

<b>TFSC / Thurston Food System Council</b>	
<b>December 11, 2013</b>	3:00pm – 5:00pm at TRPC
Meeting	<b>Monthly Meeting Minutes</b>
Facilitator	TJ Johnson, Chair
Note taker:	Diane Grace <gracedd@earthlink.net>

**AGENDA:**

- I. INTRODUCTIONS (10 min.)
- II. APPROVAL of MINUTES: November 6, 2013 (5 min.)
- III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION (5 min.)
- IV. PRESENTATION – **Winter Strong, “Healthy Benefits” Market** (25 minutes)
- V. WORKING ISSUE TEAMS (WIT) REPORTS:
  - A. LEADERSHIP – 2014 Leadership Team (10 min.)
  - B. MEMBERSHIP (10 min.)
  - C. COMMUNICATIONS (10 min.)
- VI. 2014 WORKPLAN DISCUSSION/DECISIONS (20 min.)
- VII. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION (5 min.)
- VIII. EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS (5 min.)

**NEXT MEETING *Date Change*: January 8, 2014 at TRPC 3:00pm**  
Future Meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday: February 5, 2014

**Attendance and Introductions:**

**TJ Johnson, Sustainable South Sound; TFSC Chair**  
**Karen Parkhurst, Thurston Regional Planning Council**  
**Peter Witt, Friends of the Farmers Market and Kiwanis Garden Projects**  
**Loretta Seppanen, Slow Food Greater Olympia; SSCFT and TFSC Memberships**  
**Lesley Wigen, Thurston County Public Health Nutrition; TFSC Communications**  
**Diane Grace, Food Sovereignty Nutritionist, TFSC Secretary**  
**Aslan Meade, West Olympia Farmer’s Market and Bank Local Washington**  
**Erik Hagan, WSU Extension/Small Farms for Mason and Thurston Counties;**  
**Mason Conservation District; and Co-Founder of West Olympia Farmers Market.**

**Lisa Smith, Enterprise for Equity**

**Katie Rains, Executive Director at GRuB**

**ABSENT:**

**Sash Sunday, OlyKraut; TFSC Co-Chair**

**Lucas Patzek, WSU Extension/Small Farms for Thurston County**

**Heather Sundean, Produce Manager for the Thurston County Food Bank and**  
Satellite Liaison with Hunger Relief Organizations

**Zachary Fleig, TESC Campus Food Coalition Co-Coordinator: Sustainability and**  
Social Justice Dining Coordinator at TESC; TFSC Communication Team Web support.

VISITORS:

**Winter Strong, Skokomish Tribe, “Healthy Benefits” Market** at Squaxin Island  
**Rachel Floyd, AmeriCorps Food Justice, CYS/Center for Youth Services** and  
**Thurston County Food Bank “School Gardens”**  
**Treacy Kreger, South Sound Fresh, SSCFT, Friends of the Farmers Market; St. Andrews Executive Chef**; several projects, incl. Lucas’ “South Sound Local Farms, Local Markets” Assessment.

**II. APPROVAL of MEETING MINUTES: November 6, 2013** (- Diane Grace)

Meeting Minutes for November 6, 2013 were motioned, seconded, and passed for approval without changes, for upload to TFSC website.

**III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:**

**Rachel Floyd, Thurston County Food Bank “School Gardens”**: Rachel is working with 3 others on a 3-part workshop series in January, 2014 for foster children, including “Community” and “Health” (and one more), on Monday afternoons. Slow Food and GRuB are some of the supporting organizations. They are still **looking for a location** (possibly GRuB Farmhouse?). Treacy Kreger has volunteered for 2 classes. **(Rachel is not sitting in as an Alternate for Heather Sudean.)**

**IV. PRESENTATION: Winter Strong, “Healthy Benefits” Market**

**Winter Strong** of the **Skokomish Tribe** took time out of her very busy schedule to share about her 17-year fishing, shrimping and crabbing career (in partnership with her father); her **“Healthy Benefits” Market** (in partnership with her mother); the challenges of business (2-1/2 hours sleep nightly during July-through-September fishing season); the weak economy in Shelton, the high costs of healthy local foods, the price-squeeze and customer’s resistance to “an \$8 organic deli sandwich made with local ingredients”. She promised not to “sugar coat” her sharing.

