

Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee Meeting

June 9, 2020 – 1pm to 2:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83633947391>

Attendance: Denise Smith, Emily Alger, Bethany Remmers, Nina Hansen, Robert Ostermeyer, Brad Docheff, Rachel Huff, Tim Smith, Koi Boynton

Goals:

- Review FY' 21 Budget
- Review & Discuss EDA Grant
- Discuss Staffing

Times	Agenda Item	Action
1:00-1:10	Welcome & Updates	
<p>Notes: NMC has seen cuts that have impacted Rise staff. Betsy and Jess are the two folks left working in the community. Amy Brewer is also still at NMC working on public health efforts.</p> <p>SHLT has been working on their Grow a Row campaign with the community. Donation plot at Healthy Hero and delivering plant starts to food shelves, mentoring and parent child center.</p> <p>Fairfax's farmers market will start up on June 19th with music live stream from the town offices.</p> <p>NRPC's brownfields program has secured additional funding for that program – very exciting.</p> <p>NorthWest Family Foods – things are going well. Soon they will be getting boxes directly from the Foodbank for the Farmers to Families Food Boxes.</p> <p>Rachel – has secured funding from AOE along with the VT Farm to School Network to support professional development for educators.</p>		
1:10 – 1:45	FY'21 Budget Review	Koi will make additions to the budget based on member organizations contributions.
<p>Notes: Reviewed the FY'21 budget and identified funding that will not be secured for the FY'22 budget – requiring increased fundraising efforts this year to make up for the anticipated gap in FY'22</p> <p>\$5,000 from SHLT should be added for farm viability work. This can be invoiced when the new farm viability person is hired.</p> <p>At least \$2,000 from The Abbey Group should be added for their annual contribution.</p>		
1:45 – 2:00	Review EDA Grant Scope of Work	
<p>Notes: Committee reviewed the approved scope of work.</p>		

Rachel inquired about the conversations with Cold Hollow regarding an apprenticeship program. Koi informed that these conversations happened early on with the ag teacher and director. They have not been approached since the April finalization of the award. The early conversations with them confirmed that they feel this program is needed, they are interested and excited. They will need follow up.

Denise inquired about how the new farmers market ordering platform fits in. Koi explained that market was developed for direct to consumer but that org does have funding to establish a wholesale platform – so it might have carry over for any new ordering system HRC puts in place. We also need to further explore partnerships with orgs like Ctr. For a Ag Economy and Green Mtn Farm to School to see if there are systems in place that we can utilize for our regional purchasing for small retailers and institutions. We have found the bottle neck to be ease of ordering and distribution. Koi pointed out that we have a year to develop our infrastructure plan and we need to consider how that infrastructure investment support new revenue sources for HRC.

2:00– 2:30

Staffing Discussion

Bethany will review this feedback with the hiring committee and NRPC.

Notes: Bethany presented the process at NRPC for brining on new staff people. They have a personnel subcommittee of NRPC that approves new positions. Emily/Tim will work with Catherine to craft the job posting, taking into account the conversation that the advisory committee had during the June meeting. The posting will be sent out via the usual channels and through partners. Catherine and 1-2 staff will select 3-5 candidates, who will be interviewed by the NRPC personnel committee and a couple of HRC advisory committee members (probably Emily/Tim). 1-3 candidates will be interviews by the staff more generally, and at this time more HRC advisory committee members could participate

Bethany brought up the Healthy Roots Coordinator job description that exists at NRPC.

Emily brought up that the job description is everything that HRC does and positions need clear outline of duties with identified boundaries between staff and collaboration points. This has been a challenge for staff in the past.

Denise and Koi agreed with Emily’s point that it has been the nature of HRC to have many shared tasks and this has not worked well in the past. Staff would benefit from clearer identification of their role within the program. Koi communicated a lack of clarity for her role at HRC because of the deep overlap with each of the program areas, oversight of the gleaning program and need to jump from program area to program area. Koi also pointed out the need to focus on the general administration of the program, especially with an anticipated \$70,000 shortfall in FY’22.

Denise asked where Koi’s interests in tasks are. Based on strengths and past experience – Koi identified the general management of the program and supporting staff in achieving their goals is her area of strength. There has been a focus on direct service for all staff from the advisory committee and this has been a challenge to maintain when such large shifts and administration needs continue to come up that require focus and attention.

Based on this direction the group shifted to reviewing survey results from farms on TA services. The group reviewed these and discussed the balance between existing relationships in the region and strong experience in the state. The group decided that relationships can be formed but experience needs to be there. Koi brought up the point that our farms have identified and will continue to identify that access to markets is their number one priority and therefore we need someone that has a strong experience with the logistics of facilitating and maintaining buying

relationships. Denise pointed out that based on this someone with experience in business to business relations is needed. There was also discussion regarding ease with people and farms is a priority and for that reason, we might consider including a farm visit in the interview process.

Brad asked about where fundraising falls in the job description. Denise pointed out that grant writing is within the job area of general administration but fundraising is not included. Koi pointed out that she has inherited much of this role because of her past experience as the grant writer at NMC – supporting and advising HRC from the beginning. Denise urged that HRC needs to ensure that staff time spent is paying off for fundraising and that events are often not the way to go. Brad asked if a fundraising plan is in place. Koi explained the history of the TA for fundraising and the existing plan that has not been implemented or revised because we have been saved with large influxes of money in the past. This fundraising plan needs to be revised and take into consideration HRC's existing placement within NRPC.

Next Meeting Agenda: Review a revised fundraising plan and get update on hiring process.

Handouts – FY' 21 Healthy Roots Budget, EDA Scope of Work

In accordance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the NRPC will ensure public meeting sites are accessible to all people or provide an opportunity to request accommodations. Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other requested accommodations, should be made to Amy Adams, NRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-524-5958 or aadams@nrpcvt.com, no later than 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.