# Whatcom Food Network Planning Committee Meeting

*Planning Committee purpose/function:* Working to build common understanding and facilitate collaborative efforts toward an equitable, sustainable and healthy food system for all.

**Agenda**

Date: 4-17-2018

Time: 12-2pm

Location: Sustainable Connections

## Present

Facilitator: Sara Southerland  
Note taker: Diana Meeks

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| Adrienne Renz  Cheryl Thornton  Chris Elder  Holly O’Neill  Lisa Sohni  ~~Karlee Deatherage~~  Diana Meeks | ~~Kent Kok~~  Mardi Solomon  Rosalinda Guillen  Sara Southerland  Pete Granger  Jen Hey, WSU  Krista Rome |

Red = DECISIONS

Yellow = ACTION ITEMS

Blue = Opportunities for Collaboration

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| **MEETING SUMMARY:** | |
| **Item** | **Summary** |
| 1) Agenda Review | Agreed upon |
| 2) Go Round | * Impossible to summarize! It was awesome, as always. |
| 3) Spring Forum | * Really work with presenters on labor to stick with labor focus. * We will move some time from the first networking session to the second and will narrow down the questions to 2-3. * Holly will be MC * Fall Forum to speak about labor across multiple sectors, and with more a voice of the worker present (including fishing), possibly ending with/having the second topic be processing & distribution. |
| 4) 2018 Work Plan | * Work plan approved for coming year. * Coordinating Team will add some of the action items brainstormed to the Diversity & Inclusion item. |
| 5) Subcommittee & Action Groups | * Will be creating one Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee that would work on:   -Will be the lead on strategic invites to forums  -Developing tools to enhancing our collaboration at forums and in-between  -Recruitment for Steering Committee   * We have approval from County Council to work with PHAB to develop a Food System Planning Task Force. |

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| **FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:** | | |
| **By when** | **Action Item** | **Person(s) responsible:** |
| 4/27 | Check in with presenters on labor focus for forum | Pete & Diana |
| 4/20 | Send out Forum promotion toolkit | Diana |
| 4/20 | Send out Forum invite list | Diana |
| 4/25 | Sign up to invite specific people to attend Forum | Steering Committee |
| ASAP, no later than 5/2 | Send your invitation to the Forum | Steering Committee |
| 4/27 | Send out itinerary for day of with each person’s tasks for day and group they will help facilitate for networking portion | Diana |
| May Meeting | Add diversity & inclusion action items to workplan | Coordinating Team |
|  | Schedule first Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee meeting | Sara, Cheryl, and Diana |
| 4/18 | Send new organization profile survey to Steering Committee to review | Diana |

## PROPOSED NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:

Location:

