



Hunger Council of Chittenden County Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 8, 2016

Present: Raquel Aronhime (United Way of Chittenden County), Sarah Bhimani (City Market Coop), Emma Cooperstein (Prevent Child Abuse Vermont), Sarah DeSilvey (Northwestern Medical Center), Paul Feenan (Vermont Youth Conservation Corps), Kristin Fontaine (UVM Medical Center), Karen Freudenberger (Pine Island Community Farm), Anna Graham (Child Care Resource), Dennis Hamel (Vermont Veterans Outreach), Emily Heaslip (Community Health Centers of Burlington), Jane Helmstetter (Vermont Agency of Human Services), Megan Humphrey (HANDS), Marissa Lehrman (Prevent Child Abuse Vermont), Katarina Lisaius (Office of Senator Sanders), Mark McMillen (Promise Communities), Emmet Moseley (Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf), Kymelya Sari (*Seven Days*), Beth Steckel (UVM Medical Center), Marie Thomas (Our Community Cares Camp), Ryan Torres (Greater Burlington YMCA), Carol Truesdell (Hunger Free Vermont volunteer), Kevin Veller (Office of Representative Welch), Rachel Warden (Child Care Resource)

Co-Chairs: Amy Carmola (United Way of Chittenden County), Travis Poulin (Chittenden Community Action / CVOEO)

Hunger Free Vermont Staff: Katy Davis and Jenna Banning

<u>Welcome & Introductions:</u>	<u>Action Steps & Handouts:</u>
<p><i>Introductions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travis welcomed Amy Carmola as his fellow co-chair for the Hunger Council. Amy has been a member of the Council since 2013. Amy shared her excitement to help lead the group forward. <p><i>Announcements from Members:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Travis Poulin (CVOEO)</i> - It's tax season. Encourage anyone with a household income under \$60,000 to use MyFreeTaxes.com, a free online tax filing program. People with household incomes over \$60,000 can also use this system, but will need to pay a modest fee. <i>Jenna Banning (Hunger Free Vermont)</i> - Since our last meeting, the Hunger Council of the Northeast Kingdom was launched in December. This is the 8th Hunger Council; Hunger Free Vermont will be launching two more in Rutland and Bennington Counties by the end of March, which will end the expansion and bring statewide Hunger Council coverage across Vermont. <i>Kate Ash (Office of Senator Leahy)</i> – Jenna shared two updates from Kate Ash, who was unable to attend the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on Child Nutrition Reauthorization: Last year, Senator Leahy introduced the bipartisan Farm to School Act of 2015 to expand eligibility and funding for the federal USDA Farm to School grant program, ahead of the anticipated Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR). On January 20, 2016 the Leahy-Cochran Farm to School Act of 2015 was unanimously approved by the Senate Agriculture Committee as part of the Improving Child Nutrition Integrity and Access Act of 2016. This is a great victory for the farm to school movement, and includes expansion of 	<p><i>Action:</i> Please share any contacts or suggestions you have for people and organizations in Bennington and Rutland counties with Jenna.</p>

programming to afterschool and pre-school sites, and doubles mandatory federal funding to \$10M annually to support programs like those in Vermont. This bipartisan CNR also includes recommendations submitted by the Vermont Child Nutrition Reauthorization Coalition, including the maintenance of strong nutrition standards, as well as expanded eligibility for the Child Care and Adult Food Program (CACFP) and the Supplemental Assistance Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The bill may not now be considered by the full Senate, as well as the House before final passage and implementation of these included provisions. Please visit [here](#) to learn about the most recent updates to this process.

- Senator Leahy Announces Expansion of Charitable Deductions of Food Donations:

Back in December, Senator Leahy praised the inclusion of a provision aimed at fighting hunger by incentivizing donations of surplus food to local food shelves in the fiscal year 2016 spending package. In two previous congresses, Senator Leahy had been the leading advocate for the bipartisan Good Samaritan Hunger Relief Tax Incentive Extension Act, which expands and makes permanent incentives for farmers and businesses to donate excess food to nonprofit organizations like local food banks and pantries. Please visit [here](#) and feel free to contact [Kate Ash](#) with any questions.

