

Meeting Minutes
Emergency Response to COVID-19
May 29 @ 3pm

Chat Box notes in Italics

***Next week's meeting will be shifting to Thursday at 9am. New zoom link will be provided in the follow up email.**

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- Rob from Food Service had a hard time getting rid of the USDA vegetable boxes
- Carl Alves was able to distribute well over 100 boxes from the Food Service Department at PAACA's pop up

Victoria Grasela:

- There is great feedback from the boxes

Stacie Hallal: NB Food pantry

- We have not had a problem getting food
- We've had a problem getting masks
 - o Hunger Commission has given us some – can provide more if needed

Michelle Hantman (United Way, GB):

- Order for dry goods from a different distributor than GBFB
 - o Pace, Northstar and PAACA was interested in bulk purchasing
 - o Still a couple of weeks out to have enough people for a meaningful purchase. If you are interested in participating in this contact Michelle directly via email.

00:15:37 Michelle Hantman: mhantman@unitedwayofgnb.org

Michelle Hantman (United Way, GB):

- For organizations that received state funding through the Community Fdn, funds will have to be spent quickly
 - o Looking to have a sidebar conversation with other food vendors
- Regarding bulk-buying, depending on how large this order is, and how many organizations there are, there will be a delivery aggregation and distribution logistics that will have to be worked out.

Liz:

- Is there a possibility to buy from local farms that have been hit hard with the loss of restaurant purchasing?
- Use funding to buy from farmers and produce could be distributed through the Hunger Commission?
- This could be pilot version of what would happen with aggregation of a food hub type establishment

Karen Schwalbe (SEMAP):

- I can send a call out to farmers if there is a point person, or SEMAP can be a point person

Desa:

- Could any of these funds be able to use to pay farmers to grow bumper crops such as black beans?
- RTB can now make 2lbs blocks of mozzarella from the 10-20lbs packs from Shy Brother's farm

Michelle:

- I don't think this is how they are thinking, but maybe there is a loophole to have something like this done. They haven't clearly spelled out the parameters
- We would need to work out details of demands from who would like to participate

Stephanie Perks (Coastal Foodshed):

- Update on Farmer Survey:
 - o Have received about 20 surveys, we have a goal of 50
 - It's a short 5-10 minute survey
 - o Will most likely extend deadline date past June 5th
 - o This is for farmers, not food producers, or buyers
 - These will be coming

Liz:

- We have a graphic re: farmer survey that you can send out to your networks, let me know if you want it to use in your social media posts
- We have completed the Supplemental Food provider survey
- What will happen next is the buyer (demand side of the food hub) survey
- Each survey is meant to target a particular stakeholder group
- Sid Wainer has put in another bid for USDA boxes for July and August. Will hear back at the beginning of June.

John Vasconcellos:

- Hopefully if you are a nonprofit you have registered for our funding database!
- They are across all of the basic needs
 - o The challenge is that the money has to be spend quickly and it is a direct response to COVID-19

Liz:

- Are we able to direct funds to farmers that are no longer selling to restaurants or farmers markets?

John:

- We can engage with a nonprofit to take the funds and purchase local foods (indifferent to MA COVID response) but attractive to the Community Foundation
- There is COVID response funds that need to be spent quickly
- You have until 9am on Wednesday to put an application

Maurice Cyr (BCC):

- Could the funds be used to purchase CSA's for families in need that can be distributed throughout the summer?

John:

- We need to be able to report back to MA-Covid to say the need was achieved in the next 2 to 6 weeks.
- Maybe the first 6 weeks of the CSA

Karen/Liz:

- Many of the CSA farmers are at capacity

Desa:

- There are a couple of famers (Taunton farmer) that could use more CSA customers
- The bean situation was brought up to address the potential of Covid returning in the fall
 - o What could farmers do to prevent this into the future

John:

- The tension that we have around the MA-Covid is the restrictive nature of the funding
- We are trying to come up with a State wide model to support local nonprofits through a 3, 6, 8-month recovery from Covid.
- Regardless of what will happen in the fall, how can we frame it to meet needs in the next month or two?

Liz:

- This is also about pushing the envelope to build a more sustainable food system into the future and how to lay a foundation that can be built upon

Wendy Garff-Lipp:

- We talk about if this pandemic comes back, but we will also have the impact of increased unemployment, and increased need for supplemental food services

Maura Ramsey:

- We have started some conversation about state funding about medium- and long-term response to Covid issues

Stephanie Perks:

- We are starting to see excess produce, and could distribute with pickup help

00:44:01 *Stephanie Perks: Coastal Foodshed can work with our wholesale farmers to identify produce that can be purchased for food pantries. We did a small scale of this with Southcoast Health and United Ways' Hunger Commission last year. We would just need assistance with picking it up.*

00:45:20 *Stacie Hallal: if I know ahead of time I have an 8 Pallet truck*

00:46:38 *Pam Kuechler: We are also able to help with transportation if we have availability*

Pam:

- PACE could help with pick up