**Lake County Community Food Council Meeting Minutes**

Monday, April 11, 2016

3:30 p.m. at St. Ann’s Church in Baldwin

Participating: Dennis Cosby, Kendra Gibson, Meryl Smith, Carl Merchant, Kathy Merchant, Lynne Mills, Leo Heska, Freddie Rosado, Sue Brown-Havens, Kendra Wills and Nancy Przedwojewski

1. Freddie Rosado called the meeting to order at 3:34 and conducted introductions. Freddie then explained that he asked Nancy P. to serve as co-chair of the Lake County Community Food Council. She will lead the meetings when Freddie is not able to attend. Freddie promised to try and make most meetings. The group thanked Nancy for her willingness to help lead the group.
2. Build a Box Garden Workshop Planning
   1. Leo passed around the photo of the box sample that was brought to last month’s meeting built by Paul Betts. Four one-gallon containers will fit the boxes. This will be the basic design of the boxes. The subcommittee is considering two dates: Sunday April 24 (Rogation day) and June date to partner with Webber Township Parks Dept event. Freddie agreed to contact Webber Township to make sure they would be okay with this group joining the event to distribute free boxes.

Instead of securing donations of milk or water jugs, Freddie suggested one-gallon nursery pots to purchase from a wholesale OR tell people to bring 4 of their own one-gallon jugs. The goal is to distribute 200 boxes. Perhaps instead of the ladybug we would do stamps or stencils and spray paint for the design. This allows people to design their own box but saves on labor.

The subcommittee will make sure to check with Paul on the soil donation from the mushroom business in Scottville. Seed donations or purchases and/or plant purchases also must be made. Contact Kendra Gibson for access to grant funds. The group is meeting Wednesday at 6 pm to organize these details.

It was noted that clients of the Bread of Life Pantry need to be incorporated into this project. They would need to be notified ahead of time to plan to build a box. The bus only allows one bag on the bus. Perhaps if the boxes were finished already they would be able to participate.

Carl suggested that Home Depot should be contacted to see if they would be able to help us do a workshop at the Webber Township event to build the boxes. Perhaps Baldwin Lumber donations can be secured as well.

