

MINUTES

Richland FIT Coalition

Date | time 09/25/17 at 12:02 | *Meeting called to order by* Cindy Chicker

Introductions

Emily Highnam, the new Farm to School (F2S) Nutrition Educator introduced herself to the group.

Summary of June Coalition Meeting

Cindy Chicker summarized the results of the June Coalition Meeting at The Richland Hospital. Those present were split into two groups, Group 1 to consider ways to promote local food and Group 2 how to get the community engaged. Also discussed was the fact that with the end of grant funding, there were no funds for the salary for a paid coordinator. It was announced that the Coalition would be applying for the HWLI Coach Program to follow up on the year-long training and as a vehicle to hold us more accountable without a paid coordinator. As an outcome of Group 1, today's speaker was engaged to talk about the School Lunch program and School Garden at Weston School District.

Program – Carl Welke

Carl provided an overview of how school lunch program funding flowed. It was interesting that it is up to the School District to determine whether it will offer a school lunch as it is not a mandated program. There are Federal guidelines if any reimbursement is expected from the government, as well as guidelines for fundraisers by the school district or other groups.

School lunch programs, if offered, must have 5 components:

- Meat (Protein)
- Grains (51% whole grain)
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Fluid/Milk

At the high school level, food is offered while at the elementary and middle school level food is served.

Problems with lunches were also discussed:

- There is a lot of waste (food in trash)
- Still have hungry kids
- The caloric intake needed is different for different ages, difficult to plan for
- Reminder about Nellie's job that makes it difficult – she is one person who has to plan to feed 5 schools, all from one budget
- 90% of schools lose money on the meal programs
- Vending machine use is allowed after school
- Manpower
- Pricing difficulties, for example water is more expensive than soda/pop.

Carl informed the listeners that it needs to be “more about the fuel than the food”, and that its really a two-way street. Parents need to understand that school lunch is not the enemy and that if the students eat a well-balanced diet at home, it makes the job easier at school.

He briefly touched on the use of school gardens as part of the food plan, which was largely unsuccessful. The food can't be good for you if you don't eat it. He suggested having a community event involving the lunch program, possibly funded by sponsors, to talk about the school lunch program, and to utilize some well-thought out produce from the school garden such as watermelon and fresh broccoli.

Follow-up

Discussed the Steering Committee taking on some of the jobs that had been the responsibility of the Coordinator, and the need to get a list out to the members via email, sort of like mini-job descriptions and this would be discussed at the December Steering Committee meeting. There will be both a Steering Committee and Coalition meeting scheduled in December. Discussed the potential for the Steering Committee to meet monthly in order to keep things on track.

Program Follow-up

- Walk with GRACE.
Along with the Quinoa and fruit salads, there was education on the link between cancer prevention and nutrition. It was felt that the addition of healthier options did not detract from sales but brought additional sales during the event
- Point of Purchase
There are 4 restaurants in the pipeline now. Chelsea can update the group at the December meeting. Robin indicated that area Athletic Directors have received an email requesting a bigger presence of healthy options at sporting/event concession stands.
- Community Garden
Mary Nee reported that the Mill Pond Garden was having a good year, especially with the addition of two new beds and mulch. Still looking forward to easier access to water.
- F2S
HOM scheduled
- Ugly Sweater Run/Walk
Handed off to Symons Rec Center, and scheduled for December 2nd. A soup supper was planned for after the run.
- Farmer's Market
The Tasting Table is a big success as is the space for an information rack. The newly forming Chamber of Commerce has indicated an interest in partnering to assist with growth. Suggested were a location with bathrooms nearby, and partnering with Richland FIT in some way.
- ColorFest participation
The group just did some general brainstorming on what could be done and who to contact for additional information.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Coalition is scheduled for December 18th, location and time to be announced.

Motion to adjourn was made at 1:15pm and approved unanimously.