**Meeting Minutes**

**August 30th, 2018 • 9:30 - 11:30**

**Present:** Sara Babcock (Lamoille Community Food Share), Katie Black (UVM Extension - EFNEP), Nancy Bradshaw (Vermont Department for Children and Families – Economic Services Division), Beth Burgess (Vermont 2-1-1), Alexandra Duquette (Copley Hospital), Anne Farley (Lamoille Family Center), Alice Goins (Jewish Community of Greater Stowe), Emma Korowotny (Salvation Farms), Katarina Lisaius (Office of Senator Sanders), John Mandeville (Lamoille Economic Development Corporation), Susanne Masland (Vermont Department of Health – Morrisville District Office), Danielle Smith (Salvation Farms)

**Co-Chairs:** Susan Bartlett (community leader) and Scott Johnson (community leader)

**Hunger Free Vermont Staff:** Drake Turner and Jenna O’Donnell

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<th>Welcome, Updates and Announcements</th>
<th>Action Steps &amp; Handouts</th>
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<td>Hunger Council members and guests shared updates on what they and their organizations have been working on related to hunger and nutrition.</td>
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<td><strong>Scott Johnson and Susan Bartlett welcomed the group to the meeting.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Susanne Masland (Vermont Department of Health)</strong> – Susanne shared a number of updates from the Morrisville District Office (see attached document for full list). This included:</td>
<td><strong>Handout:</strong> See attached update from Susanne Masland and Nancy Segreto (attached)</td>
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<td>• The WIC program has been partnering with Salvation Farms to great success.</td>
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<td>• After the Morrisville District Office distributed all of its Farm to Family coupons over the summer, it collected all of the excess coupons from across the state and was able to give all of those away, resulting in a record 260 coupon books going out to help Vermonters access fresh local produce.</td>
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<td>• A Lamoille Valley Nutrition Collaborative has been formed to connect the many nutritionists working in the region. The Collaborative meets monthly to discuss different topics and increase collaboration.</td>
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<td><strong>Alexandra Duquette (Copley Hospital)</strong> – Alexandra shared that she is also part of the Lamoille Valley Nutrition Collaborative. Dominique Couture is now working in both the in-patient setting as well as continuing her work in the Emergency Department. Copley has also hired a new referral specialist to help Dominique in the E.D. Alexandra encouraged Council members to share information with her to ensure that Colleen is aware of all relevant community resources.</td>
<td><strong>Action:</strong> Send information on community resources and referral sites to Alexandra Duquette at <a href="mailto:aduquette@chsi.org">aduquette@chsi.org</a>.</td>
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<td><strong>Sara Babcock (Lamoille Community Food Share)</strong> – Numbers of clients have remained regular, and the Food Share continues to receive a lot of food from the local Hannafords. Sara is starting to prepare for Thanksgiving, and is looking for spaces that would allow her to store freezers to hold the donated turkeys. <strong>Hunger Council members shared suggestions with Sara throughout the meeting.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Action:</strong> Send recommendations for freezer storage locations for the Food Share’s turkey drive to Sara Babcock at <a href="mailto:lcfoodshare@gmail.com">lcfoodshare@gmail.com</a>.</td>
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Health Services of the Lamoille Valley (CHSLV) and other organizations, but encouraged Council members to share recommendations for how she can connect with groups of adults to share EFNEP services.

Emma Korowotny and Danielle Smith (Salvation Farms) – Emma and Danielle introduced themselves as Salvation Farms’ new AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers.

Katarina Lisaius (Office of Senator Sanders) – Katarina covers a wide range of issues for the Senator’s office, including focusing on workforce development and education. Katarina highlighted the collaborative nature of this work, and encouraged anyone interested in this field to contact her.

Senator Sanders’ Vermont Office has also been ramping up its media production, and trying to highlight all of the good work being done in Vermont, especially those that are related to federal programs. Katarina encouraged Hunger Council members to connect her with ideas.

