# 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: 6/5/2019

Time: 3:30-5pm

Location: Sustainable Connections

## Present

Facilitator: Various  
Note taker: Kerry

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| Cheryl Thornton  Chris Elder  ~~Holly O’Neill~~  ~~Lisa Sohni~~  Karlee Deatherage  Kerry Eastwood  Ali Jensen | ~~Kent Kok~~  Mardi Solomon  ~~Rosalinda Guillen~~  Sara Southerland  Pete Granger  ~~Jen Hey, WSU~~  ~~Amy Esary~~ |

Red = DECISIONS

Yellow = ACTION ITEMS

Blue = Opportunities for Collaboration

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| --- | --- |
| **MEETING SUMMARY:** | |
| **Item** | **Summary** |
| 1) Agenda Review | Agreed |
| 2) Go Round | See notes |
| 3) How to expand WFN Steering Committee | Current steering committee members will review new member criteria and add to it or adjust as needed before we begin recruitment.  Current steering committee members will help come up with a list of quality candidates to expand the steering committee based on a set of criteria we laid out in the meeting (see notes).  Kerry will compile WFN current audience from newsletter contacts (includes all forum attendees for the last few years) and send to steering committee members to review and use to identify potential candidates for the committee. |
| 4)Steering Committee meeting schedule | Stick with every other month schedule for Steering and Coordinating team with the coordinating team meeting next on July 9, and the Steering Committee meeting next in August (date TBD). |

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| **FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:** | | |
| **By when** | **Action Item** | **Person(s) responsible:** |
| 6/11 | Post Steering Committee updates from the go-round section to the Listserv | Kerry |
| 6/30 | Read and review new WFN steering committee member criteria that was decided on at the meeting (see notes) and add to it, expand on it as fit so we can use it as a guide when expanding the committee. | Kerry will email the criteria out to members to prompt them to review  ALL Steering Committee members review and provide feedback to Kerry.  Kerry will compile feedback for next meeting. |
| 6/30 | Compile list of all WFN audience members for review for recruitment by current steering committee. | Kerry |
| 6/15 | Kerry will schedule future meetings so they’re on everyone’s calendars. | Kerry |

## PROPOSED NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:

**AUGUST, Date: TBD, Location: Sustainable Connections**

## NOTES

1. **Agree on agenda for meeting**
   1. Agreed
2. **Go Round**
   1. Mardi: 5 State school-to-farm networks are holding regional gatherings to network and hear how each region is working toward the state priorities. A small state work retreat will follow the regional gatherings to process what comes out of them.
   2. Cheryl: WWU has been sourcing from CMFC for their student cafeteria – it’s nice to be getting back into supplying local food serving businesses. CMFC has 8 interns in their intern program and they are all doing great work out at Cloud Mtn.
   3. Chris: Stepped down from Twin Sisters Market to let someone else take the lead role. They are applying for federal grants to staff a ½ time admin person so the farmers can focus on farming. County update: they have created a regional map that aids in prioritizing parcels for outreach and ed purposes, and ultimately ag preservation. Tracked and looked at 2004 vs 2019 land use changes and found a loss of 400 acres of ag land in 12 years – that’s 75 acres a year. Presenting results to the council and Ag Committee will work on recommendations. Hopefully they’ll create a plan for how to protect the ag lands for future. One possibility involves the sub-division regulations (how sub-divisions occur on ag land). Another factor is that there are properties not currently being farmed but are still getting a farming/ag tax break – could disqualify them from tax break if land is not in active farming, or offer to give them 1-2 years to lease their land into farming to get the land back into ag. Climate impact advisory committee is hiring a consultant to do climate action planning. Paddle to Lummi July 24-27 is looking for food donations – has around 15 farms ready to donate. Chris is possibly delivering food via rafts to the event - Has 4 rafts that can hold 2k lbs. Might have a film crew document food delivery
   4. Pete: working with a group that’s trying to preserve the maritime use of the waterfront area. In particular, trying to prevent the loss of waterfront buildings to non-maritime related businesses/industries. Asking port to inherently think about use of property before leasing; port is considering their plan to try to protect maritime character of port/waterfront. Bobby Briscoe is up for re-election and is supportive of these measures. Blue drinks at Drayton harbor oysters – (Marlene's Fishery has opened a fish stand). What about doing a food/drinks event as a WFN networking event? Tariffs from china – seafood industry is getting hit hard. Terry Fair runs seafood market off Slater Rd – they have a sea cucumber and urchin that they can’t sell to china this year due to tariffs. They will have to try to market to Seattle or Canada.
   5. Karlee: REsources and other enviro orgs are hosting Salish Splash on June 14 to celebrate orca recovery legislative successes. Light drinks and refreshments will be served and local elected officials will be there. County Shoreline Management program update: open house June 10 in Birch Bay, Deming the following week, Bellingham June 25. County is looking at what the periodic updates should be—whatever the community wants to see improved: one of the things we’re looking at is being proactive for impacts of climate change; another is better managing protection of gravel bars in the Nooksack. Resources is hosting a paddle – Friday, June 18 to raise awareness for orcas. Someone found an invasive green crab in Squalicum Harbor Marina. City of Bellingham is exploring what to do next with their incinerator – helping them look into how they plan to address the carbon impact and looking at other alternatives to reduce pollution, including possibly capturing energy from incineration, and reusing bio-solids to produce compost. County council trying to designate a fund for Lake Whatcom programs to create a dedicated revenue source.
   6. Kerry: Sustainable Connections putting on a Smart Business Leadership workshop on June 19 that will help businesses integrate social equity and sustainability values into their
   7. Sara: Recently held a successful Chef Farm Tour, and also a Farmer mixer down in Skagit. We’re inviting Food businesses to host events for Eat Local Month this September. Local food-related organizations are invited to host booths during the Farm Tour Sept 7-8. Food Atlas – working to get more businesses incorporated, will be out at events tabling to sign folks up and spread the word about this online local food finding tool every weekend this summer. Eat Local First campaign is working to expand into Skagit – we’re building relationships with restaurants and grocers.
   8. Ali: East Whatcom Food Landscape Assessment is done and will be published soon. We’ll gather for a summit in the fall (invitation only) to create a food action plan based on the results. Foothills Community Partnership is leading that effort. One of Ali’s coworkers is leading a Farm-to-School program for childcare centers. There is interest in putting a grocer back in the old IGA.
3. **Update from Food System Subcommittee**
   1. Last meeting was May 15: the committee identified basic values of the food system plan: ecological stewardship, thriving local economy, equitability, access, and food sovereignty. Next steps involve interviews to ground truth the plan and get input. Next meeting is June 14. Group is working productively.

