

Minutes
Mayor's Initiative for Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems
Jan 10, 2014
10:00 – 11:30, City Hall, Room 209

- 1. Welcome Introductions of meeting attendees**
- 2. Review and approval of minutes from December, 2013 meeting**
- 3. Public Hearing on LD 1483 - Troy Moon**

Troy updated the group on the public hearing he attended on behalf of the City for LD1483 An Act To Promote and Enhance State Policy To Preserve and Support Existing Methods of Disposal of Municipal Solid Waste. This bill was discussed at the December meeting during Kevin Roche's presentation of ecomaine's Organics Recycling Feasibility Study.

Tyler Frank from Garbage to Garden provided the group with an update on his organization's accomplishments in providing curbside composting Portland over the past year.

Organics Recycling Feasibility study:

http://www.ecomaine.org/specialwaste/ecomainefinal_11-07-13.pdf

LD1483:

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0545&item=1&sum=126>

Garbage to Garden Report attached.

- 4. LD1431 - Food Hub / Farm to School Bill - - Ben Tettlebaum, CLF, Maine**

Ben provided background on LD1431, An Act To Support School Nutrition and Expand the Local Foods Economy. After a full discussion, the group voted in favor of supporting this bill. Ben agreed to keep the group informed of developments and to provide additional information by email following the meeting.

LD1431:

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0517&item=1&sum=126>.

- 5. Let's Move Cities and Towns: Next steps. - Stephanie Pooler / Tim Fuller**

Portland has been recognized by the National League of Cities and Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" program in four out of five categories. Healthy Portland staff will work to gain recognition in the following category: *"To improve access to healthy, affordable*

foods, local elected officials commit to implementing healthy and sustainable food service guidelines that are aligned with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in all municipally-owned or operated venues that serve food."

A first step toward this goal, Tim agreed to initiate an assessment of what current guidelines and practices are within City operated food venues and to research what other Cities may be doing in this area.

Let's Move! Cities and Towns:

<http://www.letsmove.gov/become-lets-move-city-or-town>

6. Goals and Priorities for 2014 - Tim Fuller

Tim guided the committee through a review of the goals and priorities document. With little time left in the meeting the group agreed to review it again in February to ensure that all action items have leadership from a committee member.

Draft priorities document attached.

7. Adjourned

Garbage to Garden

Portland, Maine

City-wide Composting Progress -- *December 2013*

of Portland households receiving curbside service: 23,400

of Portland households participating in GtG: 2,385

City-wide participation rate: 10.2%

Average set-out rate: 88% (70% reported by CSWD in pilot, 70% assumed by Northern Tilth in Ecomaine Study)

Collected Targeted Organics (lbs/HH/week): 12 (Average is higher than reported in other communities -- possibly due to the common practice of sharing buckets)

Total tons diverted by Garbage to Garden in November, 2013: 158

Tons per year based on current rate: 1,900

- GtG operators perform a contamination removal step when dumping buckets
- All waste is processed in accordance with best composting practices
- We have a strong relationship with the Maine DEP
- There is zero cost to the municipality
- We use reusable containers and do not create trash from plastic bags
- We also provide a recycling opportunity for cooking oil and grease, placing less strain on the sewer system.
- We power collection vehicles on biodiesel, and wash containers with the by-product soap.
- Residents commonly report using 50% fewer trash bags
- We are distributing 25-30 yards of finished compost, MOFGA certified for use on organic soils
- Approximately 100 residents volunteer each month. Most recently, 30 participants volunteered time at the Wayside food drive this past weekend, bringing in a record amount of donated food. We build and repair trails, clean up parks, beaches and streets, educate children about recycling, feed the hungry, and overall are building connections among good-hearted people to make our community a stronger, cleaner and healthier place.
- Our robust outreach strategies are bearing fruit in a few different forms. Organic growth in the participation rate is still accelerating, currently increasing by 8% per month.
- Based on our success with various outreach activities, Garbage to Garden anticipates reaching a 25% participation rate in Portland before the end of 2014. We are collaborating to upgrade the Benson Farm facility, and building partnerships with other processors, including the Village Green Ventures/Quasar energy anaerobic digester at Brunswick landing, proposed to come online in the latter half of 2014.



