



Sustainable Food Policy Board

MEETING MINUTES Monday, September 14, 2015

Board Members in Attendance:

Alexandra Evans, Sharon Mays, Jessica Gaffney, Carla Jenkins, Adrienne Haschke, Erin Lentz, Jake Carter, Felipe Camacho, Errol Schweizer

Absent Board Members:

Kathy Green, Dominique Bowman, Dustin Fedako

Staff in Attendance:

Amanda Rohlich, Paula Camacho

CALL TO ORDER

Board Vice-Chair Alexandra Evans called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

- a) Tim Miller, Millberg Farm: Miller runs one of the oldest organic farms in Texas. He wanted to come in front of the Sustainable Food Policy Board to preview a letter he will present to Kyle City Council regarding the importance of the need for them to act proactively to help preserve farmland. Miller is concerned about the potential of vehicle emission on his farm from a plan to expand FM 150 from I-35 to Highway 290.
- b) Questions from the Board members: Adrienne Haschke asked how close to his land was the proposed highway expansion. Miller answered that it was 100 feet from his farm. Carla Jenkins asked who the “we” was that Mr. Miller referred to and he clarified that he was only representing his farm with this letter. Felipe Camacho asked how much of the farms products are marketed to Austin. Mr. Miller answered that he no longer participates in any Austin farmers markets. Felipe Camacho asked if he stopped selling in Austin due to sprawl. Mr. Miller answered in the affirmative. Erin Lentz asked Mr. Miller for any deadlines or the timeframe for this expansion and he answered that the timeline is unknown but ground is being broken on FM 150.

2. STAFF BRIEFINGS

- a) Austin Food Shed Investors, Curt Nelson
Mr. Nelson gave an overview of who Austin Foodshed Investors (AFI) are and what they do. He explained that AFI is an offshoot of the Slow Money philosophy and impact investing whereby they provide capital to finance growth in cash-positive businesses that are ready to scale up their model. They specifically focus on food businesses (production or value added products) that create community and social health.
- b) Question from the Board members: Sharon Mays asked if businesses must be open and operational for them to be a viable venture. Mr. Nelson responded that they do not work with start-ups and the must be able to show impact and how they have been tracking success. Question from Board member: What qualifies as a “sustainable business”? Mr. Neslon answered that “you know it when you see it...it must pass the smell test”. Adrienne Haschke asked what they were looking for—investors? Mr. Nelson responded that they have twenty investors signed up and \$6 million in conceptual funding. They are just looking for good companies to invest in. They are eventually looking to grow network to 200 investors. Errol Schweizer asked Mr. Nelson to give definition to the Foodshed—must they grow in Austin or just locate here? Mr. Nelson responded that the highest preference is given to producers, then value-added food products, the distributors, retail perhaps and less likely to invest in restaurants. Carla Jenkins asked specifically about processors and Mr. Nelson confirmed that they were very interested in identifying food processors to work with.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE MEETING

- a) Board Member Erin Lentz motions to approve the meeting minutes from 8/24/15
- b) Board Member Carla Jenkins seconds the motion to approve
- c) All are in favor of approving with five minor corrections; none opposed

4. OLD BUSINESS

- a) **Board Infrastructure & Protocol:**
 - 1) Boards and Commissions Task Force Information Update
 - a. No update
 - 2) Review Board Members' meetings with City and County Officials
 - a. Board Members Jake Carter and Kathy Green met with the offices of Council Members Pool, Tovo and Kitchen to discuss budget.
 - b. Board Member Erin Lentz met with Council Member Casar's office
 - c. Board Member Carla Jenkins will meet with Travis County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty and with Council Member Renteria
 - d. Board Member Jessica Gaffney met with Council Members Garza and Tovo to introduce herself
- b) **Board Recommendations Follow-up**
 - 1) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Outreach/ Incentives
COA staff Amanda Rohlich provided update that Austin City Council passed FY 16 budget by a vote of 9-2 last Thursday, September 10th. Included in that budget was \$400,000 for food access initiatives that will be administered through Health and Human Services Department in collaboration with the Office of Sustainability and grassroots community organizations:
 - a. \$150,000 for Healthy Food Retail Initiative
 - b. \$100,000 for Community and School Based Farm Markets
 - c. \$100,000 for Sustainable Food Center's Double Dollars Incentive Program
 - d. \$50,000 for a Full Time Employee at Health and Human Services Department to administer the programs
 - 2) Local and Healthy Food Procurement
Amanda Rohlich reported that the Office of Sustainability is continuing the conversation with UT Austin, AISD, and other potential partners to gauge interest in working as a pilot city with the Center for Good Food Purchasing to better understand who we are buying food from, what are we buying, setting goals, tracking changes, and celebrating successes. Other cities being considered are Chicago, Oakland and Minneapolis. Erin Lentz met with Jim Walker, Director of Sustainability at UT Austin. UT has goal to reach Zero Waste by 2020 and to source 25% of their food from local/sustainable sources. Amanda Rohlich will set up meeting with Jim Walker and Edwin Marty.
 - 3) Urban Farm Ordinance, City Council Memo
Amanda Rohlich reported on the Council decision on the Springdale Farm zoning appeal. On August 20th, City Council approved a conditional use permit zoning appeal (Ora Houston-District 1 as the only dissenting vote) that allows the farm to host up to 22 events per year with up to 150 people, and up to five events per year that host more than 150 people. Board Member Errol Schweizer asked for clarification on what district Springdale Farm is in and Amanda Rohlich reported that it is in Pio Renteria's District 3.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a) **Working Group Briefings and Recommendations**
 - 1) Working Group Break-outs
 - a) Farmland Preservation and Access Working Group
 - i. Board Member Adrienne Haschke updated: overview of recent presentations to working group from Evan Driscoll from Sustainable Food Policy Board on Texas Land Link, Meredith from Parks and Recreation Department on the cumbersome application and license agreement process for starting a community garden or urban farm. Additionally, there is currently no process in place for accepting land donations. Gail Rothe's scan of conservation lands in Austin and look into how this framework could be applied to endangered farmlands.
 - b) Retail Capacity Working Group
 - i. Board Member Carla Jenkins updated: \$25,000 to conduct a feasibility study for mobile farmers market.
 - c) Codes and Ordinances Working Group
 - i. Board Member Sharon Mays updated: Gave overview of process to write the recommendations on what to incorporate in land development code that is currently under consideration through CodeNext. The white paper assesses current situations, what's missing, and makes recommendations on

how to move towards a more sustainable food system by incorporating code that supports this mission. The Board was unable to confidently vote on the recommendations presented in the white paper because the paper was not posted for public 72 hours prior to meeting, was not explicitly outlined as part of the posted agenda, and Board members did not feel they had adequate time to review prior to meeting.

b) **Review of Board Member Assignments**

- 1) Sharon Mays to coordinate with Staff Liaison Edwin Marty about setting up a special meeting to approve and make formal the recommendation to CodeNext, the white paper that the Codes and Ordinances Working Group has authored.
- 2) Jake Carter to see about additional resources the Board could access that would improve their understanding of the Robert's Rules of Order and participating effectively in Board meetings.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a) None

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a) Formal Recommendation – Code Next White Paper to be adopted as resolution from Codes and Ordinances Working Group
- b) Advocacy training
- c) Robert's Rules training
- d) Introduction to Austin Independent School District's Nutrition and Food Services Director, Anneliese Tanner and updates from AISD's Sustainability Coordinator Jen Cregar
- e) Update from University of Texas at Austin on Food Procurement

ADJOURNMENT at 8:04 pm