# Whatcom Food Network Steering 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: 12/17/2019

Time: 1:30-3:30pm

Location: Sustainable Connections

## Present

Facilitator: Various  
Note taker: Kerry–

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| Cheryl Thornton  Ali Jensen  Mardi Solomon  Gavin Willis  Rhys Thorvald Hansen | Amy Esary  Kerry Eastwood  Naomi Siegel  Karlee Deatherage |

Red = DECISIONS

Yellow = ACTION ITEMS

Blue = Opportunities for Collaboration

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| **MEETING SUMMARY:** | |
| **Item** | **Summary** |
| Agenda | Approved. |
| Fall Forum | Was a great success, much room to continue improving for next time. |
| Spring Forum | Brainstormed questions for the Hartman group to possible cover (will need to be refined) |
| File storage | Kerry will consolidate old files onto external hard-drive and move guiding docs to website. |
| Outreach | Next steps: lay out goals/objectives of 2020 outreach and create content calendar. |
| Steering Committee | Coordinating team will work on further defining chair and co-chair terms, roles, and responsibilities, and will work to recruit more representation from labor and waste sectors. |
| Sector updates | We shared news and opportunities related to local food systems work. |

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| **FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:** | | |
| **By when** | **Action Item** | **Person(s) responsible:** |
| 12/31/19 | Set up regular schedule of SC and coordinating team meetings for 2020 | Kerry |
| 12/31/19 | Move old files to external hard-drive, guiding docs to web. | Kerry |
| 1/31/ 2020 | Coordinating team work on roles and terms for chair and co-chair | Coordinating team |
| 1/31/ 2020 | Recruit representation from labor and waste sectors | Coordinating team |
| 2/15/ 2020 | Rhys will work on laying out some goals based on our past work and guiding docs. | Rhys |
| 2/15/ 2020 | Rhys willing to come up with a content calendar/plan to help us stay on track with outreach efforts in 2020 | Rhys |