1. Rogation Sunday – marketing plan? Press release?
   1. April 25 is the official date. (Monday)
   2. April 24 in the parking lot of St. Ann’s Church for the blessing of the seeds/plants.
   3. Marketing for the June event.
   4. Perhaps some boxes will be made to advertise the June event.
   5. Leo volunteered to connect with Fr. Ron on this event before the Wednesday meeting.
2. New Grant Opportunity from the District 10 Health Department
   1. Sally Mellema put this on the agenda and unfortunately she was not able to attend the meeting today.
   2. The group has the opportunity to complete a community assessment and then be awarded a $5,000 grant to support the works of the Food Council. The project money is targeted at food, exercise, or elimination of tobacco.
   3. The group was interested in this possibility. We will wait for more information to come from Sally.
3. 3 Minute Project Updates:
   1. Expansion of the Bread of Life pantry and how new client choice process is working
      1. Kathy and Carl reported that two grant applications have been sent out. Carl talked with the Village about site plans to add on and building permit applications. Now we are waiting to find out about funds to pay for the expansion. There is a generic drawing in place right now – a 12 foot addition is the basic plan and 16 foot might be possible. Materials list and cost of concrete has been done $36,000 is the cost of the 12 foot addition. No volunteer labor is incorporated in this. The two grants would only total to be $17,000. Could possibly expand in phases and do some private fundraising to raise the rest of the funds.
      2. Sue believes the larger of the grants $12,000 Great Lakes Energy People Fund would be awarded in August. $5,000 from the Lake County Community Foundation would be awarded in June.
      3. Sue asked the group if others knew of more grant opportunities for the pantry expansion.
   2. Farmers market feasibility study – Kendra Wills
      1. Lots of community surveys have been collected from Pathfinder Library and from Sue Brown-Havens. Thank you! A separate survey to local government officials was distributed with 20 responses. Wills noted that there seems to be support for a farmers market but no clear consensus from what she is reading on the location, format or lead organization of the market.
      2. Sue passed around a recent Lake County Start article that mentions the CDC grant. Meryl noted that the Health Department would not be starting a farmers market.
      3. Leo liked the idea of Healthy Corner Stores and noted that the Branch store is true community center. Meryl said the CDC grant project would be working with these stores to label and promote healthy foods.
      4. Sue mentioned that Wenger Pavillion in Baldwin as another possible farmers location.
   3. CDC grant project – Meryl Smith
      1. First meeting project meeting will be tomorrow (April 12) at noon at the bank in Baldwin.
      2. Affordable, healthy food access is the focus.
      3. They do plan on working with the area grocery stores and corner stores to label and stock healthy foods.
      4. The project will also be working with restaurants to put a table-top sign to advertise their healthy meal options.
      5. The other project they are working on is increasing breastfeeding in Lake County.
   4. Baldwin Intersession Class – Kendra, Kendra and Jane
      1. We are currently in the second week of the class. Serv Safe was conducted (6 students were certified), 8 students are in the Cooking Matters class, and 5 are in the local food business part of the course.
      2. The group agreed that more education is needed around how to cook and eat fresh fruits and vegetables. Students and pantry clients and other community members. We need to help create a culture that likes to cook and share food and recipes. The foodie movement needs to come to Lake County.
   5. The Real Hunger Games – Leo Heska
      1. The project is moving slowly. The flyers have been distributed at a few places. Response is light. Many teens are over scheduled. Initial responses are coming from home school students. Leo participated in the Hunters Safety Certification class and is attending another training. Looking at using the Hunter Home Study model – 96 page book. Leo wants to try and reduce the time that students are in a classroom setting. Hands-on model with shooting practice as part of the class. There needs to be two Hunter Certified Instructors to teach a class. Would like to run a class before fall. Students ages 12-18 are targeted.
      2. Freddie noted that the June event would be a great marketing opportunity for this club.
4. Discussion on the future of the council and how it can continue beyond the life of the grant.
   1. Brainstorm List: What are the essential items that need to be in place before the end of the Voices for Food Grant to allow the Council to continue to be successful.
      1. Leo: Good people are in place, we have a location, we would need a budget (funds to work with) and projects to do.
      2. Sue: I think we need to tie youth and young farmers into the group. As the more elderly members of the group, there would be new young people to carry this on.
      3. Dennis: More focus one or two things and involvement from everyone in the room. The current projects do not seem to involve everyone.
      4. Kendra G: Partnerships with other organizations and community members.
      5. Meryl: Committed leadership, sense of accomplishment, more resident involvement and involvement from young people. Partnership and the D#10HD will be interested in continuing this work.
      6. Carl: Need a 1, 3 and 5 year plan. This year, three years and then a long-term plan.
      7. Kathy: With the pantry, it must be sustainable. We need the expansion to happen. Donations are coming in but there is no place to go. The pantry should be a key accomplishment.
      8. Lynne: The pantry has no room for storage and we are turning away some donations.
      9. Nancy: We need to expand the involvement. Day cares, schools, churches, businesses so everyone is talking and learning from each other. This expands your list of contacts and capacity for projects.
      10. Freddie: We should try and form a 501c3 and have officers and be able to secure grant funds independently and administer grants ourselves. In order for us to be a legitimate Food Council, we will need this structure in place. This will allow us to apply for funds that meet the community’s needs.
5. Other new business or updates
   1. Lynne is putting together the list of all pantries in Lake County for a phone chain list in the case of excess donations and helping to facilitate increased communication and collaboration.

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Next meeting: **Monday, May 9** **3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. St. Ann’s Church in Baldwin.**

**Please bring a guest with you!** Agenda Item: CDC Needs Assessment Results (Dennis will present for 10 -15 Minutes)