**Hunger Council of the Lamoille Valley Meeting Minutes**

**November 14th, 2019**

**Present:** Rick Aupperlee (Laraway School, Inc.), Katie Black (UVM Extension – EFNEP), Beth Burgess (Vermont 2-1-1), Nicole Fournier Grisgrobin (Meals on Wheels), Cae Keenan (Salvation Farms), Karyl Kent (Lamoille North Supervisory Union, Nutrition Director), Emma Korowotny (Salvation Farms), Joyce Majors (Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District), Kate Myerson (Community Health Services of Lamoille), Susan Rouselle (Lamoille Community Food Share), Meredith Scott (Childrens Literacy Foundation), Valerie Valcour (Vermont Department of Health), Lillian White (Johnson Food Shelf)

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

**Hunger Free Vermont Staff:** Jenna O’Donnell and Hannah Carpino

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**Welcome, Updates and Announcements**

_Hunger Council members shared news and updates._

-Beth Burgess (Vermont 2-1-1): Beth shared that Vermont 2-1-1 is awaiting positive news about funding and their hours. Beth also shared county wide data for the hotline (attached):
  - 447 calls for Lamoille County area
  - 44 total service referrals

-Katie Black: UVM Extension - EFNEP is looking for host sites or agencies for adult nutrition education classes

-Susan Rouselle: Lamoille Community Food Share is gearing up for Thanksgiving. 400 people signed up for turkeys

-Nicole Fournier Grisgraber: Meals on Wheels of Lamoille County prepared 42,000 meals this past fiscal year. The contract with Council on Aging is only 39000 meals, but we were able to get reimbursed for the extra meals. Meals on Wheels is looking for drivers and volunteers to help with routes. Flyers available for volunteers interested in helping out with Thanksgiving.
  - Voting next week on potentially moving to a new building in the spring in center of town. The new building has easy access and handicapped parking, as well as proximity to the food shelf. Meals on Wheels will be making an announcement soon!

-NOFA’s Simple Supper will be held November 23rd at noon at the Morristown Centennial Library

-Kate Myerson (Community Health Services of Lamoille Valley): CHSLV has been piloting a program called Bounty Share where 12 food insecure families get access to gleaned produce. In week 4 of 6, CHSLV is learning about barriers to pick up and hopes to get a grant in the spring to continue the program.

-Cae Keenan: Salvation Farms is nearing the end of gleaning season, and still gleaning despite the weather. Some farms will still donate produce year-round. We plan on distributing weekly as long as we can. Bounty Share is a different vehicle of distributing produce, and hopefully the pilot program goes well

-Valerie Valcour (Vermont Department of Health): Updates on fall programming
  - WIC served 15 participants during Halloween Program
  - VDH is currently working on breastfeeding strategic plan for the community.

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**Action Steps & Handouts:**

Handout:
- Lamoille County Statistical Report

Handout:
- Simple Supper flyer
- Partnering with Farm First, which is an employee assistance program for farmers. Any farm that produces at least $10k annually is eligible for Farm First services.
- Lillian White: Johnson Food Shelf is currently signing people up for turkeys. There have been more visits in past few months than before. Serving 60-70 families.
- Joyce Majors: Lamoille Solid Waste sold most of its compost this year and is now working on outreach for the food scrap landfill ban.

Rick Aupperlee (Laraway School, Inc.) - Almost 400 pounds of squash were harvested from the school’s farm site during the annual Harvest Festival
- 6 students have started training at the community lunch in Johnson, four have started training with Meals on Wheels, and one is training at the Hardwick Food Shelf
- Laraway School is working on hiring a new Executive Director, and has narrowed the search down to 4-6 solid candidates. There will be more updates coming soon!

**Federal Updates**

*Jenna O’Donnell shared updates on federal level policy proposals.*

Jenna shared an update on a new proposal from the USDA that threatens Vermonters’ food security. This proposed rule change would reduce benefits 68% of all households participating in 3SquaresVT, and would affect households with older adults or people with disabilities even more drastically: 80% of these households would see their benefits reduced. These reductions would eliminate $26 million from coming into the Vermont economy every year.

As with previous proposed rules, there is a comment period where the public can share their feedback. The deadline for this proposed rule change is December 2nd, and Hunger Free Vermont is hoping we can get as many Vermonters as possible to submit comments opposing this proposal. For more information and to submit your comment, please visit

[hungerfreevt.org/protect3SquaresVT](hungerfreevt.org/protect3SquaresVT)

Jenna thanked everyone who’s already submitted comments, on this and/or on previous proposals. These public comments have been very effective in stalling past proposals, such as the proposed rule changes for the Public Charge Rule and for changing eligibility for 3SquaresVT.

**Updates from Lamoille North Supervisory Union – Karyl Kent**

*Karyl Kent shared updates from Lamoille schools.*

- Lamoille High School has rolled out an on-campus food pantry for students at the high school, middle school, and tech center
  - The pantry is stocked with school supplies, clothing, toiletries, shelf stable foods
  - Using the former middle school kitchen space
  - 8-10 adults have keys to the space
  - The pantry doesn’t have a refrigerator, and the milk cooler they were using broke. Hopefully, the pantry will be able to stock fresh produce if they can acquire a fridge.
- Afterschool meals/supper program started October 1st. There is a lot of regulation/documentation, and Karyl noted that this can be tricky to manage. However, she’s been getting mostly positive responses about the program.
The teachers have said students are really appreciative. The program is reimbursed by the USDA. There are between 80 and 120 participants at the high school alone. Another school (Waterville) has signed up for the fresh fruit and vegetable program, which provides a free snack for students every day.

As Karyl had shared at the past meeting, LNSU is working with Hunger Free Vermont to implement Universal School Meals for the area, using the Provision 2 strategy. This is different from how LNSU offered universal school meals previously, and will be challenging. However, Karyl acknowledged the need in the area, as she’s seen from the responses to the food shelf, afterschool meal program, and the amount of outstanding school meal debts.

Hunger Council members suggested approaching RiseVT to see if they could help fund the fridge, or seeing if the local Sears store has fridges that could be donated.

**Wrap Up and Adjourn**

The Hunger Council reviewed final action steps.

**Actions:**
- Please submit a public comment about the [standard utilities allowance rule change](#)
- Spread the word that Meals on Wheels is looking for volunteer drivers.
- Lamoille High School is looking for a standard, household fridge. Please contact Karyl Kent if you have any leads!

*Scott thanked the group for meeting. The next meeting will be February 6th, 2020.*

**Meeting Adjourned**

Next Meeting: February 6th, 2020