## PROPOSED NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:

**December Date & Location: TBD**

## NOTES

1. **Agree on agenda for meeting**
   1. Agreed.
2. **Fall Forum Debrief**
   1. Space was good.
   2. Crowd was engaged.
   3. Needed more time for panel q’s.
   4. Facilitated networking took up too much time at beginning – do one less round so we can shift that time to speakers.
   5. Lack of diversity on panel was a problem.
   6. Bring name tags vs print – no need to double.
   7. WCF presentation was not on topic.
   8. Charge small fee – to shrink no-shows, could make registration have two tiers (‘supported’ = free, basic = $5, ‘supporter’ = $10)
   9. Hold forums at a different time of day so that laborers can come if the topic is relevant.
   10. Flyer table, and announcement window at beginning so people can make quick announcements/share what resources they have available.
   11. Time cards were key to staying on track with agenda.
   12. Several reminders seem to have helped avoid no-shows, still had about 30% no-shows, with 10% of that being made up for with unregistered attendees.
   13. Best forum yet!
3. **Spring forum** **topic: consumer trends – what specifically do we want the Hartman group to cover?**
   1. What are consumers buying?
   2. What do they do with food waste?
   3. What are their family’s needs?
   4. How do they buy food?
   5. How do they prepare it?
   6. How do they eat it?
   7. How much of it do they eat vs waste?
   8. How much money is wasted?
   9. What is the environ impact?
   10. Prepared foods vs restaurants?
   11. Value added vs raw products
   12. How important is local and organic? How much do consumers value those traits? Is that demand growing? What is the trend for what consumers prefer in terms of how their food is grown and processed?
   13. How are conveniences like online ordering and delivery affecting local producers? How can local producers compete/integrate?
   14. How do we compare to national in these trends?
   15. City vs rural
   16. Broken out by income
   17. Forecasting of major trends in meat-alternatives
   18. What long-term changes do they see happening in consumer trends relative to our local producers?
   19. How much locally produced food is consumed locally?
   20. The bread lab – present on different local strains
   21. Have a bread and beer networking event
4. **File Storage system**
   1. Kerry will move old files onto external hard-drive and see if we can downsize Dropbox files as a first step before rethinking the file system.
   2. Files the SC wants to be able to access are all the food assessment reports and meeting agendas.
5. **Outreach Ideas for expanding in 2020**
   1. Rhys willing to come up with a content calendar/plan to help us stay on track with outreach efforts in 2020
   2. Opportunties to promote events of the Conservation District which hosts Drayton Harbor Shellibration, Small farm expo, speaker events – technical info sessions, and the seed swap January 18
   3. What are the goals/objectives for the channel (social media, newsletter, listserv) – curate content from that: staying positive – recognize what’s wrong but from the lens of what can we do about it; Rhys will work on laying out some goals based on our past work and guiding docs.
   4. Social media is not worth our time if we’re only going to post content twice per month – our content won’t be seen due to the algorithms.
   5. Focus should be on newsletter and figuring out how to best use the listserv
   6. Newsletter:
      1. Could do a feature in the e-newsletter on someone in our local food system like the Mountaineers 10-questions (feature a different member each quarter and ask them the same 10 questions)
      2. Featured collaboration: highlight local collaboration (example we could use: specialty crop block grant)
      3. 10-questions feature: Kelly Morgan
      4. Amplify messaging from the fall forum
      5. Highlight Birchwood food desert fighters
6. **Steering Committee functioning**
   1. Need a new chair:
      1. Value in having an individual listed as the chair and co-chair for the public to know who they can go to
      2. Co-chair should be willing to fill role of chair when chair leaves
   2. Coordinating team is the body that takes care of day-to-day
      1. Create roles on coordinating team so everything has a place
      2. Coordinating team work on roles and terms
   3. Also need better representation from someone in labor and waste – coordinating team will work on this.
   4. Do we meet at a regular time or will it always be done by doodle poll? Kerry will set up a regular schedule for 2020 meetings.
7. **Sector updates**
   1. Ali: A Birchwood food summit was held Oct 2019, which focused on food access issues and building momentum around growing food in urban areas.
   2. There was also a Foothills food summit held in Oct 2019.
   3. County election: how does it affect the food systems committee?
      1. Ali - Don’t think there will be any changes to aim and goals
   4. Food system plan updates: done lots of interviews, we have the data, now we’re going through and trying to identify themes and gaps and finish the food systems assessment.
   5. Food system committee – Health Dept. houses leader of committee (Ali) mandated in Feb to do assessment; WFN did some assessing but didn’t have enough resources to do a food systems plan; started in Feb with most sectors represented – they are updating the community food assessment, will create recommendations to guide policy around local food systems issues; outline policies that make a more equitable and sustainable food system; food system assessment will eventually lead to food policy agenda.
   6. Gavin: Drainage basin management: two pilot areas Bertrand, Dakota creek, South fork - lot of work being done there to help alleviate issues around water needs for farmers.
   7. Rhys: San Juan Island Ag summit Feb 7 & 8 at Camp Orcila – Keynote is Jennifer from American Farmland.
   8. Naomi: Opp Co has 3 new vistas: Maddie working on Birchwood and other Health Dept. projects, another that started in August working on migrant labor food access; another working on Sea-Mar community programs.
   9. Some federal decisions in the works that are in the works that could threaten several food security/access for our community.
   10. Community seed swap /skill share fair Jan 18. Would love to have CMFC there to do skill share.
   11. Mardi: Ferndale got funding to create their own scratch made kitchen and are looking at BHam for a model.
   12. Bake for Good Kids – they have a program where they do an assembly to teach the kids how to bake – Mardi working to get more assemblies for Whatcom Schools.
   13. Adventure book club – by Misha Collin’s wife; proceeds go to Whatcom Farm to School and two other causes.
   14. Kerry: Gigi Berardi – FoodWISE; wants to cross-promote WFN as she promotes her book.
   15. Maddie: we could do some event countdowns on social media to create content.
   16. Cheryl: CMFC is building a greenhouse that will be used as an educational space – interactive learning space.
   17. Cheryl is working with the school district on an agreement to have bigger Bham schools share resources with smaller, under-resourced schools.