1. **Expanding the Steering Committee**
   1. Vision is to have one rep from each sector and Double the steering committee numbers
   2. What are the sectors? (e.g. Waste management (would probably need to be a food-waste based background for it to be applicable)
   3. Ideas for members:
      1. Scratch and Peck Feed – they want to be more involved in the food system.
      2. New GM for Puget Sound Food Hub Andrew and his wife (name?) both seemed knowledgeable and interested in food systems.
      3. Crave Catering – Pam or her assistant – they have their ear to the ground in food systems would be in the consumption sector but are very busy.
      4. Bham Cold Storage – could represent an important sector.
      5. Green Earth Technologies - different angle on waste but they are private, for profit.
      6. Potential pool of retirees? Pete has contacts.
   4. Concerns about commercial/private businesses
      * 1. Will they be representing the community or private interest?
        2. We all give self-promoting updates on our work, but the nature of our work is community-oriented.
        3. We need sector representation but in the past we’ve been concerned that private interest would dominate our work if we allow private business sectors on steering committee
        4. If allowed on, private sector members would need to be looking at a broader role and their sector’s connection to the food system. As a business they are valuable to the food network because they know the lay of the land in their sector.
        5. The steering committee seems to have had private reps before but were so community-oriented that it didn’t come under scrutiny.
        6. It seems like private sector reps are a key piece of the food system and need to be involved.
        7. Maybe we could create criteria to ensure that appropriate members are recruited (including private if the right fit)
        8. Criteria
           1. Already connected to work of WFN
           2. Committee will maintain majority in community organizations (NGO and local gov’t)
           3. Community-oriented
           4. Well-connected within their sector and have a broad interest in food systems
           5. Ideally have interactions across multiple sectors
        9. Kerry will compile and send these criteria to steering committee for further feedback before finalizing
   5. Kerry will compile WFN Contacts for current committee members to use to identify recruitment pool.
   6. Past process: coordinating team sent recommendations to Steering committee.
   7. Steering committee can decide to change process and we will reflect in guiding documents.
   8. Naomi has been nominated by Lisa Sohni who is stepping down. Naomi is food systems oriented and has been involved in our work – she's approved.
2. **Re-envisioning the WFN, continuing the conversation. Ran out of time - table until next time.**
3. **Set meeting schedule for Steering Committee and Coordinating team.**
   1. More frequent meetings?
   2. Ali suggests we use listerve for monthly updates
   3. Next year we could transition to having working groups
   4. How many more meetings do we need to make progress needed on work plan?
   5. Let’s do monthly meetings: Steering Committee every other month, Coordinating team every other month alternately.
   6. Kerry will schedule.