

California Food Policy Council Quarterly

Date: February 11, 2020

Location: 85 Nielson Street Watsonville, CA 95076

Attendees:

In-person: Melanie Wong, Sarah Marschall, Gary Cal Farm Link, Sara Housman, Penny Ellis, Francisco Estrada (PVCHT), Kayla Kumar (Food, What?!), Carlos, Judit Camacho, Julio Neri, Josue Barajas, Rebecca Garcia, Annie Puckett, Bibianna Rocha, Ana Melgoza, DeAndre James, Reggie Knox, Corinne Hyland, Alfonso Gonzales, Peter Ruddock Slow Food California/ Homemade Food Operations Act,

Via Zoom:

Beth Spittler (zoom), Hester Parker (zoom), Michael Dimock (zoom), Diego Ortiz (zoom), Renate (zoom), Roseann Cohen (zoom), Carmen Cortez (zoom), Beth Smoker (zoom), Chris Moss (zoom), Liana (zoom)

By Phone:

Amanda Hickson (phone-zoom),

I. Welcome

The California Food Policy Council meeting started with Melanie Wong acknowledging the land we share and inhabited by the native tribes. DeAndre' James also welcomed the participants to the Pajaro Valley Community Health Trust.

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II. Introductions

Attendees, both in-person and via zoom, provided a brief introduction and answered the following question: What will provide energy and nourishment for your efforts in 2020?

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III. Unity Clap

Ms. Wong then led the council in a unity clap, a ritual meant to promote unity and collaboration. The clap was developed by Filipino farmworkers and later adopted by Latino farm workers who were united in their struggle to improve working conditions.

IV. Presentations

Rebecca Garcia

City of Watsonville Mayor Rebecca Garcia provided a presentation to the group discussing recent developments regarding amending an ordinance to limit or ban additional drive-throughs in the community. When I learned that the city of Santa Cruz had prohibited Drive Thrus, the city of Watsonville had adopted their climate action plan. I did not know why our city brushed off the idea of eliminating drive thrus. Recently there is a proposal to a new drive thru business proposition and I have proposed it and encouraged planning commission members to learn more about the

proposition before approving the plan. There was a moratorium to prevent drive thrus proposed to our city council, unfortunately this was not voted for approval. We need to turn two council members to convince them to support the ordinance. We must communicate with community members and urge them to tell their council members the urgency behind this request to ban drive thrus. We should consider making this initiative a ballot item and have it enacted by voters, council cannot disprove this initiative if it is voter approved. The developers can challenge the city if they decide to not allow for this project to be approved.

Carmen: Could the council disprove the plan? They could, and that would give the developers the grounds to sue the city.

Exercise – provide feedback on our possible recommendations:

1. Convince two more council members to support the initiative.

Council members could always say yes and then later on change their mind.

2. City Wide petition.

This would be the best first step. There needs to be a strong effort to organize the community before any of these. We can focus on the districts where the constituents of the council members live to show council members our desire for this change. The city manager has not allowed for me to add a certain item directly to the council agenda

3. Ballot Initiative

We want to promote local business; likely the owners of these business propositions do not live in our community.

Reggie Knox

Reggie has been the Executive Director of Farm Link since 2011. I am very excited to work with both people here local in Santa Cruz but also statewide. The core of our work is here in Santa Cruz and Monterey County. We connect small and new farmers to the land and resources they need to start their business. Farm Link supports beginning, limited-resource, immigrant and other underserved farmers. One of the first agricultural community development financial institutions (CDFI) in the nation. Partners with farm training programs, government agencies, impact investors...

Capital Access

FarmLink provides loans to California farmers

Land Access

Web portal, lease, purchase, advocate, work with land trust

Education

Challenges and Barriers to Capital Access

Alternative sales channels or practices

California FarmLink's Financing Program

Annual operating loans under \$50,000. 23 land purchase loans, averaging \$500,000, conservation loans to incentivize regenerative agriculture, 65% of all FarmLink loans – to farmers of color, in 2019: 38% of loans went to women farmers and

86% to organic farms, \$24 million cumulative lending since 2011; 10 million loan portfolios.

Cumulative lending, most of all the lending happens in the three counties here around the Monterey bay. We have confidently become lease specialists over the last 20 years. We strive to help families secure intergenerational wealth. Impact Measures - we are committed to helping farmers and ranchers across California. We were able to create 750 jobs over the 50 loans we made last year. Statewide Policy Work:

California Reinvestment Coalition

Community reinvestment act monitoring = \$\$ billions for LMI communities.

Fairness in Pay Day lenders = prohibiting triple-digit interest

COIN

California organized investment network. Department of Insurance: a 0% five-year investment from CA corporations; reducing state income tax liability.

Land Access

REEA: Act 2019 (rural)

Questions: Do you have a program for cooperative farming? We have educational programs to support this and focusing on group education.

CAFPC Food Advocate Awards

Peter Ruddock

Mr. Ruddock thanks Ms. Wong for arranging this meeting. He expressed his gratitude to the local council who acted as a host for this event. Mr. Ruddock then took time to acknowledge the 28 member councils of CAFPC and the efforts that contributed to the 2019 CAFPC Annual Report. Mr Ruddock highlights the success of generating this report both this year and in past years despite facing certain challenges.

Ms. Herrera asked: how does the PV council operate?

Ms. Wong responds: The council operate hyper locally, there is only one governing body that they need to work with. The levels of advocacy are very strong in this region. We see many individuals come to our meetings and speak actively. Some councils are fortunate enough to have million dollar budgets and have some full time employees, which can make us jealous but also comes with its challenges.

What are you interested in working on in 2020?

*See charts

Honoring our Activists

Meagen Baldy

Carmen Herrera

Closing Remarks: Melanie Wong

Ms. Wong thanked our hosts and everyone who joined over the phone and in person. She shares a statement: "It not easy to cross boundaries to adopt a whole systems approach to health. It means leaving the systems we know well.... It means learning new concepts.... *see Melanie.