After working with AmeriCorps and other positions, Winter returned to Port Townsend for 5-years as “Cultural Programs Coordinator”, working with **Northwest Indian College**, Healing Garden, Women’s Circles, Basket weaving and as an Herbalist. “You can’t pass this up”, her mother urged. Winter states, “This rooted me home.”

**Healthy Benefits Market** is a gathering place for learning, and was aided by **Enterprise for Equity**, a loan and current space in Shelton. Winter’s mother, Denise LeClair, (former Tribal Council, and political leader, for Squaxin Island and Nisqually Tribes) makes the soups daily; Denise and Winter manage all of the contracts and PR. Denise has the license for selling seafood. They cater delicious organic lunches!

- **“Seasonality!”** This is the biggest educational piece. When the fish are not there, look for other resources.
  - **King Salmon** run is July – August/September
  - **Silver Salmon** should come next; the complete lack of a Silver Salmon run this year “was terrifying”.
  - **Chum Salmon** are the last run each year - though Thanksgiving is a long season. Pale, with fatty flesh, it is delicious “smoked” (which they are not

licensed to do commercially.) Chum is the “most reliable” run, especially for Skokomish in Hood Canal. “How to market it”? With Chum, septic maintenance is necessary, it becomes toxic...

- **Fluxuating availability of resources** – Source locally. When the farmer who was providing **goat’s milk** retired last year, client’s resisted buying other brands.
- They sell fresh **shrimp** to **Olympia Seafood Company**; **Crab** is sold in Port Townsend. Salish/Squaxin Island Tribe buys some fish, and some goes to the **Food Bank**. They have some contracts with companies and direct sales with individual buyers. She provides salmon to “Briney Sea Delicaseas” to smoke. Also, Chum eggs are sold to Russia; carcasses are used for animal food.
- **Supply & Demand challenges, Credit vs. Pay on Delivery vs. 5~7 Days pay:** Establishing local fresh food sources, back-up plans when they are not available, accommodate customers loyalty to certain labels, and note the price-squeeze for elders and families with children... It is challenging to establish consistency and educate (“rehabilitate”) people’s ideas of why fresh, local, organic food is worth the price. She sources from High Water Farm, Black Jack Meat, Chelsey goat cheese, Jekuthiel Dairy’s goat milk (now closed); Flying Dog and Heritage meats, Dave’s Bread, local eggs and raw milk, organic peppers. Clients pass on \$7 organic strawberries, to pay \$3 for regular berries at Fred Meyer “for the kids”.
- **Mason County is large and diverse.** Winter was requested to teach 3 herb classes in early 2013, “to pass on information from the Elders”, with only 1 person attending the last class. She grew up with large Skokomish/Mason County community garden; saw deer and elk hanging in the garaged and “knows how to skin and piece them”. Education is just not in citizens’ budgets.
- **Mason County Regulation “barriers”** – It is illegal for them to place a “sandwich board” sign on the main street (insurance issue), while they are located on the backside of the railroad. The (Chamber of Commerce?) offers a Shelton “Tour of Empty Buildings” seeking high rent.
- **Mason County ranks #37 in Health.**

QUESTIONS:

**What could TFSC be doing (or thinking) to help a sustainable food system engage your business?** “Provide local milk, egg and meat referral resources!”

**CSF / Community Supported Fishing?** This was suggested to Winter, as the CSA direct-sell model grows. Sell through **Oly Local Foods?** Winter will contact Tom Husmann about this.

V.	<b><u>WORKING ISSUE TEAM (WIT) REPORTS:</u></b>
A.	<b>LEADERSHIP</b> (- TJ Johnson)

For 2014, the Leadership positions of **CHAIR, Co-CHAIR** and **SECRETARY**, plus **WEBMASTER** are all **open** and **seeking replacements**.