Drake Turner (Hunger Free Vermont) – Drake shared an update on the Farm Bill negotiations. Senator Leahy will be on the conference committee that will be trying to work out the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill. He just held a press conference on this, and is very passionate about protecting the nutrition assistance programs. The conference committee will hold its first meeting next Wednesday (September 5th).

Hunger Free Vermont will be hosting a statewide 3SquaresVT Conference on October 2nd at Vermont Law School. This is an excellent opportunity for people who either work directly with the 3SquaresVT program or who are interested in learning more about it. (To learn more and sign up, click HERE.)

Drake shared an update on the Older Vermonters Nutrition Coalition, a relatively new group that’s connecting organizations that serve older Vermonters (including Lamoille County Meals on Wheels). The group is planning to pilot strategies in different regions to connect more older Vermonters with the services that they need and want.

The Hunger Council discussed the low percentage of seniors who are accessing programs like 3SquaresVT. Since Vermont’s eligibility for participation is expanded, only about one-third of all eligible seniors are enrolled. Hunger Council members suggested examples of work being done in the state that are aiming to connect more Vermonters, especially older Vermonters, with fresh local food. Katarina Lisaius and Drake Turner described an initiative that had been proposed a few years ago, in which Senator Sanders would sign a letter for outreach to older Vermonters on 3SquaresVT enrollment. That letter had to be tabled at the time, but Katarina agreed to investigate whether it could be revisited. Scott Johnson proposed having the letter be a joint letter between the Senator and the state’s Hunger Council Chairs.

John Mandeville (Lamoille Economic Development Corporation) – John focuses a lot of energy on workforce development issues, which are a huge issue for the region and state, and have direct impacts on food security. John shared that there are a lot of well-paying jobs available in the state that aren’t being filled, which is a huge concern. John is the co-chair of the Vermont Farm to Plate’s working group on education and workforce development, and encouraged Hunger Council members to attend the annual Farm to Plate gathering in November. (To learn more and register, click HERE.)
Jenna O'Donnell (Hunger Free Vermont) – Jenna shared two documents with the Hunger Council: a list of the people currently on the email lists, and a summary of results from the most recent Tracking Outcomes survey, which was conducted in February 2018. (see attached) Jenna asked Hunger Council members to share recommendations for names that need to be removed from the list, or people who should be invited to join.

Susan Bartlett – Susan shared an update on the food diversion project that she and Joyce Majors have been spearheading. Since the Hunger Council’s last meeting, she, Joyce, and some others visited Salvation Farms’ Vermont Commodities Program facility in Winooski, as well as HOPE’s gleaning and processing coordinator in Middlebury. The goal of this work is to establish a place in the Lamoille Valley that can process food, which would help increase the supply of usable produce for food shelves and other organizations as well as provide workforce development.

Susan and Joyce will be meeting soon with leadership at Lamoille County Mental Health Services, which is interested in this project and might be a good site to house the work. At the last Hunger Council meeting, Susan had shared that the United Way of Lamoille County had agreed to share its barn with Salvation Farms for storage of its gleaned foods. Since then, Susan shared that the United Way is working on funding for rehabbing the building, but plans for the storage space are still moving forward.

Scott Johnson – Scott shared a summary of the summer’s All Chairs meeting, which brought together the Chairs of all 10 Hunger Councils of Vermont. At this meeting, Anore Horton (Hunger Free Vermont’s Executive Director) reviewed the organization’s Strategic Plan and shared some priorities for the near future: expanding universal meals for children, supporting older Vermonters, and delivering nutrition education in a more effective manner.

Setting the Agenda for the Coming Year

In this working meeting, Hunger Council members explored potential topics to focus on during the coming year.

