



PAJARO VALLEY FOOD, FARMING & HEALTH POLICY COUNCIL

September 8th Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Kendra Howell (Blue Zones), Carmen Herrera (El Pajaro CDC), Hektor Calderon (Safe Ag Safe Schools), Nancy Faulstich (Regeneracion), Lisa McGrath (CHT), Annie Puckett (CHT), Kristal Caballero (SC PH), Gustavo Indarose (CHT), Genevieve LeBlanc (Blue Zones), Josue Barajas (Second Harvest), Jessica Ridgeway (Farm Discovery), Hester Parker (CSUMB), Consuelo Alba (Watsonville Film Festival), Guillermina (Catholic Charities), Mayra Hernandez (Community Water Center)

Welcome & Introductions

Annie Puckett welcomed the council, members shared brief introductions.

Governance

Official Membership

Gustavo Indarose confirmed that the council has 18 official member agencies. He explained that moving forward, meetings would cease to be open to non-members, and that any nonmember who wishes to continue participation in council meetings should complete the membership form. He also shared that a general interest e-newsletter would be made available to members and nonmembers alike.

Membership Committee

Gustavo Indarose reminded the council of the opportunity to join the Membership Committee, which aims to recruit new members to the council in accordance with the membership composition stated in the bylaws. He recalled that Myra Hernandez and Josue Barajas had expressed interest in joining this committee and encouraged additional council members to contact him via email with interest.



Action Item: Amendment to the Bylaws: Article 9, Section 2

Staff recommended that *Article 9: Decision Making, Section 2: Procedure*, of the council bylaws be amended to include the option to abstain in decision making in cases of conflict of interest. **The council unanimously approved the recommendation.**

Policy Updates

Propane Facility in the City of Watsonville

Gustavo Indarose requested feedback from the council regarding Mountain Propane's proposal to build a propane storage facility in the City of Watsonville. Nancy Faulstich of Regeneration shared that environmental concern seems minimal, and that the transportation of propane by rail, as described in the proposal, minimizes emissions compared to transportation by truck. Nancy also stated her concern about the circulation of misinformation associated with possible risks, such as explosion, related to the facility. She explained that last minute information has given Regeneration pause on the issue and thus the organization has elected to remain neutral. Consuelo Alba Executive Director of the Watsonville Film Festival, strongly opposed the project, observing that is not a good fit with the city's current climate action plan and sited risk of explosion as an issue where the community should have more understanding. She offered to share resources on the topic. The council concluded that more information is needed before a consensus can be reached and will revisit the issue.

AB-626 California Retail Food Code: microenterprise home kitchen operations, opt-in legislation: Is this right for Santa Cruz County?

Carmen Herrera, of El Pajaro CDC, stated the AB 626 - a bill that allows individuals to run food businesses out of their homes as a means to address low employment levels -- not only gives individuals a way to reduce food insecurity in their communities, but may also be a way of incubating new businesses that one day operate outside the home. Carmen also observed that ensuring food safety in a home-kitchen operation is very important to consider, and that more research should be done to understand zoning restrictions and how safety protocol will be formalized and implemented.



The council agreed that more research is needed on the legislation and that contacting the County Board of Supervisors is the first step in that direction.

Calendaring, Announcements, and Closing Remarks

News Clippings

Gustavo Indarose announced that news clipping would continue to be available via electronic newsletter on a bimonthly basis and invited council members to contribute relevant articles or information via email to him at gindarose@pvhealthtrust.org.

Disaster relief

Nicole Caballero advised the council of funds available through the CARES act with more information available at <http://sccvitality.org/Business/caresgrant.aspx>

Farmers' market

Annie Puckett shared the El Mercado is on track to open its first market in the Spring of 2021 and that the opening delay due to the pandemic has been an opportunity to refine operational details.

DataShare Santa Cruz County

Lisa McGrath shared that valuable statistical data on local food access, health, and wellness is now available at <https://www.datasharescc.org/tiles/index/display?id=202720135968631677> and she invited council members to contribute any relevant additional data or photos by contacting her at lmcgrath@pvhealthtrust.org.

Closing remarks

Staff recommended that meetings be reduced to a one hour time frame, from 2-3 pm, to which the council unanimously agreed.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 1:30-2:30pm via zoom