

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Emergency Response to COVID-19**  
**May 22 @ 3pm**

*Chat Box notes in Italics*

**Liz W (Marion Institute):**

- After next week, would meeting on Thursday at 9am work?
  - o Would every other week meetings work?
- 10,000 boxes of vegetables will be sent out over the next 5 weeks
- Extending Cooks for Community for 2 further weeks

**Josh Smith (My Brother's Keeper):**

- Doing some emergency bed deliveries, but shifted furniture assistance to food
- Working in Brockton and Easton, and scaled up in Dartmouth
  - o Delivering 5 days per week
  - o Families in need can call the Brothers keeper helpline
    - #?
  - o Providing assistance in Westport, Dartmouth, Fall River, and New Bedford

**Carol Cordeiro (Damien's Pantry):**

- Just starting to get going
- Still supporting Marion COA, but this program will discontinue at the end of the month
  - o Clients can come to the pantry
- Still supporting Wareham COA

**Pam Kuechler (PACE):**

- USDA Food from GBFB is not coming
- Doing a program for (McKenney Vento -any child deemed homeless) families that are deemed homeless to get families boxes of food
- Also doing bags for homeless in Morse Twist Drill areas (south end)

**Meghan Rogers (United Way FR):**

- Fifth weeks of Feed Fall River program
  - o 180 families
  - o Groceries, soup from Blount
- Hoping to increase to 200 families including USDA families

**Rob Shaheen:**

- Continuing the summer program through the parks (June 22) at nine sites
- USDA produce boxes will also be available (750/week) distributed on Fridays
- Other districts are trying to figure out summer programs with funding losses from COVID)

**Liz W:**

- About 50 of the Vegetable boxes are being distribute to Wareham

**Sarah Cogswell:**

- What is happening with the Boston Food Bank Issues?

**Pam K:**

- The USDA foods did not deploy to New England in quantities that were expected

**Kimberly Hoy:**

- They are not getting about 20% of the food they ordered
  - o With greatly increased demand

**Laura (New Life) / Carol Cordeiro:**

- There were issues with pick up from GB Food Bank as well
- It is difficult to get dock time (**one of the big problems**) at the food bank, they have changed their rules in the situation.
  - o Causes the distribution to be unstable.
  - o Members of the food bank have been trying to get dock time for months
- If needed, people should find Food Bank members in their city/area to get access to food bank resources

00:32:40 *Holly Fowler: When orgs go for a delivery to GBFB, is it always a full truck load and what size truck? This is not a question we anticipated when we did the survey, but is clearly part of a challenging situation now.*

00:35:15 *Joshua Amaral: Holly, I think it varies each time. I believe pantries can place an order and pick it up there and can get the quantity they need (full truck or less). At PACE we've been sending a 53' trailer to get loaded up on Saturdays but it's not always totally full based on our needs and their supply.*

00:36:27 *Josh Smith: No, you do not need to fill a full truck (and I don't think there is a minimum amount you have to order). The maximum order is 18,000 lbs. They want the truck floor height to be 48" to line up with their docks.*

**Wendy Garf-Lipp:**

- The problem is that the system is overloaded
- What would happen if this food bank falls apart?
- Making a food bank here does not solve the problem
  - o It's taking the same issues

**Liz W:**

- From the survey done one question was: interest in aggregate / bulk purchasing?
  - o We had a meeting with interested pantries to talk about needs and how this would be done
  - o Quantities, ability to spend?

- Outcomes:
  - o Items most needed were dry goods, rice, beans, cereal, kid friendly snacks, etc.
  - o For United Way to start, how much do you need, how much are you willing to spend, how often?
  - o If they are dry goods, we may be able to hold items in PACE storage space

**Desa:**

- Thinking forward towards the winter, we are specifically growing dry beans
  - o Dry beans can be planted now if there are farms that are interested
  - o If there was a guarantee to buy them, would farmers be interested?

**Liz:**

- What we are aiming to do is identify what our region needs are and capacity that a regional food center could supply?
  - o So that in future events we would have more resilience when issues could happen?

**Sarah Cogswell:**

- Are there mechanisms in place for when farmers have extra food

**Victoria Grasele:**

- The hunger commission will pick up any extra food that farmers may have

**Liz:**

- Could we develop a gleaner network to collect the extra food?

00:57:29 *Holly Fowler: Here is farmer/producer survey link:*  
<https://bit.ly/SoutheasternMA-FoodHubFarmerSurvey>

**Holly Fowler:**

- We never asked the question: How to people go to the food bank to pick up the food?
  - o Those organizations who do not use the GBFB, many used restaurants, which can be an issue.
  - o What does the alternative look like to the dock time issue at GBFB
  - o We are moving to the analysis parts of the Supplemental Food provider survey
- Coastal Foodshed has put out the farmer survey
- What stands out so far, 183 acres total in production, 129 additional acres available
  - o Mostly capacity would be needed to put this into production
  - o These acres could be put into production for things like the dry beans
- Overwhelmingly the need for delivery is the largest issue
  - o Meat processing also stands out
- There is interest for the need for a Food Hub
  - o A mixed interest from seasonal to year-round



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**SOUTHCOAST FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

- 00:58:32 Holly Fowler: *Things mentioned by producers (n=10) to grow more: more capacity and time*
- 00:58:37 Holly Fowler: *land tenure*
- 00:58:41 Holly Fowler: *market*
- 00:58:49 Holly Fowler: *infrastructure and spending capital*
- 00:59:52 Holly Fowler: *Sarah: I think we would need to tease out some of it more (e.g. water systems, infrastructure).*

**Karen Schwalbe (SEMAP):**

- How do we make sure that farmers get and fill out the survey?
  - o 10% hit right now
  - o Can this be a social media campaign?
- SEMAP can offer an incentive to fill it out
- Karen needs info for who filled it out to reach out to individual farmers

**Liz:**

- We have all got to take the lead to reach out to our farmers and ask them to fill out the survey

**Bill Napolitano:**

- Is this something that we could send out to the Agriculture Commissions?

**Holly Fowler:**

- Looking at the first week of the month from supplemental food providers seem to be the heaviest
  - o This is also when clients have their benefit available to them

**Liz W:**

- This came up yesterday with the idea of best practices for food pantries and streamlining some of the practices and buying so there is a more coordinated effort throughout the month.

**Pam/Victoria:**

- Have been trying to organize the logistic between the food bank
  - o Part of the problem is the new places starting that we do not know of
  - o Part of the problem is having good data

**Liz:**

- The food finder app is web based, and at a Beta Testing phase (ready for people to trial)