**Sash Sunday** (absent; per TJ) is willing to serve as **CHAIR with Co-CHAIR** and lots of collaboration.

**Peter Witt** was asked if he would step into the Co-Chair position? He will think about it.

In the **absence of a SECRETARY volunteer**, a suggestion is on the table to “**rotate the Secretary’s monthly note-taking between members**”; and to “**take summarizing notes**, rather than detailed meeting minutes”. The choice of “detailed Minutes” versus “summarizing notes” was explored:

- Some Elected officials, other Food Policy Councils and listserv members may be following TFSC’s discussions via Meeting Minutes.
- Some styles of meeting notes can be difficult to “follow” actual discussions.
- The SECRETARY position needs to be **filled by a council member** with regular attendance, for comprehensive continuity, not an external volunteer. (Diane was acknowledged for her service.)
- A “Template” exists for taking the Meeting Minutes, with a clear, established format. Diane will distribute this to members.

Heather Sundean (absent) will be encouraged to become more involved in TFSC.

<b>V.</b>	<b>B.</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	(- Loretta Seppanen)
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Katie Rains distributed two-sided revised “**2014 TFSC Membership Roster**” indicating:

- Member name
- Food System Sector represented
- Term (1 or 2 years)
- 2013 WIT, Leadership or Team participation
- Blank Column for 2014 WIT, Team or Leadership position

12 Members are listed; information for Lucas Patzek and Heather Sundean is missing. A **total of 20 members** are sought, for diverse sector representation and to compensate for absences.

The page 2 summarizes the mission, vision and criterion of TFSC Membership. **Sectors represented** by current members are **in bold**, with many desired sectors still unrepresented.

**CRITERION:**

1. Member applicants must “participate” in **Thurston-centric Food System**, by “**living or working or selling here**”; this includes regional partners.
2. They must attend “or send an **Alternate**”. (What about Farmers during the growing season? Could they “tag-team” or “rotate” with committed others?)
3. Members participate in at least 1 WIT, Team or Leadership position per year.

**Re: Bullet #2 Attendance:** This item was discussed, and **remains pending for further review** due to practical applications (including “excused” or “unexcused”), for a final decision at January, 2014 Meeting:

- “Must attend, or send an alternate to, at least 75% of regularly scheduled meetings, **and** will not miss 3 consecutive meetings during your term”.

**All other content was motioned for Adoption, 2<sup>nd</sup>**; unanimously passed for **approval**.

Attendance is important due to **votes** and **sector voice contribution**.

There is no funding to pay for attendance, so we need to accept voices when available.

“Frequently Absent” voices are always welcome to attend as **Visitors** if not members. Taylor Shellfish would like to join; current text denotes “non-resident” (Mason County). Membership Application Forms are still required for all current and future members, with some missing.

**V. C. COMMUNICATIONS:** (-Lesley Wigen, Karen Parkhurst)

Lesley reported that Erin redesigned TFSC’s website with more color and photos, continuing into January, 2014.

- **Content! Communications Team, please write and submit by 12/13/13.**

**VI. 2014 WORKPLAN DISCUSSION / DECISIONS:**

Three existing “internal” WITs will continue [**Leadership, Communication and Membership**].

Karen Parkhurst will continue to report on Legislation & Policy (without a WIT).

Individual Proposals described at November’s meeting were detailed, submitted, collated by Communications Team and distributed internally, for December review. Additional discussion considered co-existence of “internal / planning” versus “external / projects”.

Council members voted for their “top 3” projects [initials, noted below]; discussed and combined select proposals into the following **four 2014 WITs/Working Issue Teams**:

**#1 Top PRIORITY:**

**Proposal #10: “FOOD SYSTEM ACTION PLAN”** [TJ, PW, KP, LW, DG, LS, EH, KR]

+ **Subset - #2: Food Council Research** (- Sash Sunday) [PW, DG, AM]

+ **Subset** with data from **2012 USDA Census of Agriculture** (March, 2014)

**#4: “How is Food Production on Thurston County Farms Changing?”**  
(-Loretta Seppanen)

**#7: “2012 Census Nutrition Assessment”** (-Diane Grace)  
[cf. “Capacity Assessment” per Sustainable Thurston]

+ **Subset - #9: Events & Education (under Communications)**

(-TJ Johnson) [PW, TJ, LW, KP, KR]

**2<sup>nd</sup> “Action” PRIORITY:** **Draft new proposal, for January TFSC meeting.**

**Create new “Rural Economic Vitality” WIT.**

Combine Proposals #1 + #3.

