

Meeting Minutes
Emergency Response to COVID-19
May 15 @ 3pm

Chat Box notes in Italics

Identify Needs and Food Pantry:

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- Sid Wainer received a grant from USDA to provide produce boxes
 - o Partnered with Marion Institute and United Way to distribute

Rob Shaheen (New Bedford Food Service Department):

- Food Service has put out 125,000 meals at sites to date
- Will be putting out produce boxes from 2 sites
 - o About 750 boxes per week
- May rent a facility in a short term for refrigeration and storage room
- Working on a RFP with Boston Public Schools on a bid for local foods sourcing for vegetables
 - o Working with a produce specialist to put together procurement bid
 - o Should be able to pass on an itemized list for items that the Food Service will be looking to.
- Working on updating the infrastructure at the High School to work as a secondary 'central' kitchen.
 - o Still uncertainty about what will happen in the fall at schools

00:44:55 Liz Wiley: I will work with Holly to get the info on who has reported that they are interested in more space and will organize a follow up meeting with Rob and all. If you are interested in being involved in this conversation PM me and I will add you to the list.

Carol Cordeiro (Damien's Pantry):

- Reopened on Thursday
 - o Starting to work with Wareham COA which is doing home deliveries
 - o Supplementing perishables

Pam Kuechler (PACE):

- Boxing operation at King Street is moving well
 - o Did 4 popups and at a point to put together a schedule to become consistent
- Helped housing authority for a drop off to emergency needs for elders (Tripp Towers)
- Looking at refrigeration and helping to coordinate with Greater Boston Food Bank
- Working with Dee at Elliot Farm on USDA grant for food resources that should go through the fall
 - o PACE is getting product from Dee's

Kim Ferreira (Coastal Foodshed):

- Continuing to see increases with delivery and pickup
- Waiting to hear back from Health Department on Farmers Market
 - o No city permitted events until Labor Day
 - o But Markets should be considered a food market

Liz W: Can the Food Policy Council help?

- Right now CFS is waiting for connections to come together

Liz:

- Last couple of weeks we have gotten a good number of returns from the Food Pantry Survey – up to 24 responses
- This survey could also be for Food Emergency - such as restaurant food delivery service **(ALL SUPPLEMENTARY FOOD PROVIDERS SHOULD FILL OUT OUTSIDE OF INSTITUTIONS)**
 - If you were or are now in the business of supplementary food provider please fill out
 - Deadline is next Friday

Holly Fowler (Food Systems Consultant):

- This is a different approach than in past Food System Assessments
 - This first survey has spanned several groups, and shows the responsiveness and resilience in the area
 - We are talking in the tens of thousands of people in need in the supplementary service
 - As well as timeline expected for this to last
 - We are assessing the gaps in timing and schedule to prepare for the future
- A question was, what would help you run your organization or service better?
 - Storage space for refrigerated or storage space
 - If there was a Food hub – do we need a place to aggregate, process food, etc.?
 - There is not a lot of response outside of storage needs
 - Storage needs long or short term
 - Aggregated purchasing has not increased
 - Still looking to see if there is excess capacity

00:48:05 Pam Kuechler: *I don't know know if it would be helpful but we could potentially help you with consumers through our FB (Food bank and/or Facebook) folks*

00:50:06 Sarah Cogswell: *I can put a physical survey at the Meatworks retail store.*

00:50:29 KIMBERLY Hoy: *Our COA is checking in with seniors pretty often. We could possibly add your questions to their conversations*

Rob S:

- In the future there could be options for the Central Commissary Kitchen for both storage and potentially processing and cooking space
 - Currently hoping to be in a temporary space in July 2020

Holly Fowler (Food Systems Consultant):

- If there is one space (such as the Food Service Kitchen) to serve multiple purposes it should be explored
- There are 11 organizations interested in refrigeration or storage space

*Message Liz Wiley if you are interested in potential refrigeration or freezer space

- Some of the next steps will be:
 - o The farmer survey (more aligned with the Food Hub Feasibility Survey)
 - Needs to be vetted by a couple of farmers
 - Will be going out
 - o We will be doing a buyer survey
 - o Need to talk with organizations about other services they provide i.e. education, technical assistance
 - o Looking at trends of how people access food

*What ways can we reach the general consumer to accompany publicly available data? – Since we will not be able to hold focus groups in the situation

- Some ideas: Social Media, Online Youth group
 - Is there a way to reach seniors?
- Looking to push the surveys to be done in July or August

Peter Muise:

- A lot of the data is historic, but we are in unprecedented times in Covid and un/underemployment (could reach 20-25%, not including those not eligible)
 - o This could last 16-24 months in need for Food Security help
 - Affecting hospitality, lower wage workers
 - o Would hate to see an underestimate in numbers with this potential need
- Refrigeration and freezer space is available at the Maritime terminals
 - o \$25 / pallet for a month
- Spending money product or produce rather than capital seems right to me
- What if the need doubles, how will we respond?
- What potential is out there, in which we can gain support from others, such as the Regeneration Committee?

00:55:34 *Michael McCarthy: To Peter's point on data: The Public Policy Center is working on a profile of workers, based on occupations to try and understand the size of the impact to Southcoast's labor force. We're limited to what we can analyze but I welcome any suggestions or input:*

Michael.mccarthy@umassd.edu 00:55:53 *Michael McCarthy: sorry *based on occupation codes*

00:57:13 *Holly Fowler: The food economy is a big piece of the food system assessment and that needs to include jobs in food service, wages, etc.*

Liz:

- Also adding the need of adding healthier foods to the distribution of those in need
 - o What would it take to bring local food into the regional supply chain?
 - o How to incentive local farmers to produce needs

00:59:17 Maura Ramsey: MPHA has a statewide Taskforce on COVID-19 and equity with a petition going around now about this

01:03:37 Holly Fowler: I've been studying a number of state plans on risks to the economy and none of them list pandemic.

Holly:

- For buying survey -- do you know of a community of potential buyers for local foods

Pamela (Womens Center):

- If there were a Co-Op style of buying potential, we would purchase from it
 - o I.e. with a guaranteed monthly purchasing agreement
 - o Would be able to pay for it with a guaranteed purchase
- There was not much pre-planning for a situation like this at the State level

Sarah Cogswell (Livestock Institute):

- Fascinated by the farmers box program, how does this go for the distributors here?
 - o Livestock Institute product is not currently applicable
 - o There is high quality meat product available at a reasonable price

Liz:

- Do we have a plan?
 - o We do, but does it need to move faster?
- We have responded with Food Pantries expanding and supplemental programs
 - o Now moving towards Farm Boxes
- What about July – August?
 - o Can this be used to pay local farmers to extend to Food Security needs?
- How can we improve the health of people with our supplemental services?
 - o Those most susceptible are those with Chronic disease influenced by processed low quality foods
- We need the data from the Food Assessment in order to plan a quality response for the future

*Is Friday at 3pm still a good time?

- Should we change time or day (Tuesday or Wednesday?)
- Should we move to every other week?

ADDENDUM: WEEKLY MEETING LOG-IN INFORMATION

Topic: Southcoast Food Policy Council COVID - Response Effort

Time: Apr 3, 2020 03:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Every week on Fri, until May 29, 2020, 9 occurrence(s)

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