



Local Food and Farm Council

Meeting Minutes

April 5, 2024

Location		No. of Presenters	Start Time	End Time	Recorder
via Zoom Video Conferencing		0	9:07 a.m.	10:34 a.m.	Jacquette Maynard
This Council is composed of the following agencies, farmers, and restaurateurs:	University of the Virgin Islands (UVI)	Department of Agriculture (VIDA)	Department of Education (VIDE)	Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR)	Economic Development Authority (USVI EDA)
	Farmer (TBA)	Farmer (TBA)	Farmer (TBA)	Restaurateur (TBA)	Restaurateur (TBA)
Present:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chair: Dr. David Hall – President (UVI) • Co-chair: Dr. Louis E. Petersen, Jr., – Commissioner Nominee (VIDE) • Member: Wayne L. Biggs, Jr., – Chief Executive Officer (EDA) • VIDE Designee: Mr. Harith Wickrema – President of Island Green Living • VIDE Designee: Dr. Renee Charleswell – Deputy Commissioner of Curriculum and Instruction • Honorary Farmer Member: Ms. Abeba Sellassie – The B-Hive Farm Collective • Honorary Farmer Member: Dr. Nate Olive – Ridge to Reef Farm • Local Food and Farm Coordinator: Ms. Sommer Sibilly-Brown – VI Good Food Coalition 				
Absent:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member: Jean-Pierre L. Oriol – Commissioner (DPNR) • Member: Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington – Commissioner • Member: Dr. Usman Adamu – Dean and Director of the School Agriculture (UVI) • DPNR Designee: Dr. Nicole F. Angeli – Director of Fish and Wildlife • DPNR Designee: Dr. Sennai Habtes – Bureau Chief, Fisheries • Honorary Farmer Member: Mr. Edmon Titre – New Breed Farm • Honorary Farmer Member: Mr. Royce Creque – Greenridge Guavaberry Farm 				

I. Welcome, Member Introductions, and Charge

- The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Dr. Hall, Co-Chair of the Local Food and Farm Council.
- Dr. Hall warmly welcomed all members and expressed gratitude for their engagement, commitment and presence.

II. Meeting Minutes: March 22, 2024

- No corrections or changes were observed in the minutes.
- Mr. Wickrema moved to approve the Meeting Minutes as presented; seconded by Director Biggs.
- The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Public-Private Partnership Investment Fund (PPPIF) Funding Program Development

- **Funding Availability Update:** Director Biggs provided an update on the status of funds. He confirmed that while the funds have not yet reached their account, they have been approved by the Department of Finance. He mentioned ongoing checks by the Accounting Department for fund release and agreed to provide further updates by the end of the meeting.
- **Advertising of the Funding Program:** Dr. Hall emphasized the significance of fund availability for promotional activities and the Town Hall schedule. He stressed the necessity of promptly informing potential applicants about the availability of funds. Dr. Hall expressed readiness to promote the new Town Hall Meeting dates once the funds are confirmed.
- **Funding Agreement:** Dr. Hall announced that Attorney Marie Thomas-Griffith is expected to be available for the upcoming meeting to address the Funding Agreement. He emphasized the need for further discussion and review of the Agreement by the Council and invited feedback on the document. Following a robust and constructive discussion, Dr. Hall assured that compiled points would be forwarded to Attorney Thomas-Griffith for incorporation into the Agreement. (see attached letter).

IV. Town Hall Meetings

Dr. Hall discussed the need to reschedule Town Hall Meetings due to delays in announcements. He suggested starting promotions at least two weeks before the meetings. Considering the upcoming carnival schedule, the proposal is to begin the week of April 22nd. Dr. Hall stated that he would review meeting dates and propose them to the Counsel for their review.

Further, Dr. Hall asked for feedback regarding the draft Press Release, Announcement Flyer, and PowerPoint Presentation. He stated that he would review the PowerPoint Presentation, and as he observed, there are some required edits. Dr. Hall emphasized the importance of promoting available funds and application processes. He also mentioned updates from the Agriculture Business Center and hoped for updates from other areas. Also, he suggested inviting government officials to the meetings.

V. Update on website and Email Address

Ms. Maynard provided an overview of the Council's website. She mentioned that the website is now live and open to suggestions. She highlighted various sections of the website. Council members suggested changes to the layout, such as prioritizing the application process and providing clear explanations for the registration tab. Members also discussed the importance of clarifying the registration process and emphasized the need for an online application option. It was also suggested that the links on the first page should be rearranged. For example, the Donation link should be last and not first.

It was also confirmed that the Council email address is active. Dr. Hall thanked Dr. Petersen and his team for their assistance on this initiative.

VI. Update on PPPIF Funding

Regarding funding, Director Biggs provided an update on anticipated fund disbursement. He confirmed that the funds should be available by the next meeting. Dr. Hall thanked him for the update.

In addition, Dr. Hall stressed the importance of utilizing the funds efficiently and suggested distributing them in the first round to strengthen the case for future funding requests. He also mentioned the possibility of a quarterly application cycle to capture various grant opportunities.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m.