

Howard County FFI Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 17, 2009
6-8 p.m. at Cresco Bank and Trust in Cresco

Those present were: Dan Burkhart, Sue Barnes, Bruce Weigel, Elaine Govern, Lynette Anderson, Lauren Obermann, Hazel Boyle, Joyce Swestka, Nancy Hruska, Brenda Johnson, Renee Cuvelier, Chris Bourassa, Paula Kelley, Sheila Halweg, Edith Asfahl, John Lloyd, Duane Johnson, Gary Sovereign, Sharlene and Stan Milewsky, Deb Obermann.

Dan Burkhart called the meeting to order. Introductions were given. Dan asked that everyone sign in using their mailing address and email and to give thought to meeting times and dates. Joye Meyer has agreed that she will co-convene the meetings but needs a helper. In the packet of handouts there was a Flash Survey each attendee was asked to fill out.

Started out with vision of FFI. Vision that NE is unique place where all residents and guests experience, celebrate and promote healthy locally grown food with abundant opportunities for physical activity and play EVERY Day. Healthier people make stronger families and vibrant communities.

Introductions were made by each attendee on why they were at this meeting and their interest in FFI. Participants shared reasons as interested in grant, interested in the built environment, school nurse interested in youth, school food and fitness involvement to educate youth and adults and that it is carried in all of our schools. Retired coach and fitness teacher now has time to be interested in the fitness portion. Elma resident retired bus driver seeing importance of food and eat healthier. FFI youth engagement coordinator works with youth and school based teams in NE Iowa. It was shared that Chickasaw county has been added onto the initiative and education in the schools is progressing. Youth on the team educated younger children in school. Extension council members here to learn and be educated and are interested in healthy living. Public Health represents the health component of this project. Riceville K-8 PE teacher working with youth coach for school based team teaching nutrition and Riceville now has open salad bar twice a week. Interested in seeing how local involvement will be used.

Regional leadership team report: Dan Burkhart covered the highlights of the Regional Meeting. Regional Team is working on the submission of the WKKF Grant due Sept. 4. The Woods grant was not received. Lynette Anderson is to present in Chicago on child obesity thru RWJ. Funding received for 2 Americorps positions until Aug 2010. Request for Mark Fenton to come to present safe routes to school information in October 7-8 conference in NE Iowa. Wednesday evening, October 7 at 6:30 p.m. in Decorah will be his presentation at Luther College. More information will be shared as this conference is put together. The next Regional Team meeting is August 26.

The Regional Team is reviewing Community Action Plan. Farm to School pilot schools were selected. Schools are being contacted for participation. Lauren Obermann and Lynette Anderson were in Boston for a FFI youth retreat with other adults and youth. Focus was on food policy. Five of the nine sites with WKKL participated. Our youth are from a rural community. Our youth learned about what it is like to live in an inner

city compared to the wide open spaces and freedoms we have being active in our communities. It is a fact that 1 in 5 children are at risk.

Dan Burkhart commented on the website and all the minutes of past meetings and information about the county and regional meeting are all on this website www.iowafoodandfitness.org

Organizational structure handout was handed out. This revolves around the Regional Team with 31 members. There will be two reps from each county. Chickasaw will be added to this mix. The fiscal agent is Community Foundation in Dubuque. Ann Mansfield and Brenda Ranum are co-conveners. The proposed budget that is going to be submitted was also handed out for information.

Food and Fitness Strategies: Dan Burkhart went out the strategies, tactics and policy targets for the NE Iowa FFI.

Strategy A - Ensure that school district policies and practices support healthy living of children, families and community members. Year one will support a regional learning community, farm to school program and provide opportunity for a variety of physical activity before, during and after school. It will work on producing food for local schools and locating food locally grown for schools.

Year 2 and 3 will build on year one progress. Continue working on school purchasing locally grown. Set school beverage policy and food policy within schools. Also promote more physical activity in schools during and outside of school.

Strategy B – Insure local healthy food is available and affordable. Year one will work on investing in new and existing producers. Develop and maintain storage and processing capabilities for local food. Then in year 2 and 3 continue support. Attempts will be made to work on getting processing of local food brought back and increase sales of local food on national and local level.

Strategy C – Insure communities have a built environment. Build and support learning community. Increase youth and family and work on infrastructure and biking to and from. Year 2 and 3 promote more use of school facilities outside of school hours.

Paula Kelley shared that the Riceville School shares fresh foods with the school children and it was introduced to the younger children by older children. They had great success in having children try new foods. Sharing of the group brought out new ideas on food sharing in the school and changing food ideas for lunch menus.

Questions on winter time use of local food. Sharing of canning and freezing of the produce now insures for winter time use. More greenhouses are growing vegetables during the winter time and more are being planned. Greenhouse turns bumble bees loose in winter to pollinate during the winter. Those with greenhouses have to make an investment and know that they will have a market for their produce. Many of these are working on this to make sure it will be profitable for the investment. There are retired farmers that have found that marketing produce at a farmers market is a job they enjoy doing.

RFA's (Requests For Activities) were looked at. There is a lot of planning that has gone into this whole process. Since the process has started we are now seeing the counties that are working together between county lines. This process started two years ago and now the county boards of conservation in all of the counties are working together working on trails.

What questions do you have?

We are seeing that the school involvement is huge and are seeing the benefit. The children will become role models for all of this. The youth is a key element in this process. Having the school nurse involved in the process at school and the need for the school superintendent and committees involved in this whole process. Having a garden for some people is a natural thing.

Lynette Anderson commented on the youth engagement handouts. Looking at having fitness teams at 4-H Clubs. Lynette is working with 12 schools and working with CYC's in the other counties to help support the schools in this region. Looking at finding sponsors for fees for these clubs. School teams from last year will begin working again this year. Had 5 schools and of that 12 youth were on youth team. We now have 12 schools. There will be two people from each school on a team. That team will decide who is on a work group to meet four times a year. Out of the 24 there will be 6 youth that will be on a regional team. They are asking 3 from Riceville and 3 from Cresco to serve on the Howard County FFI. 2010-2011 requirement for 30 minutes a day of activity in each school for children, which includes changing classes, recess. The schools that have foot and fitness teams are looking at planning ahead for this with the schools.

Question of winter activity for engaging people in fitness. Question of how to use school facilities if a person cannot afford the fitness center. It was thought that schools could not buy raw produce from gardeners. It was discovered that it was a law and a food inspector enforced it. That has now been changed and schools can buy from local producers.

Question on how vendors can sell baked goods. Depends on the guidelines of Dept of Inspection and Appeals. Discussion on farmers markets guidelines.

Consensus to keep the meeting on second Thursday of each month. Next meeting will be September 10 at 6-8 p.m. at Cresco Bank and Trust. Suggested we invite the food service personnel from the schools and from the hospital and care centers in the area.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59.

Sue Barnes, Secretary