

# FARM TO SCHOOL TASK FORCE

## DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup> MEETING MINUTES

### TASK FORCE MEMBER ATTENDEES

Andy Nowak, Jane Brand, Susan Motika, Wendy White, Julie Moore, Jeremy West, Joan Armon, Tanya Fell, Theresa Hafner

### TASK FORCE STAFF

Lyn Kathlene, Jewlya Lynn, Rebecca Kahn

### GUESTS

Julia Erlbaum, Barb Marty

### INTRODUCTIONS, NEW MEMBERS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### New Members

- Please welcome our two new members:
  - Joan Armon, Associate Professor at Regis University; taking over Ian MacGillivray's seat on the TF.
  - Theresa Hafner, new Director of Enterprise Management at DPS; taking over Leo Lesh's seat on the TF.

#### Announcements

- **Bond Issue:** There is a fact sheet about the bond issue; Andy and Julie will send it out to the Task Force.
- **Colorado Farm to School Initiative:** The Colorado FTS Initiative has been conducting a series of webinars, the next one of which will be in January on what the state is doing to make FTS happen. Going to have presentations from the TF, CO-FSAC, others. Second week of January. Lyn will be recruiting TF members to participate.
- **Colorado MarketMaker:** Greeley will be the first school to sign up on MarketMaker (<http://co.marketmaker.uiuc.edu>) as a buyer. Schools can put a lot of criteria for the food in their profiles. There is a FTS webinar training next week, 2-3pm, to introduce the components of MarketMaker (see archived webinars at [www.coloradofarmtoschool.org](http://www.coloradofarmtoschool.org)).
- **TCHF Funding:** In October we put in a request for continued staff funding to TCHF. It's been received and the next step is a site visit with Hillary Fulton. We will need TF members to come and be part of the site visit. A funding decision will be announced in early February.
- **El Pomar Funding:** El Pomar has rules that mean we'd need a waiver to apply for funding through our fiscal agent. We are waiting to hear whether we can put in an application with

a waiver.

- ***Durango FTS Conference.*** Julia and Andy were in Durango in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of November for a full day workshop with 9 food service directors with 24 producers from southwest Colorado. The purpose of the conference was to start a discussion on what it would mean for a producer to supply a school district.
  - Morning session on food safety plans – trying to show producers that food safety plans are important but need not be imposing.
  - Afternoon session to review process of school bids. Responding to a bid was perceived as very foreign to the producers. The discussion helped to make it less of a barrier.
  - The conference generated a lot of feedback. The producers wanted practical definitions of terms; for example, co-mingling. Andy Nowak and Julia Erlbaum are producing a list of terms and revising the farmer self-assessment. General consensus is that the procurement process is doable, honest exchange appreciated. Evaluation showed positive responses from producers.
  - Packet with resources will be sent out to the attendees with an invitation to attend the Southwest School Districts pre-bid conference in beginning of January. The pre-bid conference will be publicly announced. Julia will attend as a facilitator and to answer to questions about the procurement process.
- ***Connecting Farms to Schools Conference:*** The Colorado Health Foundation and CDPHE are the primary sponsors for second annual Connecting Farms to Schools Conference. You are invited! (registration link: <http://realfoodcolorado.com/index.html>) This is the big statewide Farm to School Conference. The event is on Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>. Stipends are available for participants traveling over 150 miles. The conference focuses on providing resources and access. There will be workshops in the afternoon on food safety plans, procurement regulations, hands-on instruction on how to do FTS. Registration is at 100, hoping for more than 200! Final agenda will be posted around January 5. The FTS-TF is a sponsor.
- ***Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (CFSAC):*** Since the FTF-TF's September meeting, the FSAC had two meetings – on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and December 6<sup>th</sup>. The council deals with the entire state's food systems. It is a big group, mandated by legislation and appointed by the Governor. The group is busy with subcommittee work, communications. Barb Marty represents producers. The group has representation from the grocery industry, producers, DOA, CDE, CDPHE, USDA (Jim Isgar), and HHS. Their new website is now available at: [www.cofoodsystemscouncil.org](http://www.cofoodsystemscouncil.org). The Communications subcommittee is trying to develop a list of Colorado Food Policy Councils; if you know of anyone who should be on the list, please contact is via the website. The Healthy Food Access Subcommittee has met a number of times, is spending a lot of time researching and gathering information, and is developing a vision and goals and strategy so that they can get to work next year and attack food access issues. There is also an Economic Development Subcommittee, which is holding its first regional meeting on Friday, December 16, 2011, in Pueblo. The next full Council meeting is

January 26<sup>th</sup>. A list of dates of subcommittees is available on the website.