Scott Johnson – Scott reviewed the three issues that had been identified by the Hunger Council as priorities in the past year, and encouraged the group to share thoughts on if and how these topics may be worked on: supporting the local school system in providing food for all students; continuing to strengthen the local food diversion system; and supporting medical providers in addressing food security and other social determinants of health.

Supporting Local Schools: The Hunger Council reviewed data compiled by Hunger Free Vermont on the enrollment and participation of students in school meal programs. More data will be available later in the fall (approximately early November). Council members discussed some of the different programs that are being used to support free school meals, including the federal programs (Provision 2 and Community Eligibility Provision) as well as subsidizing the cost by local agencies. Hunger Council members also briefly discussed backpack programs, which provide food for students over the weekend. Susanne Masland shared that the Department of Education is promoting “Morning Circles,” a practice to help students get centered at the beginning of the school day, and
suggested this could be an excellent opportunity to expand more Breakfast After the Bell programs. Scott and Drake Turner encouraged Council members to share school meal enrollment materials with all families in their networks. (see handouts) The Council agreed that there are a lot of opportunities for Hunger Council members to get engaged in this issue.

**Supporting Food Diversion:** The Council built off of Susan Bartlett’s earlier update on the project, and discussed programs and locations that may need to be considered as the project moves forward. Susan feels that it would be ideal to have the facility and program in Morrisville. Additionally, since Mental Health Services already works with people experiencing a wide range of issues, their space and staff would be well suited for working with people who may have varied backgrounds. Susan envisions this project as a way to build a system in the region that can capture more of the wood currently being waste, and although there are a lot of pieces that will need to be figured out, there are also already a lot of resources that could relatively easily be utilized. Susan agreed to keep the Hunger Council updated on progress.

**Supporting medical providers:** The last meeting of the Hunger Council focused on making sure that local medical providers are aware of the local resources (e.g. using Vermont 2-1-1) and that they’re using the Hunger Vital Signs (a two question screen validated to identify people struggling with food insecurity). Alexandra Duquette described what medical providers in the region are currently doing, and her suggestions on how to convince providers to use the tool. She hopes to connect with experts in the community over the coming year to help alleviate the burden on medical providers, which may in turn help the providers to see the value of tapping into the local safety net system. Alexandra also pointed out that identifying people with food insecurity (or struggling with other social determinants of health) can really make a difference. There are professionals (like Dominque or Colleen at Copley Hospital) who are focusing on helping the people with “complex cases;” it’s people who have less complex cases (e.g. only struggling with one or two determinants) who often slip through the cracks. Susanne Masland shared an update on work being done between the WIC program and Dr. Balau at Appleseed Pediatrics, who came to the last Hunger Council meeting. Appleseed now has an office space for WIC at their new location, which has been a great way to connect with families and has actually helped sign up more families to the program. Susan Bartlett shared that CHSLV is very close to hiring a new CEO. It was required that all applicants be familiar with the social determinants of health, and all of the final applicants are particularly strong. Susan feels that once the new CEO is in place, this focus on incorporating the social determinants of health will then filter down and become part of the culture of care. Hunger Council members agreed that there are a lot of opportunities to continue strengthening this issue.

**Action:** Susan Bartlett will connect with the manager of Price Chopper to bring Hal into the conversation.
**Other Topics:**
Council members discussed some of the other issues related to food security in the region:
- Supporting older Vermonters, and the volunteers who serve them
- Increasing whole foods and local foods in childcare settings
- “Gleaning” and distributing plant starts in the spring
- Investigating food security at Johnson State College

**Wrap Up and Adjourn**
*The Hunger Council reviewed final action steps.*

*Scott Johnson* – Scott thanked the group for its suggestions, reflections, and recommendations. He agreed that there are a lot of opportunities to strengthen the food security of the Lamoille Valley, and shared that this conversation will be used to help him, Susan Bartlett, and the Council’s HFVT staffers decide what to focus on over the coming year.

**Meeting Adjourned**

Next Meeting: November 29, 2018; 9:30 - 11:30