

TFSC / Thurston Food System Council	
December 3, 2014	3:00pm – 5:00pm at TRPC
Meeting	Monthly Meeting Minutes
Facilitator	Sash Sunday, Chair
Note taker:	David Skattebo, Secretary

AGENDA:

1. Introductions + Projects (3:00-3:10)
 2. November Meeting Minutes (3:10-3:15)
 3. Public Communication (3:15-3:20)
 4. Working Issue Team (WIT) Reports
 - i. Leadership – 2014 leadership team (3:20-3:30)
 - ii. Membership (3:30-3:35)
 - iii. Communications (3:35-3:40)
 5. Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) Public Comment Review and Approve – Loretta Seppanen (3:40 – 4:00)
 6. Policy Selection Session– (4:00-4:30)
 - a. (Summarize Ideas from last month, additional thoughts, selection exercise)
 7. Thurston Thrives Food Action Team (TTFAT) – Vision for collaboration (Katie Rains 4:30-4:50)
 8. Public Communication (4:50-4:55)
 9. Events and Announcements (4:55-5:00)
(note: in the meeting, we ended up discussing visions for collaboration with TTFAT immediately after the Leadership WIT report because it segued naturally.)
- Next Meeting: January 7, 2015

Attendance and briefs on member projects:

Sash Sunday, OlyKraut

Katie Rains, Executive Director, GRuB: Katie is working to organize a meeting between community education organizations (including Eastside Urban Farm & Garden Center, TCFB, Parks & Rec and SPSCC Continuing Education) to discuss the closure of the horticulture program & coordination of classes in early January.

Karen Parkhurst, Thurston Regional Planning Council

Loretta Seppanen, Slow Food Greater Olympia; The Village Building Convergence is hosting “Village Winter Warmer”, a community celebration and planning meeting for the Village Building Convergence’s 10-day event in August. Loretta suggests that the council involve itself in the Convergence in August.

Diane Grace Crutcher, Food Sovereignty Nutritionist, Nutrition and Citizens Sector Liaison – Dianne mentioned the commercial kitchen survey that Enterprise for Equity is conducting and credited E4E for the great initiative.

Aslan Meade, West Olympia Farmer’s Market and Bank Local Washington: On 12/5, Aslan is coordinating a tour of the Port of Olympia. The Economic Development Council is holding their local economic forecast Thursday 12/11 at the Great Wolf Lodge.

Michaela Winkley: The Food Bank just got a new nutrition team (nutritionist and support staff) through their SNAP-education contract. The Food Bank is holding an upcoming Community Access Night at a local school. 200 people are expected to attend.

Lisa Smith, Enterprise for Equity: On Monday 12/8, E4E is hosting Farm to Fork at the county fairgrounds, which connects producers, distributors, institutional buyers, processors, and grocery stores. On Wednesday 12/10, E4E is hosting a lender’s panel from 10am-12pm at their downtown location.

Lesley Wigen, Thurston County Public Health Nutrition; TFSC Communications:

Rachel Floyd, TESC Campus Food Coalition Co-Coordinator, Slow Food Olympia: Slow Food is having planning meetings for an upcoming documentary showing and maple syrup making demonstration. For Terra Madre Day, Slow Food is hosting a cocktail tasting with all local ingredients.

David Skattebo, TESC student examining inequalities in the local food movement

ABSENT:

Susan Ujcic and Annie Salafsky, Helsing Junction Farm

TJ Johnson, Sustainable South Sound

Gifford (Marco) Pinchot, Taylor Shellfish

VISITORS:

Zack Holcomb, AmeriCorps member at the Food Bank working with school gardens

Peggy Smith, League of Women Voters Ag Lobby Team

Hannah (didn’t catch her last name), TESC student writing paper on food equity for her science journalism program.

II. APPROVAL of MEETING MINUTES (November 5, 2014)

Meeting Minutes for November 5, 2014 were motioned, seconded, and passed for approval without changes, and submitted for upload to TFSC website.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:

None.

IV. WORKING ISSUE TEAMS

IV. A. LEADERSHIP (Sash Sunday, Chair)

Katie Rains discussed leadership changes for 2015. David Skattebo will remain secretary until June when he graduates. Katie is willing to remain vice-chair, but is unable to chair. Sash Sunday announced that she will step down from the chair position in 2015, but wishes to remain on the council representing local food processors. Sash nominates Aslan Meade for chair. Aslan accepts the nomination, but wants to know if anyone else is interested in the position.

This segues into a discussion of what's next for 2015 and what collaboration with TTFAT could look like.

IV. B. MEMBERSHIP (Loretta Seppanen)

No announcements.

IV. C. COMMUNICATIONS: (Lesley Wigen)

No announcements.

