

**Governor’s Food Desert Working Group
In-person meeting
August 17 & 18, 2022**

MINUTES

Attendees:

**Working Group
Members:**

Kathy Webb, Kenya Eddings, Christie Jordan, Rachel Spencer, Sandy DeCoursey, Kelley Jackson, Jean Noble, Cynthia Edwards, Joe Thompson, M.D.

**Working Group
Representatives:**

Lance Whitney representing Tomiko Townley, Deborah Landers representing Julie Harlan, Jennifer Wessel representing Joe Thompson, M.D., Joshua Markham representing Jean Noble

Facilitators:

Janet Harris, Payton Christenberry, James Hopper, Aaron Keith Kenard, Lizz Wagner, Quiana Brown, Molly Thomason, Carder Hawkins

Guests:

Charity Hallman, Kevin Coogan, Kathy Saloy, Kimberly Lee, Alex Ostensen, Caroline Harries, Michael Thomsen

Regrets:

Steve Goode, Gary Proffitt, Kara Wilkins

Location:

Winthrop Rockefeller Institute / Zoom

I. Welcome and introductions

Janet Harris opened the meeting at 12:22 p.m., challenging the working group to be inspired by Governor Winthrop Rockefeller’s Ethic to focus on how to create transformational change in addressing food deserts. Wednesday, August 17. Working group members, representatives, and facilitators introduced themselves and their organizations.

II. Recap of last in-person meeting

At 12:40 p.m., a recap of the last in-person meeting in June was given to give attendees an opportunity to refresh their minds. During this time, the group began discussing resources that had been shared between the June meeting and the August meeting.

III. Conversation with Hope Credit Union/Enterprise

At 1:10 p.m., representatives from Hope Credit Union/Enterprise presented about the work they do to help fund community projects, and then on their Healthy Food Financing Initiative, which finances programs to address food insecurity.

IV. Presentation on Main Street Market in Evansville, Minnesota

At 2:30 p.m., Alex Ostenson presented the community grocery store that he and his wife opened in Evansville, Minnesota.

V. Presentation from Michael Thomsen, Endowed Obesity Chair at the College of Public Health

At 3:05 p.m., Dr. Michael Thomsen, Endowed Obesity Chair at the College of Public Health presented to the working group on the public health need to address food deserts.

VI. Wave Exercise

At 3:30 p.m., the group participated in an exercise designed to get them to think about the big trends around food deserts. They were challenged to brainstorm trends, practices, programs, etc that are emerging, established, on the horizon, and disappearing.

VII. Recess for the evening

Work paused for dinner and rest at 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 17.

VIII. End of recess/ begin the new day

Aaron Keith Kennard and Kathy Webb ended recess at 8:30 a.m.

IX. Overview from yesterday

At 8:30 a.m. Aaron Keith Kennard led the working group in a discussion of what was addressed yesterday, and gathered any thoughts that were brought up during dinner the previous night.

X. Report Plan Revisit

At 8:45 a.m. Payton Christenberry led the working group in a discussion where they refined the problem they wish to address, the purpose of their group and their report, and the audience they wish to reach.

XI. Presentation from Caroline Harries, MRP, AICP

At 9:30 a.m., Caroline Harries Director, Healthy Food Access, The Food Trust presented on the work that the Food Trust does to meet the needs of people living with food insecurity.

XII. Official Definition of a Food Desert

At 10:20 a.m., the working group finalized the definition of a food desert they wished to use going forward. The group decided to use the definition of the Anne E Casey Foundation, which states that “Food deserts are geo-graph-ic areas where res-i-dents

have few to no convenient options for securing affordable and healthy foods — especially fresh fruits and vegetables.”

XIII. Subcommittee Evaluations

At 11:00 a.m., the group evaluated the subcommittees they had established to determine if they needed to be reconfigured to account for new priorities given the refined purpose, problem, and audience for their recommendations. Two new subcommittees were created, one to ensure that the working group is keeping on top of FOIA compliancy, and another subcommittee to steer the development of the final report.

XIV. Subcommittee Evaluations

At 12:00 p.m., the group conducted a working-lunch to finalize the action items for each subcommittee, and the entire group going into the time between their next in-person meeting in October.

XV. Adjournment

Kenya Eddings adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 28, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved as to form and content:



8/24/2022

Carder Hawkins

Chief Strategy Officer, Winthrop
Rockefeller Institute

Kathy Webb

Chair, Governor’s Food Desert Working
Group