

Marin Food Policy Council  
Meeting Notes  
December 15, 2015  
[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: January 19, 2016, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. [HHS campus](#)

**Attendees:**

*Steering Committee* – Janet Brown (AllStar Organics); Alexandra Danino (SF/Marin Food Bank); Bonnie Nielsen (UCCE Marin); Julia Van Soelen Kim (UCCE Marin); Kiely Hosmon (Youth Leadership Institute); Reba Meigs (HHS)

*Committee Members* – Becky Gershon (SF/Marin Food Bank); Casey Poldino (ZeroWaste Marin); Cío Hernández (HHS); June Farmer (Marin City CX3); Lori Davis (Sanzuma); Madeline Hope (West Marin Waste Education); Miguel Villarreal (Novato USD); Peter Healey (AIM); Terrie Green (Marin City Community Services District)

*Guests* – Kathy Koblick (Marin County Public Health);

**Welcome & Council Representative Announcements – Janet Brown**

- Terrie: Monday December 21 – 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Helping Hands dinner and backpack giveaway for seniors, disabled, homeless, sick, also for single parent head-of-households. Now collecting blankets (need about 45), can be dropped off at the Marin City CSD, or picked up by Terrie.

**MLK Coalition Annual Day on January 18 – Tony Iton with California Endowment**

- EcoFarm Conference January 20 – 23 – apply for scholarships for next year.

**Council Business – Julia Van Soelen Kim**

- Membership structure discussion. Two categories: 1) who are our current MFPC members? and 2) what is our strategy for governance going forward? e.g. voting decisions, outreach for new members, etc. **Next steps:** Bonnie will email out the membership application for folks to fill out so that we have baseline information to move forward with. At future meetings, we can discuss governance and what our ideal scenario of Council membership might be? Currently we are heavy on the agency side and weak on the community side. Also lacking representation from the retail/grocer side. Once we have a clear view of our current membership, we can work on outreach for expanding membership to include a broader sector of stakeholders.

**CA Food Policy Council Report – Julia**

- 2015 legislative report: tracks legislatures' votes on 18 specific food and farming bills. Politicians now know that Food Policy Councils are watching them! Report is available online for free download here: <http://www.rootsofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/CAFPC-ANNUAL-REPORT-for-WEB.pdf>. This year bills were heavily focused on intersection between agriculture and water and drought, less on poverty and food security due to immediate drought situation.

**Equitable Access Report – many**

**3 department meeting on December 7 (CDA, HHS, UCCE, Marin City CSD, and BOS) - Reba Meigs & Julia Van Soelen Kim**

- Narrowing down to 3-5 issues for our final report; couple from healthy retail and 1 each from other buckets. Meeting with partners to assess feasibility, effectiveness, and costs for each.
- This meeting was the first time that CDA, HHS, and Marin City CSD were all at the same table. Dr. Matt Willis, HHS, credited the MFPC with identifying a key missing piece of the puzzle and commended the Council for being the right body to advance this work.

### **CalFresh Policy Work Update – Reba Meigs**

- Reba and Angela are working to develop targeted and data-driven goals for increasing CalFresh enrollment – targeting low hanging fruit of families on free and reduced meal program who are not utilizing CalFresh program to create a data-driven strategy with a concrete number goal.

- **Next steps:** Meeting with Reba, Becky, Alex, and Angela re CalFresh goal.

### **Healthy Retail Policy Work in Marin City Update – Terrie Green**

#### **Meeting with Tom Lai of CDA**

- Healthy Retail requests: fast-tracking permits, incentives, etc. Tom Lai committed to fast-tracking permits and supporting financial assistance for associated fees for Marin City retail facility. Marin City can use this to help incentivize a grocer into the community.

- There is a precedent of BOS supporting grocery stores entering communities lacking one (Marinwood).

- HHS is contacting owners of the vacant retail space to present the issue as an equity/food access issue. - Working on speaking the financial language of Returns on Investment also from the perspective of health.

- **Next steps:** upcoming meeting with the Federal Reserve Bank- Any needs for support from the MFPC? YLI would also likely send a letter of support.

### **Healthy Retail Policy Work in the Canal Update – Reba Meigs**

- Mi Rancho has been active in promoting healthy living for a while, have wanted EBT from the beginning. First round was denied, and they just got accepted.

- CVS palm card (info on Social Host Ordinance) example of integrating local goals with large businesses

- **Next steps:** quantify HHS time spent helping retailer apply for EBT to be able to better put a figure on the need for technical assistance.

