

Indiana Grown Commission Meeting

April 1, 2015

Attendees:

Bob White

Margaret Davidson

Pete Eschelman

Chris Baggott

Mark Straw

Jeanette Merritt

Cheryl Carter Jones

Ted McKinney joined toward the end of the meeting

-began with overview from David King

started working on a brochure

getting bids on baseline study

bids for the website

PR media/marketing company research. Need to build scope of work to decide how much is needed and how much can be done internally within ISDA

- time with the Lt. Governor

she appreciates the good work the Commission has done and is thankful for the efforts done at this time. She had asked for the input from the Commission on the excited pieces of the plan.

David King said a major retailer is planning to install 67 kiosks in their stores with just Indiana Grown products. Over 200 producers are ready to sign up into the program. Those producers include raw fruit and vegetable products, fruit and vegetable value added, honey, jams/jellies, granola, all proteins, eggs. We have the final product on the business plan, logo, and application. Some states have taken upwards of 15 years to do what we hope to do in 3 years.

Jeanette Merritt says she has never before seen the excitement and interest in the initiative. There have been other plans put forth before with little response. Industry is ready to go.

Pete Eselman noted the market is heading to the next generation of local. We were able to define local for the Indiana consumer.

Chris Baggott says their business group sees a very normal demographic for their customer base. It is not necessarily a high-level income base.

Question from the LG – where does the Commission see the money being spent? Commission statements indicated that the budget was referenced in the business plan. Major expense is staffing, building the platform for website and social media. There is also a need for a baseline survey/study to have the research. LG commented the research is needed – great value added from having a survey/study of this sort. She also recommends having capture of new jobs, new growth, due to the program.

Jeanette is looking forward to Indiana-based, local food shows. David commented that some retailers are asking why don't we have a trade show? It is needed.

LG asked if the program can be transferred eventually out of state government. Jeanette offered the cautionary tale from Indiana Artisan. If it is sent outside government, there are a variety of lessons which should be learned. Pete commented that they would like to eventually wean the program out of state funding. But Chris added that since we are discussing food, there is a benefit to having the program remain in government (safety, etc .)

LG noted ISDA has put money forward to use currently to move the program forward. The budget ask of \$1.2 Million may be a lot and is not likely to happen in this legislative session, but she is working with the General Assembly. The bottom line is that the General Assembly makes their decisions based on the April forecast. The LG's office will be having conversations on this subject with legislators to ensure awareness.

Mark Straw indicated his biggest concern is the message of being level, fair, and all-inclusive of small and big agriculture.

The LG noted no one should feel threatened. It is great to have the consensus. The initiative should move forward and be successful. A problem to consider for the future would be to think about in what ways Indiana and the Indiana Grown program can help reduce the problem of food deserts in the future. That has been something discussed during this legislative session, and is probably going to remain as a topic of discussion. Go forth, be successful, but keep this in mind as a future task to consider.

Business portion of the Commission meeting:

- Ted was asked about the rumblings from Big Ag – he did not know any concerns were out there. He is presuming it is not huge portion of the industry because it has not been noted prior to this point, but a number of requests have been put forth to the General Assembly on the budget, so he is presuming some of the worry/concern may be from limited financial resources in the budget.
- Pete – as of just a few months ago, ISDA had their hands tied somewhat. Things are now moving forward and looking well. Job now needs to include developing a scope of work for the communication/marketing plans.
- Margaret, Cheryl, and Chris will provide input to the brochure. Be careful on photo inclusion.
- Who can help with scope of work for PR/marketing? Margaret, Chris

- Backburner items would be food show(s)
- In some cases, kiosk design would be coming from ISDA, not the retailer. But the kiosks are not necessarily the same in all retail locations.
- Ted suggesting if we have only current funds available from ISDA – what is our plan? If we get more money, what can we do then? Currently, we expect to be able to allocate \$250K to the initiative.
- Need to create unveiling and tactics to put it out there. Margaret, Ted, David, and Ben will discuss further. Press conference, announcement with retailers, etc.
- In the current budget, we have allocated money to certain areas. When “new” expenditures arise, how do we account for them? We hope to continue to negotiate those expenditures to use the money in the best way possible.
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