

Santa Fe City and County, Advisory Council on Food Policy

Thursday November 14, 2024

9:00AM-12PM

In-Person; Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute:1607 Paseo De Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501 and on Zoom

A. CALL TO ORDER 9:02am

B. ROLL CALL

Francisca Kika Ortiz - Present

Nate Crail - Present

Maria Sanchez-Tucker - Present

Eric Renz-Whitmore - Present

David Sundberg - Present

Susan Perry - Present

Emigdio Ballon - Absent

Tejinder Ciano - Absent

Said Assali - Present

Jasmine Meyer - Present

Peter Ives – Present

We have a quorem

Staff:

Pam Roy

Helen Henry

Guests:

JoDee Powers

Kiana Estevez - Cooking with Kids

Adam - SF Farmers Market Institute

Anna Farrier - Cooking with Kids

Veronica Griego - NM WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Programs

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA –November 14, 2024

Prioritization and Agenda Order

Peter made a motion to approve

Sue seconded

Approved

D. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES – Sept. 12, 2024, October 10, 2024

Sue made a motion to approve

Peter seconded

Approved

David spoke about the October meeting and how wonderful it was to be at the Pueblo and to have visitors from Nepal (through a State Department sponsored tour). Sue mentioned that we should be thinking about hosting groups like this in the future. We heard through the grapevine that this was the highlight of their tour. Peter mentioned other opportunities that might be coming up for this type of exchange.

E. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

F. INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS

1. BCC Presentation The meeting took place on 11/5/24. Nate Crail, Hvtce Miller and Jennifer Romero presented the resolution at the meeting. Commissioner Bustemante introduced the resolution and it was quickly passed. Pam suggested that it would be good to follow up with the Board of County Commissioners and see what actions they might be able to take and also follow up with Hvtce because we're hoping that the resolution really drives home the opportunity for the board of county commissioners to make food systems and farm initiatives a priority on in their legislative actions.

2. City of Santa Fe Council

We also will approach the city of Santa Fe so that our priorities hopefully will be on the city's agenda so that we can get the resolution passed there and to be able to work with their lobbyists and government affairs people during the legislative process coming up. This should be fairly straight forward.

Pam is working with Kendal Chavez on how to frame the Food Initiative priorities and should have a clearer picture in the next couple of weeks.

3. Portable Agriculture Structures – County Code

This issue came up a few years ago because of a farmer who wanted to put up a high tunnel using money from a NRCS/USDA grant. He ran into an issue - the structures are supposed to be exempt but a neighbor called because they thought that he was going to be growing marijuana, so an inspector was sent out and they realized that he did not have the proper permit. The county has updated its code so that any structure that is intended to even be left up year round, regardless of how permanent or impermanent it is, if it's over a certain amount of square feet, it needs to go through a permitting process.

Nate elaborated on the requirement of having a site development plan, which is not an easy or quick process. David explained the difference between different types of growing structures. The farmer ran into financial difficulties because of the permitting process and he eventually defaulted on the loan that he had taken out to cover the up front costs because the NRCS/USDA grant is based on reimbursement (in addition to losing production time.)

In order to follow permitting regulations, you need to do a site development plan, regardless of how much building you will be doing.

David argued that we need to have a balance between safety and the practicality to make changes and receive approval. It is generally a four to eight month process to receive a USDA grant and there are a lot of hoops to jump through, and then you add the permitting process on top of that, and that is a lot for farmers to deal with.

What can and should we do about this situation? Can we make suggestions to encourage a change of law? Is this a policy that we would make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners that they adjust the Code?

Nate: In the short term, we can do education for farmers about how to approach doing a site development plan.

In the longer term, the County will be starting a general plan update in the new year, so we need to do some research about the needs of farmers, get input from them and also about what other localities do.

David: Education is a great idea, but It's not the SFFPC responsibility to do education. But this is a good time to do the research about what other localities are doing.

Pam: The recent tours at Tesuque and Desert Verde have given us some feedback and insight into these issues. We also need to look at the larger landscape of state and federal policy in relation to this.

Peter commented on the SF Home Builders Association's work around creating a fast track for permitting which he is involved with. We could help identify the types of small-scale projects that might qualify for this fast track.

David asked if people would be willing to pursue this with the County? There was general agreement.

4 Fermented Foods and Food Safety-Environmental Department

We are skipping discussion about this item because Tejinder is not present. Move this item to the next agenda.

G. PRESENTATIONS:

Veronica Griego FMNP SFMNP FMNEP

New Mexico Farmers Market Programs Manager

Legislative initiatives Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

Veronica's program, the WIC Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, is under the New Mexico Department of Health Public Health Division. This is a federally funded program which has been around for 23 years and supports seniors. The WIC Farmers Market Program has

been around for 33 years. They provide benefits to seniors who are 60 and over who are non-Native American and Native American seniors who are 55 and over so they can purchase from farmers' markets, and they also provide food boxes that are delivered. They are not connected with the SNAP program or Double Up Food Bucks. Veronica shared her slide presentation.