### **Zero Waste Policy Work Update – Casey Poldino & Madeline Hope**

- Zero Waste Marin is a group of all city managers and unincorporated Marin, staffed by the County of Marin (12 people). First step: find a way to get permitting process for restaurants, events, etc. to include a waste aversion piece (with a priority toward food recovery, donation, and finally composting).

- **Next steps:** Environmental Health Department oversees permitting process, so Zero Waste Marin will meet with Environmental Health Department on this. ExtraFood.org is involved, hoping SF / Marin Food Bank will be involved in meeting, as well. Food Banks can't take food from restaurants or events, while they can take from grocery stores. ExtraFood.org can't take large pallets of vegetables, but can take from events and restaurants.

SF / Marin Food Bank happy to join the next meeting. Potential challenge: food recovery and storage after working hours.

### **Equitable Access Report Work Timeline**

Continue having these conversations and narrow down priorities between now and the first two weeks of January, in order to **be ready to present recommendations for priority issues to the Council for discussion at the MFPC Meeting on January 19.**

### **Health Equity and Food Access Data in West Marin**

- Berkeley Public Health students worked with Julia and members of the MFPC and West Marin Collaborative to develop a West Marin Factsheet on food access and health equity indicators using secondary source quantitative data (no qualitative data)
- DRAFT factsheet included in this email \*\*JVSK to provide, please review for accuracy and send edits to Bonnie (since most info was found online rather than on the ground from the community, we still need to “ground-truth” it’s accuracy).
- West Marin Collaborative meeting at 9:30 a.m. on December 16, will also review factsheet.

### **Farm to School Update – Miguel Villarreal and Lori Davis**

- Attend North Coast Farm to School Regional Meeting. 5 or 6 different counties represented. Time to start showing superintendents and school board members examples of schools doing great work; our decision-makers need to know what is possible. Good food is going to cost a bit more. Schools that are doing great things are getting support from their districts.
- Question: Does (or could) Marin County Office of Education have a Strategic Plan? There are so many opportunities to coordinate what we are working on with MCOE if we could overlap more. Ask Mary Jane Burke about a Strategic Plan for Marin County schools? Countywide Plan to include everyone as something unifying and senior to the 19 districts? Example, creating a Zero Waste classroom at the Marin County Office of Education as a zero waste snapshot for folks to see when they visit, as a model for Marin schools.
- Students perform better at the beginning and middle of the month than end (when CalFresh has run out), ER visits for low blood sugar etc. increase at the end of the month.
- Kids are agents of change within their families – what they pick up at schools they will bring home.
- **Possible Next Step:** We may be honing in on a possible policy lever here for Countywide Strategy around farm to school.

### **Production Theme – what are folks interested in learning more about?**

- Farmworker housing (scheduled for January or February) and benefits, access to technology
- AIM programs – general AIM programs and mobile market (scheduled for January)
- Food storage and gleaning (commercial kitchens, cottage food, dehydration)
- Community connections between farmers and residents, greenhouse
- Hear from Paulette Swallow with UCCE and more dairy info. Farmer/Rancher panel?
- Small ag easements (MALT?) on county land dedicated to specific groups (e.g. just for the food bank, just for Marin City, etc.) Salary and benefits for a young farmer, community decides what to grow and the price for the produce, get a grant to get it all up and running. Food sovereignty – you be the source, make the decisions, the food is your food.
- What is needed to use garden-grown food in school kitchens?
- Food safety issues
- GMOs
- “Grow a Row” partnerships between farmers and school food service
- \$ in local economy

- Food Banks have relationships with farmers around CA and Marin, working on a bill that would make it easier for farmers to donate to food banks. Food banks relationships to local food production.
- How much of the food produced in Marin is consumed in Marin?

**Closing remarks – Janet Brown**

*"It's not easy to cross boundaries to adopt a whole-systems approach to health. It means leaving the areas we know well and venturing into fields where we have to depend on the expertise of others. It means learning unfamiliar concepts and mastering new tools to engage complexity. It means asking people to take health into account in making decisions that usually depend on other considerations. It may provoke controversy. It may make people we approach uneasy and even angry. It requires patience, imagination, courage, integrity, and a sense of humor."*

- Dr. Richard Levins, John Rock Professor of Population Science, Harvard School of Medicine

**Meeting adjured** at 5:05 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, January 19, 2016, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the [HHS campus](#)