

Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee Meeting

May 27, 2021 – 8:30am to 10:30pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82615690056?pwd=ZkRYV0lQTXovVE52d3hjc2tY3gxZz09>

Attendance: Emily Alger, Rachel Huff, Nina Hansen, Bethany Remmers, Tim Smith, Robert Ostermeyer, Denise Smith, Koi Boynton, Christine Porcaro, Peter Jenkins

Goals:

- EDA Stem update and consensus on direction
- Discuss Everyone Eats and determine role in food access beyond gleaning
- Review direction of Farm to School

Times	Agenda Item	Action
8:30 to 9:00	Org updates	
<p>Notes:</p> <p>NRPC-Bethany reported that NRPC is getting ready to finish the fiscal year, staff evaluation time, July 1st is the big new year with a lot of new administration stuff and a lot of new money coming into municipalities over the next few years. NRPC is hiring for the next round of AmeriCorps volunteers. Water Resources Planner is the other hire for NRPC. Mark, one of the current AmeriCorps volunteers, is ending his service early. Koi mentioned that he worked on couple projects with Healthy Roots, including the migrant farmer outreach.</p> <p>The Abbey Group- Nina reported that the Abbey Group is still trying to get into the USDA game for food boxes with a mix of local and not local food. \$50 was their bid and \$7 was the winning bid from a California company. Abbey Group has decided to build a packaging facility with refrigeration on route 105. It will be used for lighter processing (not like CAE). Koi asked Nina if there was potential for shared space for Healthy Roots in the new facility. Nina said she does think there could be opportunity there.</p> <p>FGI Office of Economic Opportunity- Robert reported that the office is entirely focused on housing. People currently living in motels will need to move out and there is just no housing. Robert emailed Tim to see if there is an opportunity to set up a secure tent car park for those that want or need to tent. Food shelf is trucking along and is getting good funding and support. Emily asked how much is transportation a bottleneck. Robert responded that it is still a problem, as always, especially when leaving the city center.</p> <p>FCIDC-Tim reported that FCIDC is focused on year end stuff/sending information to the state. Healthy Roots is on their BGS list. As the deadline gets closer, he'll reach out to Koi and Christine. They did preliminary budget and they got preliminary approval to give \$10,000 (from \$5,000) to Healthy Roots.</p> <p>NMC-Denise is excited that her world is going back to normal. The vaccine clinic will be going way and the focus will be on urgent care. Eventually it'll move to primary care. The COVID testing site is closing on June 1st because of lack of demand. Testing will move into lab, primary care and urgent care. 77% of people are vaccinated in the state. The governor's threshold is 80%. Emily asked what Denise's role is evolving into. Denise said it is focused on working on prevention and working on clinical outcomes in her new role as the Blueprint Manager. Denise mentioned that</p>		

Sarah DeSilvey is working on a national project looking at how social determinants affect people's health and making sure that language is being translated across organizations. Robert mentions that Champlain Housing Trust is thinking about buying the Cadillac Motel and that might offer a lot of different options for the hospital to have a presence. Denise mentioned that Gifford Medical Center test for food security during their visits and patients are given a bag of resources and shelf-stable foods. This gives the doctors a concrete action to address someone who has been identified as food insecure.

9:00 to 9:30	EDA STEM Update	Koi to follow up with Robert about CVOEO IDA program
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 Koi described the origins of our application to EDA for what NRPC/HRC called at the time an Apprenticeship Program. The idea was to work with high schools to give credit and also have dual enrollment. It was soon realized that the apprenticeship was not the appropriate model. Koi described various schools Healthy Roots has been in touch with (FNESU, Cold Hollow, BFA). Healthy Roots wanted to chase after proficiencies as an incentive for students to participate in an internship program. Koi reached out to Richard, who is the work-based coordinator at MVU, who had just started to work on proficiencies for his program. Koi brought Richard to meet with Guy Choiniere at Choiniere Family Farm. They are starting to design a program for a student to be at the farm during the school year. They have been able to identify the proficiencies that the students will get working on the farm. The goal is now for Richard to write up the program and for HRC to identify teacher host that will verify proficiencies. Our goal is to place a student at Choiniere Family Farm next year. Koi explained that HRC is still working out a timeline and also figuring out the ongoing role that Healthy Roots would play in the program. HRC has not made the post-secondary connection. UVM Ext might be a better fit than CCV. Koi then explained that with UVM Ext they have an IDA program, where they invest in a students' business planning for a year. A student enrolls in the program, they are guided through business development. Robert then mentioned that CVOEC also has an IDA program that HRC should connect with.
 Through CCV they could have dual enrollment and receive 2 credits. Koi then asks then asks the group if it is too much to offer those two options. Rachel remembers from the initial apprenticeship meeting that CCV was excited about being in the food systems work. Koi points out that they were excited that they were launching an entrepreneurship certificate.
 Koi then asks how to move forward with replication? Should HRC have a regional gathering in the fall about the program with interested students, businesses, and organizations. (The meeting originally planned was food security focused and it would use farm-to-school funding from a USDA grant). Both Denise and Rachel were curious about outcomes for the meetings matching and the goals and timeline for the project. Koi mentioned that both topics would be engaging students in the food system, so the outcomes match. The original timeline was 6 students in the coming year, but it will only be 1 student in the coming school year. EDA is aware of the impacts of COVID and HRC will hopefully be able to receive an extension as well. Koi also mentioned that HRC does not currently have enough staff time in order to run this program unless we hire someone on, or change structure.
 There was consensus among the advisory committee to giving both post-secondary options to students (UVM Ext. and CCV) and to move forward with work with MVU and the Choiniere Family Farm.

