

## MEETING MINUTES

### Rhode Island Interagency Food & Nutrition Policy Advisory Council (IFNPAC) Q4 Meeting

Chair, Director Terry Gray

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 | 9:30 - 11:00am

RI Commerce Corporation

315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101 (Narragansett Room)

[Council members must attend in person, per RI Open Meetings policy.](#)

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81118020241?pwd=M2VqeVJPNndjRXBJWWRVON0bXNrZz09>

Meeting ID: 811 1802 0241

Passcode: 182993

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*IFNPAC was established by the general assembly in 2012 to serve as a coordinating body between 8 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.*

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#### Q4 Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2023

Location: RI Commerce Corporation

**COUNCIL MEMBERS (present):** Ken Ayars, Terry Macnamara, Maria Cimini, Meredith Brady, Jessica Patroliia, Aleatha Dickerson

**COUNCIL MEMBERS (virtual):** Randi Belhumeur, Jenna Simeone

**Other attendees:** Alison Macbeth, Kayleigh Hill, Nessa Richman, Rachel Newman Greene, David Dadekian, Stephanie Bush,

#### Guest Speakers:

Alison Macbeth, RI Commerce

Nessa Richman, RI Food Policy Council

Rachel Newman Greene, RI Food Policy Council

- Welcome & Introductions (Ken Ayars, Acting Chair)**
- Approve Q3 Meeting Minutes (Ken Ayars, Acting Chair)**  
The minutes were approved with no amendments.
- Update on the HEAL program (Randi Belhumeur, RIDOH)**

- Randi from DOH provided an overview of the HEAL program, which was launched in 2020, with the intention of addressing disparities and chronic diseases in RI.
- Due to the loss of funding from the CDC for similar efforts, DOH sought funding from an opportunity with the SPAN Cooperative Agreement, a CDC-funded initiative aimed at strengthening RI's food system
- The program focuses on four key areas as outlined by the CDC: physical activity access, healthy food choices, breastfeeding support, and obesity prevention.
- The program will leverage existing fruit and vegetable voucher incentives and produce prescription programs, such as Bonus Bucks and Food on the Move.
- DOH has proposed to CDC, the creation of an Institutional Procurement Working Group that would include stakeholders like, RIDE, DOH, FFRI, RI Commerce, a food service company, and the RI Heart Association.
- Contracting with the RIFPC who has procured a consultant who is conducting a landscape analysis to better assess and understand where the CDC funding should go and how it can be supported by federal dollars.

#### **4. Update on RI State Food System Planning for 2030 development (Alison Macbeth, RI Commerce)**

- Alison provided an update on the State Food System Planning process.
- A retrospective for the 2017-2022 period has been published and will inform future strategic planning.
- Several contracts have been awarded to consultants to support the planning process, including Northbound Ventures for strategic planning and Helianth Partners for the Local Food Counts project.
- There are RFPs currently in process; a consultant for informing DE&I efforts throughout the Strategic Plan, a consultant for Strengthening RI Local Food Brands (this will also include the hire of a coordinator role), and a consultant for a 2nd Stage food business state analysis.

#### **5. Food Systems Fact Book: Rhode Island Food Policy Council State of the Food System (Nessa Richman, RI Food Policy Council)**

- Nessa presented the first annual RI Food System Fact Book, which provides data and trends on various aspects of the state's food system.
- The Fact Book includes information on the food system economy, food access and nutrition security, agriculture and land use, commercial fisheries and aquaculture, and climate change.
- The report will be completed and published by January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 and promoted at the URI Food Summit.
- Feedback is welcome to improve future editions of the Fact Book.

#### **6. RI Food System Preparedness and Recovery Plan (Rachel Newman Greene, RI Food Policy Council)**

- Rachel from the RIFPC discussed the development of the Food System Preparedness and Recovery Plan, a standalone document that will complement the State Food Strategy.
- The plan will focus on responding to and recovering from disruptions to the food system.
- Key elements include identifying vulnerable communities, assessing infrastructure, and developing an action plan to ensure food security during recovery which will include a sharable catalogue of assets.
- A consultant is actively being engaged to assist in the development of the plan, expected start is around January 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### **7. Update from agencies**

- RIDE: Jessica provided an update on the Office of Child Nutrition's efforts to comply with the Styrofoam ban and food waste ban. They plan to announce a new program in January.
- RIDE: Actively working to implement the Electronic Direct Certification Process which allows RIDE to certify more students for the SLP based on their Medicaid information.
- DEM: Ken Ayers announced that the LASA Act application period has closed with over \$2 million in application requests received.

- DEM: Resilient Food System Infrastructure Grant (RFSI) Applications for the RFSI program are due in mid-January.

## 8. Public Comment

- ☒ Randi requested an update on the Eat Well Be Well Program.
  - i. Jenna provided an update on the program, which is scheduled to launch in January 2024.
  - ii. She discussed partnerships with Walmart and S&S, marketing plans, and outreach efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 PM. Adjourned by Jessica, Terry and Maria.

### Action Items:

- HEAL Program/SPAN Cooperative Agreement: Finalize contract with RIFPC for the landscape analysis, convene the Institutional Procurement Working Group, and explore expansion of produce prescription programs.
- Explore education related to State Procurement, for the committee and relevant stakeholders. Randi to reach out to the Department of Purchasing.
- State Food System Planning: Continue work on strategic planning, hire DEI consultant, finalize briefings for strategy development, and finalize contracts for remaining projects.
- Food System Fact Book: Publish final report on January 23rd and promote at URI Food Summit.
- Food System Preparedness and Recovery Plan: Finalize contract with a consultant and complete plan by December 6th.
- RIDE: Launch new program for Styrofoam and food waste compliance in January and continue work on Electronic Direct Certification process.