



Hunger Elimination Task Force Q4 Meeting

November 10, 2021 | 1:30-3pm

Participating legislators:

- None

Participating stakeholders:

NAME	AFFILIATION	EMAIL
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Juliana Esposito	Food Access Data Collection Intern, RI Food Policy Council	juliana@rifoodcouncil.org
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AGENDA

- 1:30 pm Welcome & Introductions**
- 1:35 pm Updates**
- 1:40 pm Review of *Hunger Elimination Task Force* goals and objectives**
- 1:45 pm 2021 look-back**
- Annual review
 - Work group report out: emergency & supplemental food delivery in RI
- 2:00 pm "State of the State" of hunger in RI 'by-the-numbers'**
- 2:15 pm Small group conversations**
- 2:45 pm Small group report-out**
- 3:00 Close**

NOTES

1:30pm

Nessa welcomes the group and encourages people to introduce themselves in the chat.

- Reviews the meeting format and overall objectives
- Acknowledges that the year has been challenging, and HETF has made a big impact
- Today's meeting will help us shape the future

1:35pm

TWO BIG UPDATES

1. Randi Belhumeur, RI Department of Health (RIDOH)
 - Introduces the new Food Access and Equity Manager position, a position made possible through COVID relief funds
 - Paid through RIDOH, facilitated through the relationship with RIFPC (working in close contact with Juli Stelmaszykl and Randi)
 - Position [will be posted through RIFPC in the next week](#), start date around the new year
 - 1.5yr position, subject to RIDOH CDC funding
 - Reviews the role briefly at a "high level", explaining the goal is to reduce hunger and increase access to culturally appropriate food for all Rhode Islanders.
 - Connect and coordinate. Educate. Research. Capacity building = the foundation

- of the role
- Opens it up to questions about the position, asks that people don't hesitate to reach out
- Suggestions for candidates welcome
- 2. Andrew Schiff, RI Community Food Bank (RICFB)
 - Invites everyone to the release of [RICFB's 2021 status report on hunger](#)
 - Mon. 11/22 @ 10am ([register here](#))
 - Will be joined by Luis Gardiea, Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) and Lori Fernandez, Federal Hill House

Nessa thanks Randi and Andrew for the updates and shares her screen to show slides for the next presenters.

1:40pm

Juli Stelmaszyk, Director of Food Strategy for the RI Commerce Corporation, gives an overview of the 2021 HETF goals and objectives

- Briefly introduces herself and her role
- Notes that "To ensure food security for all Rhode Islanders" is a pillar of the food strategy, and therefore the HETF was established
- Presents the 3 main objectives:
 - A. Broaden the network of actively engaged stakeholders
 - B. Deepen the collaborative environment for medium/longer term problem solving
 - C. Collect data for the creation of a statewide hunger/food delivery landscape map

1:45pm

Diane Lynch, RIFPC Board President, provides a review of how the individual objectives were met.

- Briefly introduces herself and her role
- Reviews a pie chart slide that is relevant to Objective A, showing the number of individuals who attended HETF meetings, and the professional sectors they represent (by percentage)
 - Notes lots of participation from state agencies, but the bulk of attendees are from outside partners
 - Also notes that nonprofits were distinguished differently than community-based organizations on a judgment call when creating the chart
- Explains that to meet Objective B there was more focus on medium-longer term collaboration as to set things up for communities that can yield long term results.
- Notes that every HETF meeting was designed to maximize engagement.
- Summarizes how the Q1-Q3 conversations have translated into programs and organizational work - quite successfully - including ARPA recommendations and grant funding investments through DEM, etc.
- Reviews the current work group objectives
- Introduces Juliana Esposito, RIFPC Food Access Data Collection Intern, explaining that she inherited a great deal of research when Nina Wolff Landau left RIFPC staff in October.

Juliana presents slides relevant to Objective C

- Introduces the Emergency and Supplemental Food Work Group
 - All HETF members
 - RIFPC helped form it, and the group led RIFPC
 - Objectives were to
 - Build and share an up-to-date database/landscape map
 - Identify gaps and potential areas for increased state/non-profit support, short or longer term
- Communications with RICFB and HEZ networks identified food providers we wouldn't have otherwise known about, creating a new "landscape"
 - 40 food delivery operations were interviewed comprehensively
- Shares that we thought we needed a resource, but we learned there wasn't actually a need because of resources Integra, United Way 2-1-1 and UniteRI already maintain
 - Effort toward continuing to strengthen connections to these groups is ongoing
 - The new Food Access and Equity Manager will be key in strengthening these partnerships
- Shares that key findings identified various strengths in the network, including a diverse range of providers and a focus on older and disabled adults
- Shares challenges that were identified are things like staff capacity, 0 coverage in Northwest RI, no focus on newly immigrated people
- Reviews a map of municipalities that are operating local food delivery
- Goes into specific characteristics of food delivery operations/service providers
 - Graphs illustrate the languages accommodated and targeted populations, and length of time food delivery has been offered
 - Almost all will continue to offer these services indefinitely, or until needs are covered
- References Meals on Wheels RI's impact of households served

NOTE: Slide presentation was edited post-meeting after incorrect data was noticed. The current slide is a revised version featuring The Elisha Project

- Reviews challenges food delivery operations are facing: inadequate staffing, inadequate funding, transportation, storage

Diane takes back over with next steps recommendations

- Make findings widely available
- Inform investments and policy within the State/specific municipalities

2:00pm

Turns it over to Nessa to review the "State of the State"

Nessa gives an overview of the current state of primary indicators for food security and food access in Rhode Island.

- Encourages people to jot down suggestions and thoughts for the upcoming breakout sessions
 - The data can help us understand how these factors affect our population, which will be relevant
 - Numbers provided will help "add up" to a story that can help attendees understand why YOUR missions are important
- Shows that RI experienced over 25% hunger in 2021

- Racial and ethnic disparities played a huge role. More than 4 out of 5 BIPOC in RI's urban areas are experiencing food insecurity
- Seniors are more likely to experience hunger, and more programs are serving them
- Reviews a snapshot of SNAP, school meals, WIC and senior programs
 - Caseloads vary greatly by municipality
 - New school meal requirements are having a positive impact

Kim Gans acknowledges the disparities for Native people, and asks if there is anyone on HETF that represents that group. No participant stepped up.

2:15pm

Nessa invites Allison Montagnon, RIFPC Communications Manager, to begin Breakout Rooms.

Allison reviews basic how-to and guidelines for the sessions, which will use Google Jamboard.

Questions posed to each group:

1. *In what ways has the HETF benefitted your organization and support your work in 2021?*
2. *In what ways could the HETF better serve your organization and support your work in 2022 (e.g. format, frequency, structure, topics, etc)?*

2:45pm

Nessa hosts a popcorn-style “takeaways” session upon returning from Breakout Rooms:

- Kim: High rates of poverty in native american population
- Juli: many people were new to the group who were attending. The data sharing was really useful. Also great to recognize there is still a lot of work to do to expand our reach further. Want to also have people with lived experiences to have input. Tapping into health care.
- Allison: Brady brought up the cross pollination of food equity and health equity
- Meg Grady (MOWRI) requests an off-line conversation with Juliana regarding a potential data error or error in reporting. She and Juliana will connect as soon as possible and slides will be updated if needed.

No further announcements or notices were made.

3:00pm

Meeting closes

NOTE: 2022 meeting dates and objectives will be available in the coming weeks