*Note: Any municipality has an obligation to collect MSW and dispose of it in a responsible manner. Ecomaine member communities are contractually obligated to bring all MSW collected to the Ecomaine processing facility. This does not affect any resident's prior right to enter into a private agreement with a third-party composting organization; we collect buckets of food scraps in order to take advantage of it as a resource, and this material never becomes part of the MSW that Portland is obligated to collect and bring to Ecomaine.

DRAFT Priority focus areas for the Mayor's Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food System

01/10/14

Purpose:

The City of Portland supports a host of initiatives to improve the health and sustainability of the food systems that support our community such as composting programs, community gardens, and the farmers markets, and increasing access to healthier food at schools, in neighborhoods, and at other community locations. To bolster these initiatives and improve the health and sustainability of the food systems that support our community, the Mayor has established a Steering Committee called the Mayor's Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food System to:

- Provide continued and increased public engagement in food-related policies and initiatives;
- Identify and implement positive changes in the community's food systems and policies;
- Prioritize and respond to City and community identified needs for food system change and improvement; and
- Increase access to healthier food for residents.

Values:

Food and water sustain life. Food is a shared need and an opportunity to bring together everyone in our community. The City of Portland has many roles in how our community maintains health and vitality through food.

The City of Portland is committed to a food system that supports:

- *Justice and fairness in all aspects of the food system*
- *Equal food access for disadvantaged people*
- *Healthy people*
- *Thriving local economies and jobs*
- *Vibrant gardens and farms*
- *Sustainable ecosystems*
- *Strong neighborhoods and communities*

The City aspires to produce as much of its own food as possible and supports local growers, processors and workers. The City works to ensure everyone has enough healthy food and that the healthy food choice is the easier choice. The City intends to support a food system that creates economic opportunity and inspires greater human possibility.

2014 Priorities

Based on meetings of the Mayor's Food Initiative to date, two public forums, and recommendations from Food Initiative Subcommittees and staff, many themes have emerged. The following is an attempted listing of those themes that are seen as priorities for the Mayor's Food Initiative to focus upon in the coming several months.

- Establish a more structured approach to policy-related efforts of the Mayor's Food Initiative.
 - Establish food policy subcommittee with charge to identify, on a rolling basis, local, state, and federal policy issues relevant to the purpose and values of the Mayor's Food initiative.
- Achieve significant progress toward 50% local food in Portland Public Schools.
 - The School Food Subcommittee has created a detailed work plan to achieve this. There is at least one grant proposal pending that would support this effort.
- Increase the amount of edible landscaping (fruit and nut trees) in Portland.
- Identify and implement specific strategies the City can use to increase home gardening.
- Reduce the number of people on waiting list for community garden plots in the City and ensure the waiting list is managed with a perspective of equity.
 - Identifying space and funding to expand plots is one strategy already under way.
- Achieve higher rank as recognized by "Let's Move! Cities and Towns"
 - A logical goal for this year may be to achieve progress toward a policy for healthy and sustainable food

service guidelines for municipally owned or operated food service programs.

- Improve functions and communication between food businesses and City Hall. ‘
- Improve access to and awareness of supports for diverse entrepreneurs in the food system.
- Explore ways to preserve existing facilities appropriate for food businesses.
- Organize partners in Portland to continue increased participation in Free Summer Meals Program.
- Adopt indicators to help track and address food security in Portland
- Take actions that lead to improved access to healthcare and increased compensation for food industry workers in Portland.
- Increase communications, outreach, and engagement.
 - Hold public # forums and meetings related to specific priority areas above
 - Create a facebook page for the food initiative
 - Initiate a monthly email newsletter for the food initiative
 - Create and distribute a short report that describes the initiative and achievements to date.
 - Maintain and grow connections with other groups and coalitions and networks.
 - Increase diversity of people involved
- Ongoing attention to and assessment of assets potential threats opportunities etc.
- Ongoing attention and commitment to above values expressed in the work of each priority area.
- Ongoing efforts to connect existing resources and programs.