

## **Food Justice Committee Meeting Minutes May 2, 2018**

### **In Attendance:**

Caitlyn Ashton, Howard Bilofsky, Amelia Duffy-Tumasch (Chair), Flo Gelo, Brenda Hall-Busch, Mimi Kahn, Jeannine Kienzle, Seth Lerman, Kentu Malik, Jack Malinowski, Catherine Martin, Denise Mathuthu, Megan McCrea, Linda Samost, Jon Scaffidi, Larry Shaeffer, Lauren Todd, Shaline Webb

### **1. Approval of April 2018 minutes**

The minutes were approved.

### **2. Special Guest: Linda Samost, Sunday Suppers**

As part of our Philly Foodscape project, Jeannine (the FJC liaison person for Sunday Suppers) invited Linda Samost, the founder and director of Sunday Suppers, to our meeting. Linda established the organization about 8 years ago, after reading an article about the amount of severe hunger in Philadelphia. As described by Linda, Sunday Suppers is less about hunger as such and more about families working together to reach their goals for feeding their families. The focus is on families eating together, preparing healthier meals, and creating community.

Each fall, families make a 5-month commitment to a cohort program. They come together every week and, in a pleasant setting, receive a meal that is affordable, accessible, and easy to prepare. Linda's approach is to take a meal that they might otherwise eat (such as fried chicken) and make it healthier (for example, baked chicken). Every other week workshops are incorporated into the gathering. Workshops focus on things like shopping on a budget, cooking skills, dealing with daily stress, etc. The meals are organized in a way that creates space for everyone to participate, including children. The only mealtime rules are you must try everything and you cannot use any electronics. After one month the families fill out an assessment form, after which they receive whatever equipment they need for their kitchen at home (pots, dishes, utensils, etc.)

The program relies on peer leadership. After graduating from the program, people are qualified to teach their peers. Linda is still working on perfecting the peer-leadership model.

The program has definitely made an impact. Based on evaluations, it is clear that there has been significant improvement in several areas. These include eating together, eating more vegetables, eating fewer fried foods, and drinking fewer sugary drinks.

Most importantly, and hard to measure, is the way in which Sunday Suppers helps to create a sense of community for people who otherwise may not have this in their lives. This feeling, of being part of a community, creates lasting friendships, affects health issues, and helps with educational goals. The alumni program helps keep this feeling alive.

Until now Sunday Suppers existed only in Kensington. Recently a second location was introduced in Germantown. Linda hopes to establish one new location each year. At the moment

the groups consist of about 40 people (10-14 families, often with many children). Sunday Suppers is located at, and sponsored by, SHARE. Linda is currently setting up a 501c3.

One question raised at the meeting was... how can the FJC members help? Linda recommended volunteering at the weekly dinners to serve meals or wash dishes. She also accepts donations of items in good condition that families can use in their kitchens, such as pots, pans, dishes, utensils, etc. See the website for more details. [Sundaysuppersphilly.org](http://Sundaysuppersphilly.org)

### **3. Summer Food Drive (Catherine, Jon, Kentu)**

The date has been set for our summer food drive; namely, the weekend of June 22, 23, 24.

The food will go to four pantries: Mattie Dixon Community Cupboard in Ambler; Holy Cross in East Mt. Airy; St. Luke's Episcopal Church (which serves about 160 families) in Germantown; and Germantown Seventh Day Adventist Church's pantry (connection through FJC member Denise Mathuthu). This year we will focus on shelf-stable foods. The pantries' specific needs will be determined closer to the time of the drive.

The organizers are still in need of a publicity coordinator (signage!) and site coordinators. This year we want to improve our signage, as well as provide information about the food drive to WW staff. There was a suggestion that we could also have PA announcements in the store during the drive. Shift signups will be on the members' site soon and available at the June FJC meeting. There will be an ad in the June Shuttle very similar to last year's poster. Big thanks to Jeannine for being our WW staff liaison.

### **4. Health Fair Update (Flo)**

There are currently three ongoing and related fundraisers for Philly Food Bucks (PFB), a program that encourages SNAP recipients to use their benefits to purchase produce at participating farmers' markets. For every \$5 spent using SNAP at participating markets, customers receive a \$2 Food Buck coupon for fresh fruits and vegetables. The fundraisers are the following.

1 – Raising \$2,000 for PFB to be distributed to attendees of cooking demonstrations during the Germantown Farmers' Markets. So far three donors have raised \$1,100.

2 – Raising money for Saul High School and Henry Got Crops. HGC is distributing \$2 coupons to students to boost interest. Howard and Amelia are working on this.

3 – We want to distribute PFB coupons at The Germantown Natural Health Fair on August 25th. \$4 of PFB would be given to health fair attendees who participate in yoga and other wellness activities at the Fair.

### **5. Research Update (Howard)**

The "Food For All" data that Jeannine provided was much appreciated and led Anne and

Howard to a very productive discussion but also raised a number of issues about the program. As a result, Howard and Anne came up with new questions, which made them think more seriously about the FFA program and what role it has within the Co-op.

**6. New Business (Larry)**

Larry raised his earlier idea about Chinese take-out places from which people can purchase fresh vegetables for very low prices. People interested in working on this project should get in touch with Larry.

We welcomed new member Brenda Hall-Busch. Brenda is an attorney and a part-time LL.M. candidate in the Agriculture and Food Law Program at the University of Arkansas Law School.

**NEXT MEETING**

**Wed, June 6, 2018, 6-7:30 PM**

**TBA**