

# Whatcom Food Network Steering Committee Meeting

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

Date: 12/10/20

Time: 10:30am–12pm

Location: Virtual Zoom Mtg

## Present

Facilitator: Elma & Miik

Note taker: Kerry Eastwood

Kerry Eastwood	Mardi Soloman
Rhys-Thorvald Hansen	Laura Ridenour
Ali Jensen	Ander Russell
Cheryl Thornton	Naomi Siegel
Kent Kok	Sean Hopps
Gavin Willis	Miik Wells
Elma Burnham	Becky Snijder van Wissenkerke

Red = DECISIONS

Yellow = ACTION ITEMS

Opportunities

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:		
By when	Action Item	Person(s) responsible:
12/17	Send out instructions on Slack.	Rhys
12/17	Send doodle to set up recurring meeting time for first four months of WFN SC meetings for 2021.	Kerry
12/31	Decide on SEED funding hiring a facilitator for JEDI work in 2021.	CT
12/31	Create agenda for next SC meeting.	Ander & Kerry

## Decisions:

- 1) Work on forums and all other work aside from JEDI building will be put aside until we have established a base of JEDI leadership and processes as an SC.
- 2) Ander will serve as WFN chair.
- 3) WFN SC will meet monthly for the first four months of 2021, then revisit to decide whether monthly meetings are still needed.

## NOTES

- 1) Welcome. How are we feeling about this meeting: Fist to Five.
- 2) Agenda review/finalization (see link to [agenda](#)).

- 3) Food System Committee Joint Meeting Update
  - a) WFN joined FSC a week ago - alot on the agenda.
  - b) discussed respective roles, Kerry gave background and future visions.
  - c) Update from FSC == they have been on hold for 10 months - prior to last week's meeting, the only time they've met during pandemic ws to craft a letter of immediate policy recommendations related to COVID impacts in food system to the County Council. None of the recommended actions have been taken. **More in the future on how we can collaborate on this in future so that the Council can't ignore.**
  - d) **5 Openings on FSC: processing/distribution, labor, farming, and fishing, and WFN rep**
  - e) FSC will hopefully be finishing the CFA in 2021.
  - f) **FSC-WFN position is a great opportunity to create more fluidity and collaboration**
- 4) Why are we here? Questions reflecting on survey results and access to equity within the Network.
  - a) Miiik's work is about self-orientation and bringing our humanity into our decisions and actions - we are taught to not consider ourselves, or to consider everything. I hope to drop us down a level, so that we have some processes and can get closer to the roots.
  - b) WFN is having a challenge because there is a gap in leadership. Change, capacity, and cancelation.
    - i) There are capacity issues for how much you want/need to meet and how much you can meeting,
    - ii) Cancellation of the forum, shifting of the forum purpose
  - c) Survey results: What do the results bring up for you?
    - i) Lack of relationships within the committee is a barrier to creating relationships with the community.
    - ii) Shifting our emphasis from sector representation to JEDI representation and work on supporting JEDI needs in our food system.
    - iii) WFN past goals should be revisited and recommitted to.
    - iv) Values are there, what is lacking are tools to help us do this work: one of the tools would be the JEDI committee.
    - v) Feeling unsure about having this work be done by a smaller group rather than the larger group (CT vs. SC). Feels important to have the whole SC be integrally part of this JEDI-building work.
    - vi) JEDI team would be helping figure out the structure and collecting resources to then do the whole work as a SC.
    - vii) How do these groups communicate with each other: Network, CT, JEDI Committee, SC.
    - viii) We meet so infrequently, and our agendas are packed - worried we won't be able to move the work forward without a JEDI committee
    - ix) What work is more important than this (JEDI work)? The full SC should be working on this as top priority. If we feel we have restrictions on our capacity - all our capacity should be focused on this work.
- 5) **What** does this mean for our work moving forward?
  - a) Propose: meeting monthly for 2021.
  - b) **All other work should be put aside (forums) until this work is done.**
  - c) But we still have a need to continue engaging the food system.
  - d) As we come forward with processes and internal shifts, there will be cross-over in what we can offer the community.

- e) As we figure out how we are going to live our values, some of the work of conflict resolution will be a part of that.
  - f) It would be helpful to have a chair and co-chair to help lead the agenda creation.
  - g) Yes, we have the values document, the JEDI group would provide examining how we can move forward with those values and get buy in.
  - h) **Ander volunteers for the chair role - majority voted yes.**
  - i) **Meet monthly for next 4 months - majority voted yes.**
  - j) Recurring meeting 2nd Thursday from 10:30am - 12pm? Kerry will send out a doodle to figure out a recurring meeting time. [Kerry]
  - k) Sense of urgency to act now, in whatever capacity we are at. Our constituents are depending on us. What we run into is a barrier to that. It revolves around not clearly identifying with the values and what they mean - that's the reason for having these SC meetings where we will commit to these values.
  - l) Along with equity in wealth comes equity in political power - we're running into this barrier of empowering our constituents at a time when they most need it. In the short-term, that's the next 4 years in terms of our recovery here in Whatcom County.
  - m) It's also equity in decision making, equity in process, equity in making resources available. There's the urgent piece, but there's that cultivating piece where we place these seeds - bringing this information to other people across the network is a part of that.
  - n) At recent in-person forums, we're having people talk to our constituents, rather than having the people who come listen to our constituents and that's something we should bring forward for future forums.
- 6) **How** can we commit to the work? Discussion on action items moving forward, guided by WFN Core Values.
- a) Did not get to this - will be next meeting topic. [Kerry & Ander]
- 7) Adjourn