Address #5 separately.

**#1: Rural Economic Vitality** (- Lisa Smith)

**#3: Scatter Creek Community Farm and Conservancy** (- Sash Sunday)

**#5: Port of Olympia** (- Aslan Meade) [AM, KP, LS, EH, DG]

DISCUSSION:

**Most important topics: “Food Action Plan” + “Research” + “Economics”... plus**

**“Events + Education”.**

Proposal #8 “WATER” WIT was shelved, to “re-visit later”, perhaps 2015? The Ag Council would support this project. It is a politically charged topic.

**Lively discussion on #5: Port of Olympia**, as timely **economic** “external / action” project, coinciding with Sue Gunn’s election as Port Commissioner. **Develop Food System dialogue with the Port**: the coalescence of a systems approach with all partners involved, not just with farmers or lenders. **Combine meetings**; consider STEDI; the end of WSU/E4E Initiative. **“This is our EDC Chance”.**

- **We need the TFSC cohesive plan, in order to engage with the Port.**
- **Investment in the Food System**, with partners, is necessary, for distribution, aggregation.

**Is Economics primarily our focus/responsibility**, or does it belong to other groups? WSU is engaging the Port of Olympia. Aslan and Sash are already working with the economics sector. Investment is a “component” of the Action Plan, but not the focal point.

Example: Food Hub / Aggregation: We are not the Leader, yet we need to be aware, have knowledge about it; (perhaps 2015 focus?).

**Who is already meeting on Food issues?** (Edited 1/9/2014):

- **STEDI/South Thurston Economic Development Initiative.**
- **Thurston Thrives “Food Action Team”**
- **TFSC/Thurston Food System Council** (us)
- **Finished**: “South Sound Local Farms, Local Markets” (Lucas’ Assessment; Will be published late January, 2014)
- **Finished**: Sustainable Thurston’s “Local Food Panel”
- **Finished**: Robert Coit’s “Thurston Asset Building Coalition” (food resources for low-income population)
- **DAC/“Disaster Assistance Council”** (Emergency Management, Red Cross, etc.)

Who’s working on what? Who Educates? **Many are already doing Events & Education, pick-up on these** other events. Avoid duplication of efforts. **Does TFSC “endorse”?**

- Example: Thurston Thrives is addressing “Health”. They took over the work started by Sustainable Thurston. TFSC will take over from Sustainable Thurston’s work on “Food”.
- EDC (Michael) is considering, “How should we move forward with the Food System”? (Both planning and action.)
- Cross-pollination! TRPC (Sustainability) + TFSC (Food) + Thurston Thrives (Health); “E4E (Economics)”. **Pull together!**

**What would TFSC be adding?** Avoid duplication of efforts. 3 or 4 Food Council members are already involved. **Engage and coalesce others**, especially those who are not yet a part of the conversation, around needs, especially needs that are not yet happening. Redirect to “make it happen”. Manage **TFSC website as clearing house and education resource.**

**Internal (TFSC) + External WITs (Action):** (Rural Economic Vitality issues; Multi-organizational; Have a sector liaison at their table; keep “TFSC” on the tongues of our Partners.

- Sector Liaison (which is not a WIT or “action”) will bring communication back to us (internal) from others (external).
- Balance: There are both “**Planning WITs**” (i.e. Events & Education; include meeting and engaging with community); and “**Action WITs**” (i.e. Economic Vitality; Port of Olympia). There are both short-term and long-term.
- “Clumpers & Splitters”: There are ideas which combine and meld well with other ideas, and those which need to be addressed separately.

**“The Food Action Plan is a holistic Analysis of the entire Food System”.**

**Identify** and counsel the community about **gaps in the System** with the **Action Plan to weave this together and guide**. This work is happening anyway, emerging – we need to capture + inform + sequence; gather community buy-in with existing projects + investors + goals. The pieces are there, just not connected. We need others to jump on board.

