

MINUTES -- 27 JUN 2005 FARM TO SCHOOL & POLICY MEETING

3-4:30 AM, Durango 9R Admin Bldg Conf Room

Present: Kim Cotta, Bill Manning, Trent Taylor, Jeanne Trupiano, Bliss Bruen, Jim Judge, Chris Barker, Diane Doney, Jerry Zink, Liza Tregillus, Michael Rendon, Beth LaShell, Tom Riesing, Christie Berven, Jim Dyer.

Introductions were made.

FOOD & AGR POLICY: We discussed the County Land Use Code revisions -- it's a daunting task to wade thru it. Jean has reviewed portions relating to land trusts. Jim D. will check with Trent Taylor's father and Jim Isgar to see what they may have discovered in the revisions.

EDUCATION: Chris, Jim J, Shari, and Sue Bruckner met since the last meeting to begin planning an overall education effort. Bliss is looking into a blog or similar web-based communications tool.

PROCUREMENT: Jim D handed around the procurement section from Kim's handbook -- it is rather detailed, but the most pertinent point is that the state allows non-competitive bids if under \$100,000 per vendor. 9R allows non-competitive bids if under \$5000, and doesn't necessarily require acceptance of the lowest bid (fine print not included here). Entitlement funds can be used for produce if it is through the Dept of Defense. Andrews Distributing in Pueblo is the nearest DOD distributor.

NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL CONF: Chris and Jim D relayed their findings from the Ohio conference. Lots of examples from elsewhere and excellent resources -- too much to list here -- if you missed it, take them out for a beer sometime.

NUTRITION: Kim explained that a new group, the Nutrition Advisory Committee has formed with an emphasis on grades K-5. Kim and Donna Bower (donnab@frontier.net) are our contacts there, and Kim will notify us of meetings (the next is 9 Aug).

FORT LEWIS COLLEGE: Michael gave a status report and said he would be setting up a meeting of the Env Center, Campus Ecology Club, and others to look at 1) buying local foods, 2) having more organic and natural foods, and 3) an industrial composter.

GROWING PARTNERS GRANT: Chris explained that the USDA responded to the full local foods grant from the Growing Partners (Laboca, Garden Project, Turtle Lake, SUCAP, SWMN Local Foods Project (us)) with an offer of \$50,000 to do a Food Sovereignty Assessment. This is excellent news in that we can pick a variety of local food issues to assess to lay a foundation for numerous activities in the county -- including Farm to School. The Growing Partners group is preparing the proposed work plan for the USDA.

9R LOCAL FOODS DISCUSSION: Kim explained that she may well have some funds for local foods this Fall, but she still needs to check on restrictions from the co-op (CCSTAR) that she buys from. She handed out a price list from the co-op, and Bill Manning pointed out how difficult it would be for local growers to compete with those prices. Jim D will check with NM Farm to School

contacts to see how local producers can compete there. It appears that local ground beef might be about \$1 more a pound than the commodity beef available to the schools.

Diane pointed out that higher food expenses for local products could be offset if more students participate in the meals at school. This is a critical opportunity for us.

The question arose as to whether the kitchens could grill (local) hamburger patties -- it was suggested that some test grilling be conducted.

The group discussed what schools to start with. Kim favors the elementary and smaller schools, and starting with salads and salad bars. Kim and Diane suggested (after the meeting) that Needham may be a good choice since they have a grant that may dovetail with this. Bliss suggested a "Kids Task Force" to help. A special outside meal featuring local foods at the High School might be a way to start there. Beth pointed out that the new restrictions on young drivers may keep more students at the HS for lunch.

ALL-STAFF BREAKFAST: Kim suggested that we try some local products for the 9R All-Staff Breakfast on 17 August -- about 700 staff attend. We discussed having tomatoes, etc for breakfast burritos as well as fruit from Kiva, sausage from Sunnyside, and perhaps Blue Horizon's flour for some baked goods. (Other local producers are welcome -- these are the three producers who were at this meeting.) Jim D asked Jerry where the sausage would come from, and the group asked him to find a local pig rather than from Olathe. All these items are suggestions and up for discussion, so contact Jim D as he will work with Kim on the local products.

NEXT MEETING: 3pm Tuesday, 19 July. An announcement of location and agenda will be sent out.

The meeting was adjourned. Thanks to all!

Jim Dyer