



Meeting Minutes: Governor's Committee on the Safety, Health, and Wellbeing of Agricultural and Food Processing Workers

DATE: 5/08/2023

MINUTES PREPARED BY: CINTHIA MARTINEZ

Attendance

Committee Members

Present

Elise Sporre, Project Manager and Outreach Coordinator, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services

Erik Zabel, Epidemiologist Principal, Minnesota Department of Health

Jim Gleb, President, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1189

Marc Majors, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Patrice Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Rodolfo Gutierrez, Executive Director, Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment Through Research

Sarah Berry, Public Health Director, Waseca County | CHS Administrator, Le Sueur – Waseca Community Health Board

Tamara Nelsen, Executive Director, Minnesota AgriGrowth Council

Absent

Dan Glessing, President, Minnesota Farm Bureau

Emilia Gonzalez Avalos, Executive Director, Unidos MN

Gary Wertish, President, Minnesota Farmers Union

Jessica Grosz, Director of Labor Standards and Apprenticeship, Minnesota Department of Labor, and Industry

Kiza Olson, CHS Administrator, Meeker-McLeod-Sibley Community Health Services

Rena Wong, Director of Organizing, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 663

Stephanie Low, Interim Executive Director/ Chief Medical Officer, Community Health Service Inc.

Staff Present: Cinthia Martinez, CareerForce Office Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development; Valerie Gamble, State Program Admin Principal, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Guests present: Lidibette Guzman, State Monitor Advocate, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development; Noemi Trevino, Migrant Education, Minnesota Department of Education

Agenda

1:00 PM **Welcome / Introductions**

1:10 PM **Approve Minutes & Agenda**

1:15 PM **Legislative Updates**

1: 25 PM **AWWC Member Update**

1: 30 PM **Housing Subcommittee Report**

1:50 PM **Next Steps**

1:55 PM **Public Comments**

2:00 PM **Adjourn**

Welcome/ Introductions

Approve Minutes & Agenda

Approved.

AWWC Member Updates

Thank you for responding to the email sent by Cinthia regarding committee membership. If anyone has not expressed their interest in continuing in this committee, please let us know. We will send you an update on reappointments as soon as we hear an update.

Legislative Updates

Patrice Bailey stated that the agricultural bill is almost done and imagines that the other agencies are also wrapping things up.

DLI

- HF 70/SF 61 – Fair Labor Standards for Agricultural and Food Processing Workers – in conference committee with SF 3035
- HF 23/SF 207 (not related to AWWC recommendations but impacts food processing workers) – Safe Workplaces for Meat and Poultry Processing Workers – in conference committee with SF 3035
- DLI press release related to child labor investigation in food processing industry

DEED – Waiting for an update.

Housing Subcommittee report

Currently the Housing subcommittee includes Sarah Berry and Elise Sporre.

One of the housing recommendations is to analyze where there is overlap or existing services. The group is also focusing on expanding coverage, because this was work done before they knew the future of this Committee and they felt like this was something tangible to pass on the work. Last year in the fall the AWP group took another look at the regulations for state and federal that pertain to migrant and seasonal worker housing. Because their expertise relates to farm workers, they did not do a deep dive related to food processing workers, so they will get to that caveat later as well. The work group also hosted and inter agency meeting in December with federal agencies that had jurisdiction to get clarification and ask questions. From these meetings and their work, there is now a public facing report on housing complaints on the AWWC website. The goal on developing the simplified chart is for to inform workers about housing issues.

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Next Steps

Our next meeting will be on June 12

Public Comments

From Noemi Trevino: As we go through the legal pieces, I must remind myself that we are doing this for people. The work we do makes an impact.

Adjourn