- *Sarah DeSilvey (Northwestern Medical Center)* - Northwestern Medical Center just authorized the use of the two-item food security screen in its family practice and pediatrics departments. Sarah has been working with Children's Health Watch to further the use of the two-item screen broadly. Children's Health Watch will be publishing a study soon that validates the two-item screen across spectrums (including children, adults, and seniors), which is very exciting. Sarah will be participating in the national Anti-Hunger FRAC conference on February 28th to share her work on the two-item screen, its implementation and highlight this tool as an application of 'food as medicine'. Sarah is also pursuing creating a specific health code for food insecurity, which would recognize food insecurity as a medical condition and help develop a medical protocol to treat patients who are struggling with it.
- *Marie Thomas (Our Community Cares Camp)* - Marie is lining up food service arrangements for the summer, and shared her frustration with the requirement that even small programs like hers have to follow the federal regulations for food procurement. Marie was able to work with the state to find work-arounds, but feels that this requirement places an inordinate burden on summer meal sites.
- *Sarah Bhimani (City Market)* - City Market's Food for All program offers a 10% discount to households participating in WIC, 3SquaresVT, or Social Security Disability / Supplemental Income. There are now over 1000 families participating in the Food for All program, which counted for 6% of all sales in the month of December. While City Market is encouraged that there are so many households utilizing this program, they are looking for ways to improve the program and make it easier to access.

<p><u>“Action Groups” Formation</u> <i>The Council, which has expressed a desire to take more action, discussed forming action groups as a potential avenue for targeted action moving forward.</i></p> <p><i>Amy Carmola - Amy has been a part of a small group of people who have been meeting for nearly 3 years to work on messaging tools. The group, composed of representatives from the United Way of Chittenden County, UVM Medical Center, Vermont Department of Health, and Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, decided to focus on food insecurity, and brought in Hunger Free Vermont.</i></p> <p><i>Amy shared the messaging documents, which have been presented to the Hunger Council previously. The document geared towards the business community was just sent out in the Chamber of Commerce’s newsletter, reaching 2,500 business leaders in the Lake Champlain region. The group is now figuring out its next steps.</i></p> <p><i>Travis Poulin – Travis feels that this group’s work could be an example of how to address Council members’ desire to take more action.</i></p> <p><i>Jenna Banning shared examples of work groups that have been effective in other Hunger Councils, including Addison County and the Windham Region. Katy Davis and Travis asked for feedback from the Council on the idea of creating action groups to take targeted actions.</i></p> <p><i>Council members were generally positive about this potential new approach, stating that the formation of work groups to support targeted work aligned with a larger group’s mission is increasingly supported in the community. The Council discussed some potential topics for a group to focus on, with an agreement to have identified topics to be discussed at the May meeting. Council members discussed having short-term groups (instead of long-term static groups) that would focus on an issue and then bring actions to the Council to take as a collective group.</i></p> <p><i>There was agreement that this idea should be shared with the entire list serve of Hunger Council of Chittenden County members for feedback. The Council also agreed to formally approve the messaging group as a “model” first action group.</i></p>	<p><u>Action:</u> Jenna Banning will ask for feedback on the idea of creating targeted action groups from the entire Hunger Council of Chittenden County membership.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Katy Davis and others will identify topics for potential action, and bring these suggestions for Council consideration in May.</p>
<p><u>Increasing Access to Fresh Produce for Vulnerable Populations</u> <i>Local organizations share what they are working on to increase access to produce for various populations. The Council discussed what can be done to support these goals.</i></p> <p><i>Travis welcomed Emmet Moseley from the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf, Megan Humphrey from HANDS, and Karen Freudenberger from Pine Island Community Farm. These three organizations focus on increasing access to food for vulnerable populations, including low-income Chittenden residents, seniors, and New Americans.</i></p> <p><i>Emmet Moseley - Emmet is the Manager of the Good Food Truck. He began working with the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf in April 2015 after the Food Shelf received a grant to buy the food truck, and is excited to be combining his passions for food access and community engagement with this new role.</i></p>	<p><u>Handout:</u> The Good Food Truck powerpoint (attached)</p>

The Food Shelf estimates that 11,000 out of 19,000 eligible people use its resources; the Good Food Truck tries to reach those other 8,000 people. 2015 was a pilot year for the Good Food Truck, which has a full kitchen and is well designed to serve meals. The truck delivered meals to Harbor Place in Shelburne and the Milton Mobile Home Coop every week in the 2015 season, as well as to the Intervale, some Champlain Housing Trust properties, and other sites. Emmet would like to double the number of sites, and hopes to be able to leverage partnerships in order to expand.