## New Chair

- Andy Nowak and Jeremy West are nominated to be Task Force Chair, to replace Leo Lesh.
  - Should we wait until January to vote on new chair? A better use of time in January might be some intensive strategic planning.
  - Andy put his name in hat mainly to back up Jeremy – we need a leader from food service, and if Jeremy feels he has the time and is willing, then Andy will withdraw his name.
  - Jeremy is willing to chair the Task Force if there is support. He feels that helping Farm to School move forward is of great importance. Connecting local dollars to local economies, overcoming some of the barriers to Farm to School is an honor.
- Jeremy is elected chair.

## RECAP ROADMAP

- In February, the Task Force met to discuss what is left to do to attain long term sustainable statewide implementation of Farm to School. It was decided that two mechanisms are needed: direct farm to school, and food hubs. In having the conversation on how to get to food hubs and direct FTS, the group identified many things that need to happen (green boxes on the Roadmap).
- This Task Force is only one of many efforts around the state, and since we don't want to duplicate anything that is already happening, so the group identified critical gaps:
  - Pilots that will focus on multiple models – this is an opportunity to think about how to support different models and bring evaluation to the pilots.
  - An information hub.
  - Regulatory issues – we identified a need to develop clear guidance so schools and producers can work within the regulations.
  - One time capital improvement projects.

## GROUND RULES, DECISION MAKING PROCESS, VISITOR GUIDELINES

- Decisions will be made by a unanimous, minus one vote of all who are present.
- Voting may occur by email.
- Task Force members may abstain from decisions if they are not able to participate due to their organizations rules.
- Visitors will have a visitor designation, such as a name tag. They can be at the table. Visitors can participate when called upon or during a comment period.
- Ground Rules include: Be respectful, disagree constructively, agree to disagree, seek first to understand, don't cross examine, come prepared, stay focused, participate fully, be timely, and cell phones on vibrate.

## FACILITIES GRANTS TEMPLATE

### Template Sections

- We are in the process of developing a grant template with common language that schools might find useful when applying for a facility grant. For example for equipment a school might need, the template includes justification for why you might need different pieces of common and expensive equipment, with maps of child obesity rates and text about that.
- The template also includes customizable sections in a word document so they can be adjusted by the users, with basic language so that schools don't have to spend so much time grant writing.
- The template also has a series of equipment resources that schools can use to figure out what types of equipment is available, what costs will be, etc.

### Grant opportunities

- The template includes a list of some of the grants that are available, when the deadlines are, where to apply, what they can support.
- **Question:** How does this relate to TCHF's culinary boot camp?
  - **Response:** They have their own grant process. In our grant template we're looking at lot of different grant application forms, and providing information for some of the sections.

### Discussion: Dissemination to school districts

- Should we conduct webinars on the template?
- Dissemination of the template to the grants people for school districts might be a good plan – you can find them on the websites for larger school districts.
- For smaller districts, perhaps attending their rural philanthropy days. Do schools participate? If not, they could. Rural philanthropy days include training for small organizations on how to apply for grants. Other grants discussed there include USDA aid for disadvantaged farmers, rural and minority owned.
- Disseminate it to food services directors, and they can forward it on to the grants departments.
  - The food service director's conference is too far off.
- This will be a great resource to get on various websites, like the CFSAC and agency sites.
- Suggestion to develop a handout that could be presented at upcoming events.
- It will be in the resources for FTS at Lyn's January Webinar.
- If it's going to be on a number of different sites, it should be there as a link to one place where the original resides, so it can be updated in one place. On the Information Hub!

## INFORMATION HUB

### External partnership development

- The Information Hub will be one central place where everything we're finding can be housed. Thanks to CDPHE, we have a website developer to help us. A way to organize the information that will be in the hub was needed, so we propose three sections: information for producers, information for schools, and information for parents and communities. In other words, we will organize the information by how you might enter the site.
- When we get to the point of sorting the information, we'll be sending out a request for Task Force members to participate.
- What is now on the Colorado Farm to School website will migrate to new site.
- It will be very interactive, so people can have a dialogue about topics.

