

Meeting Minutes

RI Interagency Food & Nutrition Policy Advisory Council (IFNPAC)

Q3 Meeting

Chair, Director Terry Gray
Tuesday September 12, 2023 | 9:30 – 11:00am
RI Commerce Corporation
315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101 (Narragansett Room)

Members of the public can attend in person or via zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86583935404?pwd=ekxxQzJWYUZtNlAyVkxzVm15a1dMUT09>

Meeting ID: 865 8393 5404; Passcode: 664199

One tap mobile; +13092053325,,86583935404#,,,,*664199# US

Meeting began at 9:30 AM with a welcome and introduction by IFNPAC Chair, DEM Director Terry Gray. Director Gray introduced two new members to IFNPAC, Meredith Brady from the Department of Administration and John Coltatoni from the Governor's Office (joining by phone).

Director Gray stated the background on IFNPAC:

IFNPAC was established by the general assembly in 2012 to serve as a coordinating body between 7 state agencies to examine regulatory and policy barriers to developing a strong sustainable food economy and healthful nutrition practices. Since the launch of the 2017 State Food Strategy, [Relish Rhody](#), the Council has served as a coordinating council to drive outcomes toward the Strategy which include: preserving and growing agriculture and fisheries; enhancing the climate for food and beverage businesses; ensuring food security for all Rhode Islanders and minimizing food waste in the waste stream.

The next portion of the agenda was approval of the quarter two meeting minutes. After review of the minutes, Jessica Patroliia from the RI Department of Education made a motion to approve. Aleatha Dickerson from the Office of Healthy Aging, made a second motion. There was no disapproval of the meeting minutes.

The Director of Food Strategy, Juli Stelmaszyk, shared key findings of the Food Strategy, Relish Rhody 1.0 Retrospective:

- Engaged Northbound Ventures as consultancy to create the report. 11 KII's and IFNPAC findings helped us to create this report.
- Goal: Identify impacts, progress and outcomes over the last five years. NOT a comprehensive assessment, since no baseline metrics to draw from.
- Who has been responsible for the plan, to date? DFS and IFNPAC.
 - Food assistance programs, of which IFNPAC members oversee, are very much interconnected with the five focus areas.
- Success: funding for small BIPOC farmers and fishers thanks to the Local Agriculture and Seafood Act (LASA) funding.
- Three themes emerged: catalytic funding; policy gains with investment of funds (ARPA dollars, LASA); collaboration and coordination
- Gaps: racial inequities; gaps in support for second stage businesses; underinvestment in farmland viability and food solutions to climate change

- RIDOH, DEM, DFS leading the 2.0 process
- Alignment with other state and regional plans
 - Alignment with F2S Action Plan, Emergency Food Security Plan, 2025 climate strategy (see slide)
 - Emergency Food Security Plan: RIFPC secured RIF funding. Purpose is to look at the in between time period after the FEMA initial time frame (3 days)

Upcoming State grant programs for food businesses presented by Kara Kunst, Senior Policy and Budget Analyst, Executive Office of Commerce.

- EOC programs for small businesses; See slide and recording. Still have *Take it Outside* funding available. Support of up to 10K. Ventilation program is at capacity.
- Commerce Programs
 - Minority Business Accelerator
 - RI Rebounds Technical Assistance
 - Take It Outside

DEM updates by Ananda Frasier

- RFSI: Encompasses post-harvest to retail for business that use local or regional food products. No poultry, meat or wild caught seafood. Infrastructure and equipment only grants. Application template online if you want to start project planning now. Federal funding that state agencies are trying to stand up, and also maximize the amount of money and leverage accordingly. Creating a landing page for businesses to figure out what applicable. USDA directive around excluding meat and poultry.
- LASA update: RFSI and LASA meant to be synergistic. 700K in next decision package for LASA.
- 30 million to the NE states, and we can all apply to this pool. Available for business assistance and grant funds and meant to be synergistic to LASA and RFSI.

FY25 RI Food Policy Council legislative priorities: Josh Daly

- Policy retreat just held last week.
- Shared initial draft of '24 priorities

RI Farm to School & RIDE Food System Project Updates

Slide: USDA funding for next phase of F2S work. Local procurement for F2S network.

Public Comment

CET: Lorenzo: new clean heat program with link in the chat