Prior to serving free meals at a site, Emmet meets with community leaders to get their support and have them present when meals are served to make the atmosphere welcoming. There is no income eligibility or means-testing in order to get a meal, and people typically take at least 2 meals at a time for themselves or to share. (According to a survey, 51% of respondents stated that the meals from the Good Food Truck are the only full meal they usually eat during the day.) The Food Shelf has been very well supported with donations from local farms, and all meals served from the Good Food Truck are cooked from scratch to be nutritious and well-balanced.

The truck also offers job experience to Community Kitchen graduates. Emmet would like to expand this aspect of the truck's operations to offer more on-the-job training, and has already reached out to NECI (New England Culinary Institute). *The Council suggested a number of other organizations that could partner on this, including Vermont Works for Women and Mercy Connections.*

Staffing is the biggest challenge, especially for expanding operations.

In addition to serving meals to low-income people for free, the truck is run as a social enterprise, helping to build the operation's visibility and revenue by selling meals at community events like Arts Riot's Food Truck Fridays and the South End Art Hop.

While the truck does some catering (they catered Megan Humphrey's birthday party last year), Emmet reminded Council members that the truck is also used for job-training, so it is usually most successful when customers understand the dual purpose of the Good Food Truck's operations. No donated foods are served at for-profit events, and the prices are listed up front in the same manner as a "normal" food truck.

The Food Shelf has received a grant from City Market to purchase a refrigerated trailer that will be used as a mobile food shelf. The Good Food Trailer will be making its first stop at King Street Center this Friday, and Emmet feels that this model will be a great tool to expand services.

The Council was very supportive of the Good Food Truck's mission and operations. Katarina Lisaius has volunteered with them, and was very impressed with the atmosphere and commitment to making clients feel welcome. Emily Heaslip has heard a lot of positive feedback from her clients at Community Health Centers of Burlington, and is very supportive of the mobile food shelf trailer.

Megan Humphrey (HANDS) - Megan met Emmet and the Good Food Truck at the Old North East Ramble (a multi-block party in Burlington's Old North End neighborhood) and convinced Emmet to try catering her birthday party. (see attached photos) Megan is very supportive of the Good Food Truck's work.

Action: Contact Emmet at <http://goodfoodtruckvt.org/contact/> if you are interested in having the Good Food Truck cater or be a part of an event.

Handout: Photos of the Good Food Truck catering Megan Humphrey's birthday party (attached)

Megan is the Director of HANDS, which stands for Helping and Nurturing Diverse Seniors. HANDS was created when Megan realized that many seniors did not have a place to gather over the Christmas holiday. She and others helped organize a sit-down dinner for 20 people in HANDS' first year; they now help to serve over 300 families through partnerships with Burlington School Food Project, Central Vermont Council on Aging, Temple Sinai, and the Elks Club.

In addition to the Christmas meal, HANDS has expanded to start gardening projects with low-income seniors, and is on target to hold 5 programs this summer at locations throughout the Burlington area. The Vermont Community Garden Network and Charlie Nardozi help to run the garden programs.

HANDS is also working to raise enough money to cover the cost of 1 meal per week at senior centers for people, and has a long-term goal of organizing fresh vegetable deliveries to seniors in forms they can handle (i.e. pre-made salads).

While HANDS partners with a number of organizations, they need help with outreach, especially to veterans and New Americans. (Handout: flyer. Outreach: refer seniors to HANDS to participate in their programs)

Emily Heaslip, the Community Health Centers of Burlington's dietician, offered to help share information on HANDS, and other programs, with her clients. (See side for contact information)

Karen Freudenberger (Pine Island Community Farm) - Karen is the director of Pine Island Community Farm, which is a partnership with AALV and the Vermont Land Trust. Pine Island Community Farm grew out of the realization that many New Americans were spending inordinate time and energy, traveling far away to purchase fresh goat meat. Karen did some market research, and found that roughly 3,000 frozen goats were being imported to Burlington every year from New Zealand and Australia. Since Vermont is an agricultural state and many New Americans know how to raise goats for meat already from their backgrounds, Karen helped start the Pine Island Community Farm as a way for New Americans to connect with the land and use their knowledge to raise their own meat. The farm works to create synergies with the "traditional" Vermont agricultural system. For example, the Goat Collaborative at the Farm partners with the goat dairy producers- the farm takes the male goats (that would usually be killed since they can't produce milk) or "culled does" (females past their prime milking age). The farm will accept any healthy goat from the community.