### Review logo

- Options: do we want to adopt the national logo with a little Colorado tweaking? Advantages include that there would be a clear connection to the national movement. A disadvantage is that it would look like everyone else's.
- Discard Option 2.
- Option 1 suggestions:
  - Mountains!
  - Different font. The font on option 3 is nice.
  - Needs something to represent biodiversity.
  - Needs something to represent physical activity.
  - Option 1 votes: One 1, two 3s, six 2s.
- Option 3 Suggestions:
  - Make Colorado bigger.
  - Use fewer circles – four maximum. Keep the apple, cow, tractor, and kids running.
  - Use Colorado colors.
  - Model it on Vermont's logo.
  - Option 3 votes: Two 1s, three 3s, four 2s.
- In general, fewer details are better
- Julie will send tweaked options out by noon tomorrow and we will vote by email.

## PILOTS & EVALUATION

### CCI and Central Peaks Update

- A few members from the FTS-TF did a presentation to Central Peaks to get them thinking about creating a food hub. Colorado Corrections Industry (CCI) has a 100,000 Sq Ft

warehouse with lots of refrigeration. The Council wants to invest their money into a food hub. Steve Smith of CCI is creating a business plan. They are longer thinking of it as simply FTS – in part because they don't have the schools on board yet. Instead they are creating a business plan for restaurants and other institutions as well as schools.

### Food Hubs as pilots

- ***Greeley School Central Production Kitchen:*** Greeley's central production kitchen opened in September 2011. This represents a return to scratch cooking. They now have a place for in season produce storage and processing. A number of neighboring districts don't have storage so they will be able to use Greeley's. Greeley now has lots of equipment. They are their fourth year of a farm to school purchasing program. Last year Greeley purchased about \$15,000 of produce, this year it will be upwards of \$40,000. Greeley is almost entirely buying local pinto beans, which have less sodium than canned beans. They are hoping to use staff to buy surplus crops and put them up for later use in the school year. This year will also be the third year of doing a joint bid with 13 other districts in area. Greeley is continuing the work that has been started.
- ***Greeley County Producer Hub:*** CSU and Real Food Colorado are working on a feasibility study to identify a single producer to serve multiple growers in an area, but that proved too expensive. So we are now looking at the question from several points of view and are in active pursuit of continuing education with Weld County Farmers, educating them on marketplaces. Identifying resources that exist on current farms. Post-harvest porta-coolers (\$1200 in raw materials) – you truck it in and put it on the land, and it brings the harvest down to the right temperature for schools. This could be crucial to smaller farms because most don't have infrastructure. We are hoping to make them road-stable, so they can be delivered to schools. We are breaking up infrastructure needs and addressing them separately. Post-harvest cooling, refrigeration, and pick up. Single delivery to Greeley schools and other institutions helps farmers, helps schools.
  - **Question:** When is produce washed?
  - **Response:** At the post-harvest cooling facility. Or the farm might have the infrastructure already to wash.
- ***Denver Feasibility Study funded by TCHF:*** TCHF funded a study to look at feasibility of growing food on DPS land. This would be the first example of a school district farming its own land. There are about 72 acres of available land within DPS. We are talking to the people who manage the land to determine who would farm it, who would own the food, looking at many legal and contractual issues. We are working to identify school sites to serve as minimal processing sites, freezing vegetables. We have introduced the subject of food hubs and are working all this into a school bond. We are looking at a 4, 8, and 12 year bond issue. We may use the mobile food hubs as a bridge.
- ***Colorado Springs - Southern Food Hub:*** The Southern Food Hub was not in the 2011 food hub application. They are hoping to apply for a TCHF grant in the February 15<sup>th</sup> application round. Right now they don't know what next steps are. The hub and FTS projects are not on the critical list, so they were dropped. The TF needs to start thinking about the

leadership in the southern SD facing a lack of time to work on FTS. We need people on the ground to implement programs.

- **Discussion:**

- We need third party support to make FTS successful. Time and resources are already at a premium. Feeding kids every day has to be a priority, even if FTS is wanted. We need a strike force team with the right representation.
- We set aside some funds to work on our committees. This falls under the work of committees – it seems like something to develop in committee. What amount would we set aside for pilot implementation?
- Arkansas Valley Organic Growers works with D11. They approached us to present a workshop on food safety. We might be able to remove some of the work from Rick's plate. It really is about bodies – people who can go out and get the information, do the resourcing, map the procedures, and help to implement them.
- DPS formed a relationship a few years ago with Food Focus. They have a Learning Lab for people from university and food systems – this immediately became a resource for DPS.