9:30 to 10:00	Everyone Eats & Food Access	Peter to reach out to Brother Bob at Martha's Kitchen about Volunteers. Peter to share volunteer write-up with Denise and Emily. Christine to follow-up with Catherine/NRPC about fiscal management of the Everyone Eats program.
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Notes:
 Emily presented information on the food access programs Healthy Roots is currently and will be participating in including, Everyone Eats, Land Link Project and CSA boxes for migrant families. The

overview went through the pros and cons of each program, the current challenges and the immediate needs that need to be addressed. Emily asked if we want to participate in the potential extension of the Everyone Eats program through the summer and if so, how HRC can make that happen, if we want to distribute Farms to Families Food Boxes if they include local produce and how we can partner with other organization to support Peter with volunteer recruitment and physical help at pinch points. Emily asked if Peter had any else to add. Peter mentioned that he is not totally confident in the statement regarding volunteer interest (delivery vs field gleaning). He has had very dedicated drivers (especially in the Islands). When he reached out initially to people, it seemed like a lot of people were interested in field gleaning. But, right now in the moment, he is good on volunteer delivery drivers but also noted that that could change in the future. Peter then asked Nina about the new iteration of the Farmers to Families Food Boxes (Full Plated Vermont). Nina confirms that that is what she mentioned at the beginning of the meeting and that the Abbey Group would not be participating. Robert asked if volunteers were using the big van. Peter confirmed that they are not. They are using their personal vehicles. Denise said that she could send an email to the Medical Reserve Corp volunteers that they were using at the clinic. She has some really high quality volunteers. Emily says that SHLT could do the same. Koi also mentions that Brother Bob has said that they have more volunteer asks than capacity for Martha's Kitchen, so Peter could reach out to them as well. Emily wonders about pinch points and wonders if there is a better way for the gleaning program to better anticipate them. Peter responds that without Farmers to Families, it seems like that'll be less of an issue. In regards to the Everyone Eats program, Bethany wonders if NRPC/HRC could take over that fiscal management. She mentions that it seems like we are already doing 95% of the work.

10:00 to 10:30	Farm to School	Koi, Rachel and Emily will meet to discuss more
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Notes:
 Emily explained that are winding down with our two big regional grants. USDA/Ag of Ag under HRC purview. They were supposed to wrap up next month but has been extended to December. At that point, HRC has no outstanding grants specifically for Farm to School. It is noted that now seems like a good time to see where HRC is in relation to Farm to School and what is next. SHLT has been the fiscal agent for the past couple of years, and it seems like a good time for SHLT to step back, finish up the current grants and then take a break. Emily asks that if Rachel is going more direct work/connections with schools then what does Farm to School look like for Healthy Roots. Emily also asks if Rachel could transition from Healthy Roots contractor to Healthy Roots partner. Koi mentions that the HRC tagline has always been food access, education and farm and food business development. Koi asks if we would still have that as a part of the tagline/reporting. Koi also mentions that HRC is limited in terms of funding and there is currently no funding for HRC staff to actually participate in Farm to School. Bethany asks that if a school is participating in farm to school field trip at the West Farm and Peter in gleaning, is that considered supporting farm to school work. Koi reply that it does but that we would lose the education piece w/o Rachel, unless she has a contract with that specific school. Rachel adds that HRC does lose a little bit in not owning that Farm to School component. Which is the other side of that equity and food access coin. Rachel then asks if education is an important part of HRC's bottom line. Emily replies that HRC moving away from housing Farm to School, does not take away the possibility of it being brought back in the future. Nina adds that this she feels this is a greater discussion. HRC and Farm to School has been a long-standing relationship and the Abbey Group has seen a real impact on the schools that Rachel has been working with. Koi and Emily both agree with Nina and that it should be a larger discussion. Nina adds that if we are trying to get farm fresh meals into schools, it would be a shame to lose any momentum.

Next meeting, Thursday 06/24 @ 8:30am for HRC Advisory (Table Farm to School discussion until July)

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