## NOTES

1. **Agree on agenda for meeting**
   1. Agreed.
   2. Welcome newcomers – Krista Rome will be sitting for Karlee with ReSources while Karlee cuts back hours at resources to run a campaign.
2. **Go Round:** 
   1. Mardi – Holly and Mardi have been very involved in starting statewide F2S network. There will be a launch summit May 4th. Bham Districts good Food Promise implementation team is now meeting monthly and will be figuring out how to implement those values across all of our schools.
   2. Pete – Working hard to put together the Forum. Whatcom Working Waterfont Coalition, is now the President, 90-100 organizations are involved and the group looks out for issues that may impact working waterfront. Main goal is no net loss of working waterfront for the maritime industries. Looking forward to Seafeast in the fall, another woman is going to be taking over Debbies role
   3. Diana – In addition to helping the Food & Farming Team have also been helping Sustainable Connections with their other programs, some to note are our new Food Recovery Initiative that will help the public reduce food waste and restaurants and food businesses donate prepared foods, the Birchwood International Market happening June – Sept which will celebrate the cultural diversity of Bellingham and Birchwood. Some other updates on work with the WFN, we successfully submitted our 2017 grant report for the Whatcom Community Foundation and received our 2018 funds.
   4. Krista – A few things they are working on at ReSources that they could would love to have collaboration with water outreach – want to do a lot of listening sessions with farmers and how they struggle with getting the water they need. Would love help with promoting community forums and a questionnaire they've been passing around, making connections with other groups to do public forum community sessions. Will be doing advisory and supporting role for a group to ban plastic straws and Styrofoam in restaurants (could be two pronged approach one like Surfrider where businesses can voluntarily sign up and the other would be a ban later on passed by the city). In Sustainable Schools there aren't any big changes, still doing education and working with educators around waste reduction. On the Policy front – the current farm bill, have been following pro's and con's, wanted to share some of the impacts – will share what she's learned with the Listserve.
   5. Astrid – Hiring and E. Whatcom County community Health specialist and a dedicated policy person who will help with Food System Planning Process. Would like to have someone from WFN participate in hiring person for policy person. We are ending WIC program at Health Department, but there are two entities that have applied to home WIC and should know fairly soon who should receive that contract (will be in September). We are looking at a fall project looking at children and childhood obesity and might work with Opportunity Council/Vista.
   6. Adrienne – Coop was recognized nationally on their sustainability reporting and have started working with some other businesses with help of Sustainable Connections to mentor other businesses to do the same. In the next month or two, transitioning to paper straws. We have our annual election and a vote for people to invest locally in the Coop (will be starting in local investment for member owners, with return) more info to come soon. We had recently done some classes on how to start a Co-op which was very popular, from that started a working group to find out more about what others may want and have started a local Co-op Network (housing co-ops, credit union, food hub, etc.). We also recently had visitors from South Korean cooperative which was very inpiring and the work they have done in their food system, got to hear shared interest and values in mainting land and food access. If you have recommendations, Adrienne is putting together a group to find a way to do a needs based discount where people can go to the register and are already in the system. Who gets the discount? How can they apply? Etc. Want a group of community advisors who work in field of re-entry, SNAP benefits and start a conversation to guide this work.
   7. Holly – It was really fun to check in with Krista before she arrived orientation was really valuable, kudos to Rosalinda at Co-ops annual meeting. Have been facilitating for the Non-GOM. So related to GMOs – really important to support organic standards, labeling, etc. There is a lot of greenwashing happening with "new GMOS". E. Whatcom Regional Resource Center – the food bank that is currently there will eventually be a real food bank. Are asking for funding from County Council, it would be great to have support at that meeting which will probably happen at the next month – attending, calls, emails etc.
   8. Lisa – We aren't hearing about FINI until later this summer, but the good news is the Bellingham Farmers Mkt has maintained enough funds to run the program at that location. Trying to get Ferndale Market on board to keep a pretense going. Maple Alley Inn is our community meal program and they produce 3,500lbs for the meals at a local church. They are getting a greenhouse this year and with greenhouse in place will grow up to 5,000lbs of produce this year. Lisa just got awarded a pilot through Work First, the program for people on TANIF, Naomi Seagull will develop a three-month program through life skills will provide classes and experiences for families, will take be able to take families shopping, show them how to cook (a number of different experience, reaching 30 families).
   9. Rosalinda – One of the exciting things we are doing now is a Cooking Up Racial Justice Youth Program with community garden at First Christian Church. We will be cooking at Tadeo’s Restaurant, there will be two events where children will cook for families and the other a community event where kids present on what they learned about community foods, farming, and racial justice. Also, recently funded by PNASH Center, health centered Dept of UW that looks specifically at pesticides and toxics impacts on community health and farmworkers. We will begin a survey of farmworkers, that is peer to peer survey to get a sense of where the farmworker community is (physically and in the community). They will help develop a solid survey, and with this we'll have some much needed data and numbers to report. Hoping to get 500 surveys to reach 150 families, only got enough funding to get started in Whatcom, still looking for funding to finish survey (around 35k) – especially paying the coordinator. Starting mid-May – go through September. Hope is by end of year UW will have finished report for Whatcom and then move forward on additional counties. Next big issue coming up for Whatcom, is H2A Guestworker Program, will be working on this issue a lot this year.