A few years ago, the farm got a Working Lands Enterprise grant to create a custom exempt slaughter facility. Community members can now select a goat from the farm and slaughter it themselves for their own personal use. This is very important for many New Americans, who wish to continue and pass on their cultural practices and experiences. The Council discussed the guidelines and regulations around use of the meat from the slaughter facility, and Katy and Travis shared examples of how this is being done well in Franklin County.

After two years of raising goats, the farm expanded to raising "tough chickens" - chickens that were tough and flavorful and could fit the cooking methods of New Americans. The chickens are typically spent layer hens from other local farms - these chickens had previously gone to make dog food, but can now be raised on the farm to meet a huge

Handout: HANDS flyer (attached)

Action: Refer seniors to HANDS to participate in their programs at www.handsvt.org

Action: Email Emily Heaslip with program and resource information for clients at ehaslip@chc.org

<p>demand from the community. The farm can also accept spent hens from independent sources (such as chicken owners in Burlington).</p> <p>Pine Island Community Farm is structured to help people raise and run their own businesses. For example, Chuda Dhaurali, the lead farmer for the Goat Collaborative, lives on the farm and runs the meat production business. Farmers set their own prices (with mentoring from the farm).</p> <p>The farm is looking to become an independent non-profit farm by 2017, and just got their 501(c)(3) status 3 weeks ago. Currently, the Vermont Land Trust owns the land and allows the farm to use the land for free. Once the farm can show a sustainable business plan, the Vermont Land Trust will give the land to the farm.</p> <p>Karen shared three issues she is working on. First, she is challenged to sell the large number of eggs being produced by the chickens on the farm (approximately 300-400 eggs per day for a period of a few weeks). She is also looking for a source of food scraps for the chickens over the summer - during the school year, she collects the scraps from the Colchester and Winooski schools, but needs a source during the summer when the schools are out.</p> <p><i>Emmet Moseley shared that the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf has a lot of food scraps which they currently have to pay to have hauled away. Katy Davis offered to share a list of summer meal sites in the area.</i></p> <p>As the farm is growing and in the process of becoming independent, Karen needs an accountant who understands nonprofits to help her establish a system. Karen also shared that she looking to develop her Board of Directors to help guide the farm during its transition and down the road.</p> <p>The farm welcomes group tours and school groups, but requests that people make arrangements in advance. The farm also has a number of community events over the summer. Visit http://www.pineislandfarmvt.com to learn more. Volunteers through City Market's Member Worker program are welcome.</p>	<p><u>Action:</u> Katy Davis will share list of summer meal sites with Karen Freudenberger.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Share suggestions for accountants with Karen at pineislandfarmvt@gmail.com</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Contact Karen if interested in becoming a Board Member or if you have a suggestion for someone who may be interested.</p>
<p><u>Wrapping Up</u></p> <p><i>The Council reviewed final action steps. Council members shared upcoming events, opportunities, and related announcements.</i></p> <p><i>Amy encouraged attendees to share what actions they will take as a result of what they learned at this meeting, or what they might need from the group for support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Megan Humphrey</i> - Megan asked to be connected with donation and funding sources or ideas, and welcomes any suggestions for connections in the area. (i.e. suggestions for senior housing sites that could use a garden program) • <i>Sarah Bhimani</i> - Sarah asked Council members to encourage deserving organizations to apply for City Market's Patronage Seedling Grants. All three organizations that presented today received the grants, which are small grants up to \$7500. This will be City Market's third year of awarding Seedling Grants, and applications are opening later this spring. • <i>Anna Graham and Rachel Warden</i>- Child Care Resources helps New Americans start childcare programs. They were excited by the information they learned today, and will connect with their Executive Director to see what information and programs can be shared with their clients. 	



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<p>also welcomed Council members looking to be connected with the food truck’s clients to come along on a delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Travis Poulin</i> – Travis is working on 2 Public Service Announcements, and will be using the Messaging Group’s tools in them.• <i>Jenna Banning</i> – Jenna will ask for feedback from the entire Hunger Council of Chittenden County membership on creating action groups. She will also work with Katy, Travis, and Amy to plan time into next meeting’s agenda to develop this idea.	
<p>Meeting Adjourned</p>	
<p>Next Meeting: May 9th, 1:30 – 3:30 at CCRPC in Winooski</p>	