- We need an **overall production Assessment**, not just produce (cf. WSU Assessment).
- Without resources, how do we provide the staff time to work on this? See Phase 2 of 5 phases outlined in the proposal: “Secure resources”. Fund participation.
- Action WITS (such as Port proposal).
- Events, to “celebrate.” Keep **Oct. 24 National Food Day and Table for Olympia**. Put Events & Education under “Communications: Public Outreach” on Food Action Plan.

If we are “informed by our partners” with innovation (such as the Port of Olympia, E4E and other major entities) “why and how would the Food Action Plan be of benefit to them?”

Is Food Justice a topic?

To **summarize** the intent of the **Food Action Plan**:

- **Describe the Food System**
- Engage Community
- Set Goals
- Describe process for achieving goals
- → Report → See where we fit in →
- Examine Economic / Social / Environmental (Ecologic) impacts →
- **Commit to our part**. “What do we do to get there?”

**DECISIONS:**

**Top Priority: Create Food Action Plan** (include Environmental/Economic/Social); Using data (“#2 Research”?) plus Proposals #4 + #7 and **2012 Census of Agriculture:**

- **#4: “How is Food Production on Thurston County Farms Changing?”**
- **+ #7: “2012 Census Nutrition Assessment”**

- **#9: Education & Events** (under Communications).

**Create 2<sup>nd</sup> (Action) WIT “Rural Economic Vitality”**

Combine Proposals #1 + #3.

**#1: Rural Economic Vitality**

**#3: Scatter Creek Community Farm and Conservancy**

Address #5 separately.

**#5: Port of Olympia**

\_\_\_ *Bring New Draft Proposal to TFSC January, 2014:*

- What outcomes?
- What results?

**VOTE at January 8, 2014 Meeting:**

- “Attendance” details for membership criterion
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Action WIT: “Rural Economic Vitality”
- Write CONTENT for website.
- Divide ourselves (to specific priorities) to start 2014 work.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

Treacy Kreger: “Action! Pull it all together! Find holes! Public Outreach! Observe and analyze and let the public pull in to it somewhere.”

**December 10<sup>th</sup>, Friday, 8:30am “FOOD 101”** at Sustainable Thurston, TRPC: Lisa Smith of Enterprise for Equity (E4E) presents.

**VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS:**

To post **Events and Announcements**, please send edited version to [tfsc0@yahoo.com](mailto:tfsc0@yahoo.com).

**December 9: Enterprise for Equity Event, to meet and network with Farmers.** 25 buyers and 30 farmers met with processors, distributors, restaurants, grocery stores, school districts, colleges, hospitals, buyers and many others (alpaca’s), to match “ who need to buy” with people who are “ready to sell right now”! 12,000 pounds of berries sold! (Could this be quarterly? Open to community?)

**December 10<sup>th</sup>, Friday, 8:30am “FOOD 101”** at Sustainable Thurston, TRPC: Lisa Smith of Enterprise for Equity (E4E) presents.

**December 10<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, 12:00noon: “Slow Fish”-** Celebrate the almost 30-year Anniversary of **Slow Food’s Terra Madre** International Conference about seafood with John Adams of Taylor Shellfish. Free, at Olympia Library.

**December 12: D.O.H.’s “Eating for Health”, 1:00pm-2:00pm** (at Mason General Hospital?) in the lower conference room, with Katie Rains and Erik Hagan.

**January 10<sup>th</sup>, Friday, 8:30am “FOOD 101”** at Sustainable Thurston, TRPC: Lisa Smith of Enterprise for Equity (E4E) presents.

**January 11, 2014 and “All Saturdays”:** **Olympia Farmers Market will be OPEN!**

**January 22, 2014: The League of Women Voters is seeking a speaker** for their meeting to **update their Local and National Agriculture Policy**, which hasn't been reviewed for years. TJ was invited, but will be out of town.

**February 5th, Friday, 8:30am “FOOD 101”** at Sustainable Thurston, TRPC: “Agritourism”.

*Seasons' Greetings and have a Happy New Year!*

**NEXT MEETING – Please note date changes to 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday:**

**Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at TRPC at 3:00pm**

[December Meeting Minutes may be delayed due to holidays. – TJ, DG]

[Conference phone is available at TRPC for those unable to attend **new dates.**]

Future Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesdays, February 5, 2014