In FY25, they were given \$307,000 in federal funds, which was able to cover \$50 per senior who was eligible. That covered about 5,000 seniors, which is not a lot for New Mexico. They also received state and ARPA contributions. For the state, they received \$400,000 in general funds for FY25, plus \$336,000 in carryover ARPA funds from FY24 which allowed them to give seniors an additional \$50. That meant that they were able to serve 10,801 seniors. They were also able to provide over 4,000 food boxes and bags to those underserved areas throughout New Mexico.

They are asking the legislature for a \$2.6M request to the legislature to sustain the program, and to retain staff and create permanent positions, and to add new staff. (The breakdown is \$2 million would be for food, \$600,000 would be utilized for any admin costs, and for anything that needed for the program.)

The senior farmers market program is funded by the Farm Bill and they have not received money that should have come in during October this year because the Farm Bill has not been passed. If the Farm Bill is not passed, they do not have a program (unless the state legislature appropriates funds). They're hoping to get this off the ground and try to get it in the state general fund and make it recurring so they can continue keeping this program going, especially if they don't get any type of federal funds.

Their mobile app, which is two years old now, has helped redemption rates. The program supports one-on-one purchases between seniors and farmers. There's no admin fee pulled out of the cost and there's no charge to farmers for being on the platform. For every dollar that seniors spend, farmers get a dollar.

Pam asked for clarification about what we should be asking for. Is it about advocating for the senior farmers market nutrition program in the continuing resolution or is there an additional ask we need to make to our congressional delegation?

Pam also said that state Representative Terese Leger-Fernandez has proposed legislation to fund administration into the Farm Bill.

Veronica said that they are asking for state funds in the event that the Farm Bill is not passed.

Kika - her office works with seniors to fill out applications. She appreciates everything that Veronica's office does.

Maria said that one of their centers is closed down because of a gas leak and they are scrambling to get meals out to everyone and to deal with all the challenges, particularly the volume of paperwork.

Peter offered to help create any resolutions and outreach to federal representatives that might be helpful.

Veronica said that they will be putting together a fact sheet. She will also share the updated version of the presentation.

David said that we could write a letter of support and have it approved at the next meeting in December. He asked the SFFPC members who work for the City to find out if they are able to sign on. We can also see if other organizations can provide letters of support.

JoDee Powers – Regenerative Economics: Ideas and Practices in the Real World

This is JoDee's final presentation for her masters program.

She posed the question: What are some of the ideas and theories that people have about creating a regenerative economy? What would this look like in Santa Fe?

One economic platform/theory is called Donut Economics. She has been working with groups and exploring the question of what is economics? In one group, people were using words like evolving equity, socially beneficial, how to live inside a living being, meaning the earth. So in other words, how do we live in harmony with the earth, thriving life, human expression and not monetary. It feels like there is a big shift in terms of the economy as we know it - it isn't all about growth. It's not just about money or capital. It's not about extraction, but potentially it's about equity, socially beneficial, thriving life and about human expression. Bringing this into the local framework, people envisioned Santa Fe as a thriving community for energy, for water, for recycling, for social well-being, in different kinds of different sectors, including policy makers. In another group, people were interested but had a harder time seeing how to implement these things.

Erik said that he was glad to have participated in one of these sessions and it is important to have the discussion around these kinds of things.

Sue said that in learning theory, having a way to anchor the information supports learning. This speaks to the importance of us doing tours for decision makers. These things open the door.

Peter commented on the idea of switching our mindset from "sustainable" to "regenerative."

H. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Pam wants to have all the information so that she can follow up on Veronica's requests.

I. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL

Member check-in

Sue: What we do on a local level is critical to keeping the work that we are doing.

Said: Nothing at this point. Thank you to presenters.

Peter: Nothing at this point.

David: Gratitude to Cooking with Kids - great model for sharing information.

Kika: Invited people to the senior centers around the county for the Thanksgiving meal. The kitchen at WDP is permitted and up and running. She was at the BCC to answer questions on the presentation. David asked if we could do a tour of the new facility.

Maria: They are still working on getting meals to everyone. They are moving their Thanksgiving meal to the Convention Center and consolidating all of the centers.

Nate: Nothing at this point.

K. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sue has sent proposed dates for next year, which follows the pattern that we've been using.

David accepted a motion to approve.

Peter moved

Said seconded

Approved

Schedule of meetings for 2025-Vote to accept

J. ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

They will get a letter drafted to support Veronica's initiatives.

David talked about the HFFI grant that NMFMI has received. The goal is to connect people to grants, loan opportunities and resources. They have a new person (Adam) to help with technical assistance. Adam introduced himself.

1. Next Meeting:

December 12, 2024:

2. Topics for future presentations

L. ADJOURNMENT 10:45am

These notes were taken contemporaneously and may contain errors and omissions.

Signed by  Helen Henry.

I verify that these notes have been approved by a quorum of members of the Santa Fe Food Policy Council.

Signed by David Sundberg, Co-chair or Susan Perry, Co-chair
