

**Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee Meeting**

**July 9, 2024 – 1:00pm to 2:30pm**

**Zoom link:** Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89972208906?pwd=6aLvPsVWb3FjYl71G1yPpJJSjIzb0p.1>

Meeting ID: 899 7220 8906

Passcode: 417384

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**Attendance:** Lauren Weston, Emily Alger, Bethany Remmers, Katie Darr, Peter Jenkins, Marietta Scholten, Cassie Fraser, Christine Porcaro

**Goals:** Update HRC Committee on Transition & Provide programs updates.

Times	Agenda Item	Action
1:00 to 1:30	<b>Transition Update &amp; HRC Rules of Procedure Follow-Up</b>	
<p>C. Porcaro gave an update on the HRC/CVOEO transition. Both staff have applied for their jobs and have interviewed. The current tentative date of transfer is Monday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Needs to be at the start of a pay period which if July 22<sup>nd</sup> is missed, it would be August 5<sup>th</sup>. B. Remmers and Catherine Dimitruk met with Paul Dragon to discuss finances and equipment for HRC programming. The CVOEO Board approved the HRC transfer both “enthusiastically and unanimously”.</p> <p>B. Remmers shared information on asset transfer and have had conversations with the EDA since the assets were purchased with an EDA Disaster Resilience Grant. NRPC cannot transfer ownership to CVOEO but will work on MOU with CVOEO so HRC can continue to use those assets.</p> <p>E. Alger asked if there had been any discussion on who would be the Rep. on the HRC Advisory Committee from NRPC after the transfer. B. Remmers shared that they had not yet decided.</p> <p>C. Porcaro shared information from Jess Graff about the current FGI Advisory Committee which explained that it is run by the philanthropy and communications team at CVOEO. It is not program specific and more of a broad look at the agency and the needs of the community.</p> <p>E. Alger asked if there were any concerns about or things that need to be settled on record before the transfer. M. Scholten shared that she just wanted some clarification on roles and if there would still be a representative from the NRPC Board of Commissioners on the HRC Advisory Committee.</p> <p>B. Remmers added that she would like to continue to have a board member and an NRPC staff member, perhaps as alternates, to ensure robust participation from partner organizations.</p>		

E. Alger shared that they talked about this transition with the SHLT Board in June and everyone seemed super excited for this transition and thought CVOEO would be a great backbone organization for HRC. B. Remmers shared that C. Porcaro presented at the NRPC Board of Commissioners meeting which shared all of the great work done by HRC while housed at NRPC.

C. Fraser added that from the Abbey Group perspective this transition has been really well received and makes sense. L. Weston shared support and said that throughout the transition it has looked like HRC staff knows what they are doing and will continue to support HRC staff.

1:30 to 2:00

**Programing updates**

C. Porcaro to get printed maps to B. Remmers. E. Alger to get maps to K. Darr.

C. Porcaro gave an update on HRC Programming, including the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative Grant. Grand Isle & Franklin County maps have been printed and distribution across the 2 counties has started. 5 farms have received sales and marketing technical assistance including, adding e-commerce to websites, creating marketing materials, creating new websites, evaluating website SEO health, creating new farm newsletter and researching and prepping from on-farm events. She also shared information on the start of the Migrant Household Food Boxes and Northwest Farmacy CSA. HRC will increase its purchasing for the Migrant Household Food Boxes that are already being distributed. P. Jenkins has been making some purchases already with funding from Vermonters Feeding Vermonters, but will start receiving more crops from the West Farm through funding from the Vermont Land Trust. The Northwest Farmacy CSA starts the following week. A base share is being created by the West Farm and then P. Jenkins will be purchasing from other farms to round out the share. This is an effort to create more consistency across the CSA. This is also HRC's first year having the CSA in Grand Isle. HRC is adding up to 5 CSAs from the Darby Farm for individuals living in Alburgh.

K. Darr and B. Remmers asked for some of the printed maps to distribute.

2:00 to 2:30

**Advisory Member Updates**

C. Porcaro and E. Alger to figure out next HRC Advisory Meeting date & time.

L. Weston shared that there has been some staff turnover but hoping to have people starting in August. FC NRCD is currently looking for an office in St. Albans. B. Remmers asked if they can purchase a space. L. Weston shared that they can purchase but they cannot have a mortgage. L. Weston also shared that farm fields are still very wet and some farmers still haven't been able to get 1<sup>st</sup> cut off. There is also continued frustration with the Agency of Ag from the farmers. E. Alger asked about what those frustrations and concerns are. L. Weston explained it had to do with timing of payments, availability of funding and small farms seeing inspection for the first time.

C. Fraser shared that the Abbey Group is running free meal programming at Missisquoi Valley and Maple Run. There are about 150 meal boxes/week out of Maple Run and about 200 meal boxes out of MVU. She is looking forward to beefing up farm to school programming. They are currently working with P. Jenkins on two Farm to School Gatherings for this fall.

K. Darr shared that they released the State of the Lake report:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/0cc5a840e6904201825284a058844c1b>. They also

currently have an RFP for an Artist-in-Residence program. This opportunity will recruit artists to use scientific data, cultural trends, or historical facts to interpret natural resources in the Lake Champlain Basin. The Vermont Citizen Advisory Committee is looking to update their action plan. It currently includes a vague statement on the legislature supporting farmers. She asked if L. Weston and/or C. Porcaro had any more specific requests from farmers that they could include in the action plan.

E. Alger talked about the SHLT gleaning garden which is located at Pigasus Meats. Their intern has 50% focused time at the gleaning garden which gives more capacity. They also just purchased a 60 ft. hoop house from Sandy Bottom Farm. With that new infrastructure they are hoping to funnel more food to the Migrant Household Food boxes. They have a large conservation project at the Goulet Farm which includes hay and veggie fields. The project is a \$1.3 million project. SHLT will have their Annual Celebration at July 27<sup>th</sup> at 9am at the Worthen Library. It is free and anyone can come.

B. Remmers shared that NRPC is working on a Regional Energy Plan which will be adopted as a part of the Regional Plan: <https://www.nrpcvt.com/services-programs/regional-planning/>

NRPC received a large EDA grant to support 3 northern VT planning commissions to do some flood modeling on the Lamoille and its tributaries. They are trying to get municipalities ready for when flooding and natural disasters happen.

Meeting adjourned: 1:50pm

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