V. THURSTON THRIVES FOOD ACTION TEAM—Vision for collaboration (Katie Rains)

Katie Rains said that her original ideas for merger of TFSC and TTFAT have evolved since last meeting. She suggested that the two bodies collaborate intensively on specific projects, or working issues, (one example the group suggested is working on the Food Strategy Map), but that the two groups maintain their distinct identities & values. Katie praised the diversity, passion, and perseverance of the TFSC, but suggested that attempting to focus our energy in one place, as we did with the Community Food Action Plan, is not the best way to harness the passions of the entire membership of the council. She said that the monthly meetings were exhaustive and recommended that TFSC member consider reducing the frequency of the meetings (4-6 times a year) to leave more time to get things done on Working Issue Teams (WITs). She also suggested that we collaborate more with TTFAT (treating TTFAT as a WIT of the council) to help bring some issues of concern to the TFSC (ex. Farmland Preservation) into the TTFAT strategy map, have more WIT/committee meetings that harnessed the specific passions of council members, and continue recruiting members, having presentations and reporting on food systems topics to inspire new thinking & opportunity.

The group discussed the WIT structure as a way for council members to actively work on the issues they cared most about and were already working on, as well as the need to recruit new council members to keep the WITs going. Dianne Grace-Crutcher suggested that we revisit some of the early structures the council envisioned, and that it seemed like we were moving towards a more open approach to being a council. Lisa Smith supported collaboration with the Asset Building Coalition's Food Hub, which recently merged with the TTFAT, because they have funding, a governance structure, and good participation.

Katie Rains will write up a proposal for new group norms and collaboration with TTFAT that she will present at the January. TFSC members are invited to review the strategy map in more detail & begin thinking of additional metrics that they would like to add to the TT Food Strategy Map in 2015.

VI. FSMA PUBLIC COMMENT—Review and approve (Loretta Seppanen)

Loretta Seppanen sent out a draft letter to send to the FDA commenting on the proposed FSMA rules, which Sash read to the group. Loretta wrote the letter using some of the bullet points from sustainableag.net.

The issues addressed in the letter included:

- an amazing lack of clarity on growing produce standards and preventative control rules. There is also a lack of consistency in those rules.

- The definitions of farms v. facilities, which basically is growing food v. altering food. The latter is tightly regulated, the former now is too, especially concerning irrigation because of instances of irrigation spreading illness. Offsite storage is important to local farmers because of having land in a floodplain, but storing produce (e.g. garlic, onions, winter squash) offsite turns them into a facility, subjecting them to tighter, unnecessary regulations.
- Direct sales (farmers markets, CSA, etc) should not be considered manufacturing facilities. Congress said this explicitly, but the current version of FSMA considers some direct sales farms as manufacturing facilities anyways.
- Irrigation issues, which are more science-y than we can speak too, but mentioning this backs up the water scientists who are also commenting.
- Good things: small farms were originally defined as making \$250,000 in sales each year; we asked for that to be changed to \$1 million of sales in raw ingredients (because vegetables that are typically cooked, like potatoes and collards, are not regulated by FSMA). That change has been made, but the FDA is still including the sales of cooked vegetables like potatoes. We ask them to go further and not include potatoes. Also, Food Hub regulations have been made easier. The FDA also fixed the compost issue and made it comply with USDA Organic standards.

Dianne Grace-Crutchter motions that we approve the letter to be sent to the FDA; Katie Rains seconds. Karen Parkhurst asks if anyone in Thurston would be opposed, and Loretta said that farmers certainly wouldn't be. Sash Sunday suggests we ask Marco Pinchot and Susan Ujic if they approve before we send it out, to which Lorretta agrees.

VII. POLICY SELECTION SESSION	(Sash Sunday)
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The group reviewed and discussed the list of policies that we compiled last week using a chart Sash made on a whiteboard (picture attached). We also identified people/organizations that are already working on these issues and consolidated different policy issues that were closely related. Each council member had three votes, and there were 12 choices.

The top choices, in order of how many votes each received, are:

- 1) Getting local food into institutions / initiative to get county institutions purchasing 10% local food – 7 votes
- 2) Untangling food truck regulations – 7 votes
- 3) Policies supporting food hubs, shared kitchens, and commercial kitchens – 6 votes
- 4) Stopping loss of farmland – 5 votes
- 5) Developing a paid food systems position – 3 votes
- 6) GRuB Bill – 3 votes

The group briefly discussed where we might go with this list, and if we should address these issues with WITs. This will be discussed further in January.

VII. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

None

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS:

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at TRPC at 3:00pm

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

Future Meetings: January 7, 2015

Draft Agenda Items:

- 1) Leadership WIT/Elections
- 2) Katie's proposal on collaboration with TTFAT / developing new norms / WITs
- 3) Moving forward with list of policy opportunities