Foods Coalition, Portland ME Permaculture), Jeremy Bloom (Internet Farmer), Jonah Fertig (Local Sprouts Cooperative), Troy Moon (COP), Ron Adams (PPS Food Services), Craig Lapine (Cultivating Community), Jim Hanna (United Way), Anna Sommo (Cultivating Community), Hazel Onsrud (Citizen), Ian Houseal (COP), Joe Fornier (Rosemont), Tim Fuller (Portland Public Health), Christopher Tripp (Intern, COP Mayor's Office) Larry Niskenisn (Citizen).

2. Review and approval of minutes from November 9, 2012.

The minutes from the November 9 meeting were reviewed and approved by the group.

3. Updates:

a. Subcommittee activity

i. School department policies.

Met on December 5, 2012. Our work is driven by values and the understanding that better food makes better communities. Objective: all food is nutrient dense and high quality.

We need a culture shift in order to meet this objective. Cultivating Community and Rosemont agreed to sponsor and work on this cultural food shift.

We have a target of 50% of food dollars spent on local food by the 2015 school year. Currently we are at 30%. (These numbers also include dairy).

In order to achieve this goal we will need to:

- Look for local non-dairy protein sources.
- Increase our capacity for scratch cooking.

PPS awarded a \$100,000.00 USDA grant with a local match of \$30,000.00. This will help us invest in the infrastructure needed to reach these goals.

Questions: What is local? (This subcommittee will work to develop a better, cohesive definition of “local.”) How do we thank, acknowledge, and involve farmers in this process? Can we serve the same number of meals with \$800,000.00 spent on local food? (Current budget is 1.6 million.) How do we secure the funds to get to 50% local food in schools?

Other issues:

- We should be focused on reducing the waste stream. \$\$ is wasted here.
- Have we focused our ideas enough to ask for foundation support?
- Approach school committee to help increase financial support to reach 50% goal?

For our next meeting the School Subcommittee will work on providing a matrix as well as any further recommendations.

ii. City/state/national food policies.

We plan to draft a letter for support for the upcoming Farm Bill and possible Local Foods, Farms, and Jobs Act, outlining what the COP endorses. This will require us to look at new legislation...

CSN Food Policies will be revisited at our next meeting.

iii. Urban agriculture/community gardens.

Definition of Urban Ag. Includes keeping bees, livestock, greenhouses, rooftop gardens, aquaculture, indoor growing, and soil maintenance.

The interest level for urban ag., community gardens, and green rooftops is high. It should also be noted that the City of Portland has a tremendous amount of potential around green roofs. Many, many flat rooftops could be transformed into growing space. (Although studies need to be conducted around the structural integrity of many of the buildings).

Jeremy noted that our committee (at large) is rare in this type of food systems planning process. This makes the process much more exciting and accessible to a larger audience.

The following outlines some major goals and principles set forth by the Urban Ag. Subcommittee. First and foremost we would like to see 10% of Portland’s food grown within the city limits.

1. Linking growers to the land

- Creating an Urban Farm: Access to 300 new acres by 2016
- Rooftop gardens by 2014
- Community gardens-remove wait list, 50 new plots by ‘14

-Community Coop Gardens (like Winter Cache)

2. Education and training

- Meeting with parks & lands
- Increase outreach
- Develop school garden education program
- Increase self-growing in the city
- Soil remediation programs (and education around this)
- Gleaning/Foraging tours

3. Increase visibility and access to local healthy food

- Something we need to start doing now.
- Planting 100+ fruit trees on city land (also nut trees)

4. Increase eco. development through urban ag.

- Rooftop gardens
- Greenhouses
- Increase values around food production

5. Cultivating relationships through food

- Combine art and growing food

Community development outreach strategy

Evaluation of process using Whole Measures tools

Interested in the Riverside Golf Course for Urban Farming.

iv. Portland food industries and enterprises.

Meetings have been fact finding.

We are working on a comprehensive list of food-based businesses in Portland. Another list includes who in Portland is getting enterprises going.

The Farmers Market shift is in process (acquiring permits).

Further steps include discussion with the COP Economic Development office around food-based plans.

Also looking at what makes a good food culture. What are some trends? What can the city do? Or should the city step back? (Reduce barriers).

PFIE will revisit updates at our next meeting.

v. Food security.

Meeting food security needs touches upon ALL other issues.

Our first focus should be on the people who need it the most. Indicators include: Need and Response.

Income is a huge issue. The number of students receiving reduced or free lunch is very high and rising.

We are currently not being very strategic about how we approach food security. Can we create a strategy to getting healthy local foods to hungry people?

These efforts cannot just be about coordinating emergency food system, but must work on the larger level as well.

FS will revisit updates at our next meeting.

4. Other business.

A local food educators network has been convened. A monthly meeting is being held and a Google group has been activated.

For next meeting:

- Finish Subcommittee Activity Updates
- Draft letter in support of Farm Bill

5. Confirm date for next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2013.