   10. Sara – Tonight is the last of our farmer training workshop for winter, and have been collaborating more with Cloud Mountain. Have 10 new farmers, we hit 100k donated to local food banks this year. We have also launched new rebranded Eat Local First Campaign. Goals this year is to reach out farther and wider than we have before – out in Whatcom, and Skagit County. So if you have good connections please pass them on, it would help to build relationships so people know we are here and we want to help support and promote their business. The new 2018 Food & Farm Finders are out, as well as the new CSA Farm Directory. We are working with a few large employers around the County, if you have five or more employees interested farmers will drop off right to your office. Also published a Wholesale Product Directory – we want to get this into the hands of every food buyer in the area.
   11. Cheryl – Our interns are learning and growing and farm is busy. Today is first collaborative series working with Whatcom Conservation District putting together a farmer roundtable series. Have been working really hard with institutional buyers – six farmers between here and Skagit have been certified to sell to Sodexo, will be attending a launch of that partnership. Now signed on as an official vendor with Aramark at Western! Also doing some educational work with students and staff around Real Food Project. Had a meeting with Peace Health to explore local sourcing. And are also a certified vendor with State Farm to School Grant, now working on helping other growers use their processing center and be able to get their product into schools. Part of a statewide group exploring food hub success.
   12. Chris – Still hoping to take updated Ag Strategic Plan through County Council – big items they are looking at are ag zoning code, farm worker housing requirements. Have approval for 9 PDR projects and working on another 11 (7 projects 100% funded!).
   13. Jen – Big focus right now is the Farm to School Network.
3. **Spring Forum**
   1. Diana reviewed agenda with the Steering Committee, with the following amendments/decisions/action items:
      1. Really work with presenters on labor to stick with labor focus, not just an explanation of their business. Pete will be checking in with all presenters.
      2. We will move some time from the first networking session to the second and will narrow down the questions to 2-3. Groups will stay sector based but will report out. Diana will assign Steering Committee members to facilitate groups.
      3. Holly will be MC
      4. Everyone show up at 8am
   2. Was discussion on the focus and goal for the labor section of this Forum. Landed on using Fall Forum to speak about labor across multiple sectors, and with more a voice of the worker present (including fishing), possibly ending with/having the second topic be processing & distribution.
      1. Have a UFCW representative there to present
      2. Diana will send out Forum toolkit for each organization to help promote event
         1. Will also share the strategic invite sign up form
         2. Assign Steering Committee members tasks for the day and which group they will be facilitating during second networking exercise
4. **2018 Work Plan**
   1. At last Steering Committee Meeting we dove into what our priorities for 2018 would look like and we are now coming back with a draft work plan to review.
   2. Thoughts:
      1. Get more specific about what this work would actually look like for some of these items
      2. Will be having a WFN Steering Committee Retreat in July at River Farm to address funding
      3. For item 2 – really participate in outreach and invitation for
      4. For item 3 – what does this mean?
         1. This can tie back to #2, who is coming and who's is presenting on forum.
         2. With new subcommittee this could be a potential portion of that groups work.
         3. With communication too, incorporate more open or welcoming invite to forum.
         4. Look at language we are using on website, about a commitment to EDI (we are inclusive of all viewpoints).
         5. Pull in language at beginning of each Forum, to recognize tribal land we are all on.
         6. Have translators at forums? Statement on forum invites – if you need accommodations of any kind please let us know.
         7. Maybe not this year but in the future, it would great to have different cultures and communities share their view and perspective of the food system.
         8. Look at how to make Forum more accessible to low income and working-class people.
         9. The Coordinating Team will plug in some action items on diversity and inclusion.
      5. Work plan approved for coming year.
5. **Subcommittee & Action Groups**
   1. *Outreach & Engagement Committee –* We used to have two separate committees a communications committee and an outreach committee. Now that we have a part time assistant to help with communication, and with the feedback from the Coordinating Team we propose creating one Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee that would work on:
      1. Will be the lead on strategic invites to forums
      2. Developing tools to enhancing our collaboration at forums and in-between
      3. Recruitment for Steering Committee
      4. Proposal accepted
      5. Adrienne and Jen interested in joining in Fall. Sara, Cheryl interested in meeting in June.
   2. *Food System Planning:* The Food System Planning group met with Public Health Advisory Board earlier this year (they report to the Health Board, which is also County Council) and the Health Board on food systems planning. We have approval from County Council to work with PHAB to develop a Food System Planning Task Force. Chris, Astrid, Hank Kastner and others will be meeting soon with the board to keep that rolling.
   3. *CFA Update Subcommittee* – We are still working on the organizational profiles. The PARTNER tool turned out to not be a good tool to measure systems wide collaboration so we have amended the current profile and would like to get any feedback from the Steering Committee before sending it out to orgs.
      1. Diana will send edited survey for review
   4. *Farm to School* – They met in January and will be meeting again soon.