

Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative
Winneshiek County Planning Team
Jan. 21, 2009
Baker Commons at Luther College
Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Ron Bullerman, Dean Darling, Nikki Brevig, Donella Darrington; Rick Edwards; Lindsay Erdman; Karen Foster; David Cavagnaro; Joann Hagen; Bill Ibanez; Elizabeth Kane; Georgie Klevar; Janet Lambert; Lyle Luzum; Sue Luzum; Ann Mansfield; Julie Metcalf Cull; Alma Meyer; Eric Nordschow; Janelle Pavlovec; Brenda Ranum; Randy Uhl; Kay Schmitt; Emily Neal; Steve Holland; Tim Hayes; Nancy Sacquitne; Meredith Bishop; Tom Beard; Tom Shroyer; Jim Lage; Krista Vanden Brink

SHARING: During introductions and sharing, the following question was asked, “Our vision is to create a future we truly care about for children, youth and families in our communities. What will that look like? What will children, youth and families experience? The following comments were made:

- Constructing a community root house
- Sheltered farmer’s market
- Food & fitness are so culturally ingrained that we no longer need to meet about it
- Home food gardens. Fewer lawns, less spraying
- More people growing their own food
- School children eating healthier and lowering obesity rates
- Children have better knowledge of where food comes from & how to prepare it
- Stronger consumer-farmer connections
- Safe trails to work and schools (both walking and biking)
- Year-round access to physical education
- Healthy foods more available in our schools
- 4-H participants learn basics of food processing and preparation
- Greater levels of inter-generational respect
- Food system that is more transparent – cost/benefits of what we eat
- Affordable, locally grown foods year-round
- More programs such as one at Turkey Valley where a retired teacher is teaching students about gardening
- System of trails – fewer cars driven to high schools

REGIONAL TEAM REPORTS: The following highlights of the Regional Team committees were noted:

Communications – Logos, T-shirts and “elevator” statements about FFI are being prepared so a consistent message is conveyed. Four traveling displays have been created. FFI also presented to a combined meeting of the community foundation representatives from the five counties. They also met with state legislators and legislators who were newly elected in November.

Vision Deployment – Eric reported that the group is refining 3 strategies. They include educating youth and ensuring that policies and practices support healthy living; promoting affordable, local healthy food; and work on the built environment.

Youth – Ann reported there are 10 youth on the Leadership Team. The team has begun presenting concession-stand survey results to school boards, principals and booster clubs. Working on survey to learn more about how youth want to be physically active during and after school hours. Ann said the youth team is guided by a youth coordinator funded by the grant.

Built environment -- Lindsay said the team is gathering information about the resources available in all five counties, and inventorying indoor spaces in those counties.

Recommendations on how better to use the facilities will come after the survey is completed.

Community Health Work Group – Krista reported the five public health directors from the participating counties are planning a health assessment project. A grant from Wellmark has been applied for and details about approval should be learned in February.

NIFF Coalition – The coalition has existed for about 3 years. Strategies involve engaging local producers and educating local consumers about local foods. Eric reported a Micro-Loan Project is being investigated.

Human & Financial Resources – Rick reported the Kellogg Foundation will extend the planning period by five months. The original planning deadline was March 31, 2009. He also said that RC&D has decided it no longer wants to be the fiscal agent for the project.

WEBCAST: A DVD titled “Rising Energy & Food Prices” by Cynthia Needles Fletcher, Department of Human Development and Human Studies at ISU. She reported that food prices were 5.8% higher in July 2008 than in July 2007, and that transportation costs were 13.4% higher in that same time period. Participants were asked to keep in mind the following questions while watching it:

- How will our vision and strategies make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and their families?
- What resources, including partners and expertise, do we have in the community to address these issues?

How can we help the NIFF Coalition and the Regional School Work Group ensure equity around food and physical activity for families in our communities?

During the subsequent discussion, the following ideas were mentioned:

- There apparently is about a \$25,000 shortfall in Congregate Meals and Meals on Wheels for senior citizens
- 33% of families qualify for free and reduced lunch programs in schools
- Backpack programs where food is sent home in student packs, is critical
- NIFF is working on creating more food purchases locally
- 4-H clubs could adopt a family & school to teach them how to grow food
- Seed Savers could assist in the proliferation of local gardening
- Luther & NICC continuing education programs could offer food-growing and food-processing classes
- Healthy Meals in a Minute can be provided

- Mentoring roles can be employed to increase gardening
- Assisted gardening programs could help those who lack time or health to have gardens at their homes
- Assisted processing could help those without knowledge of food processing
- Classes could be offered at the Free Clinic
- Locations of fruit trees that may be accessible to the public can be identified