- **Decision:** Table the topic and discuss it in further detail in the subcommittee.

### Best Practices for FTS Evaluation

- Evaluation is part of our Roadmap. There is a lot of good information available on how to set up clear expectations on what you're looking for in an evaluation. CDPHE has offered help with evaluation.
- Two things we need to think about:
  - Should we be recruiting existing schools doing FTS and figuring out what kinds of evaluation we can put in place?
  - As we see pilots getting on board, how do we work to get them funded to do evaluation components?
- The small group at the last Task Force meeting narrowed our evaluation purpose to identifying models, respecting that the external environment in Colorado very much drives what model will be successful, and being aware of evaluation as a tool for improvement. We have a purpose, we have some national tools, and we have evaluators– all that is missing is who to evaluate, where to deliver the evaluation, and how to get people on board.
- CDPHE proposes a one page memo to be sent to CDPHE to remind them that they promised evaluation assistance and to propose what we want. Send this memo in the next week or so.
- New pilots would be a good place to build in evaluation. Existing programs don't have much evaluation going on. We need initial evaluation as well as during programs.
- Propose that we work with Greeley, DPS, and D11 to develop an evaluation model and then bring the model to new programs.
- The state of Farm to School evaluation is rather bad, so we must design our own. Kellogg

has some food hub evaluations in the works, but not available yet.

- **Decision:** By the next Task Force meeting, connect with CDPHE's evaluators to find out the capacity available, use Greeley, DPS, and D11 to develop model to bring to new pilots.

## POLICY AND LEGISLATION

### Administrative changes

- There has been a 50 state scan that covers a number of FTS Legislative Trends. The summary has been posted on [www.coprevent.org](http://www.coprevent.org), which has become the primary location at CDPHE for up to the minute research. Susan Motika has been putting FTS related research up there, and it can be a key source of information hub resources as well.
- Some states are doing some interesting data collection, including on how many farmers are working with schools. That would be a very valuable fact to know in Colorado.
- Suggestion to propose a data collection system as part of our charge in 2012 or 2013. We could look at best practices for data collection, figure out what are the gaps, and phase in some better data collection.
- Some states are providing a 10-15% reimbursement per meal for locally grown produce. Colorado's budget is very grim so this might be difficult, but perhaps a study to show how the reimbursement per meal affects children, to drive a bill in a later year.
  - Do we need to do our own Colorado study, or can we rely on data from other states?
- New members: the Task Force needs a teacher representative, a CDE curriculum person, and more directors.

### Discussion: Legislative Sponsor process with Betty Boyd

- Senator Betty Boyd is willing to meet with the Task Force on December 14<sup>th</sup> at 11am.
- The research will be presented. We will do an overview with the FTS-TF Briefing Book and articulate areas of special interest.
- State people cannot advocate for anything, but can provide information. Non-state people could discuss delaying the sunset and adding new members, since those require no funds and are relatively benign.
- The lobbyist for CDPHE says to think very hard about entering the legislative arena this year, as this may be one of the most brutal sessions in years because partisanship has reached a fever pitch with the districting battle. Everything is going to be positioned in a partisan way. State agencies running any form of regulation will be hit hard with a lot of questions. We need to be aware of what we'll be up against in 2012; it may be better to do research this year and be ready for 2013.
- We believe Senator Boyd has a generic bill title and is figuring out what she wants to put in it. The Senate President is being strict about letting anyone have more than their 5 bills.
- This meeting is mainly an opportunity to educate Senator Boyd.

- **Decisions:**

- We will go ahead with Senator Boyd meeting on Wednesday.
- If we need to make a decision about legislation outside of the task force, our decision making process will be to bring together those who can participate in the decision in a conference call after the Boyd meeting.
- Jeremy, maybe Julie, Andy, Susan, and Lyn will attend the meeting.
- Spark will send the Senator Boyd meeting details and schedule a follow up call time.

## **COLORADO SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION (CONFIDENTIAL FOR NOW)**

- Topic tabled for another time.

## **JANUARY MEETING**

- In January, we are planning intense subcommittee work at separate meetings, possibly by webinar to increase access. There will be no full Task Force meeting,
- We will get recipes from Andy out to full TF.