

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Emergency Response to COVID-19**  
**June 11 @ 9am**

*Chat Box notes in Italics*

**Liz W (Marion Institute):**

- We are still trialing this new time for meeting (Thursdays at 9am)
- How would be meeting on Mondays at 10am work for everyone
  - o Could allow us to have more impact on emergency food response needs
  - o Please let Liz know how if this would work for you.
- The anticipated funding from the state has been announced
  - o This is an infrastructure grant

00:19:51 Liz Wiley: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jCTekWDtLVmSHjX-tgBuLda-XUAVaX-1>

**Info on Grant--**

**Holly Fowler (Northbound Ventures – Food System Consultant):**

- This is mainly about capital with a little bit of flexibility
- It is first come first serve but open until September
- Better to be coordinated throughout region to make complimented assets throughout the region
  - o Should be talking to networks beyond the Southcoast as well
  - o These could be partners as well
- ‘Think beyond the truck’
- Limited to \$500,000
  - o Who could own different pieces of this?
- 3-tier cycle with different reviews for different amounts
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**Karen Schwalbe (SEMAP):**

- 3-tier cycle with different reviews for different amounts
  - o With different deadlines
- Will be stages of grant
- There is no labor and no staff time for this grant
- It will allow Technical Assistance on new equipment
- Money from grant will need to be spent by June 30, 2021
- It’s being reviewed by Environmental Affairs rather than the Department of Ag. (higher level of review)
  
- Department of Transitional Assistance has a program for New Farmers in the HIP program – to get a HIP terminal
  - o HIP program provides matching funds for fresh local vegetables for those on SNAP
  - o This is focused on places where there is not HIP already
  
- Healthy Futures Farm is looking to do a farmer’s market in Fall River

00:20:00 Karen Schwalbe: <https://www.mass.gov/healthy-incentives-program-hip-notice-of-opportunity-noo>

**Chelsie Stephenson (Health First):**

- New farmers market was promoted since Monday
  - o Was a good start for the first farmer market
- We are going to change the time from 2-5 to 2-4pm

00:30:27 *chelsie stephenson: Every Wednesday 2-4 Healthfirst Family Care Center parking lot near Advanced Auto Parts*

00:32:23 *chelsie stephenson: Every Friday date to be announced Cardinal Medeiros Towers 2-5. May change to 2-4 . Will keep all updated*

00:35:58 *chelsie stephenson: locations all Fall River*

**Karen (SEMAP):**

- Healthy Futures Farm is looking to do a farmer's market in Fall River

**Liz W:**

- Many who use SNAP don't know about HIP
- Advocacy is needed to our legislatures about continuing HIP Funding

**Wendy Garf-Lipp:**

- There is a barrier in the Kennedy Park farmers market with the control by

**Stephanie Perks (Coastal Foodshed):**

- In New Bedford all Farmers markets will be open starting June 29<sup>th</sup>
- We will operate virtually until then
- People are able to pre-order with SNAP for pickup only
- Open today from 12-5 for mobile farm stand
  - o Figuring out what mobile farm stand will look like this summer
- We have two job postings out!
- We have the potential to go into Fall River with more staff capacity
- We could potentially go to Wareham
  
- Westport Farmers Market is opening this weekend

**Desa (Round the Bend):**

- The Wainer Family Farm are trying to sell box trucks that are on their property

**Food Pantry Update--**

**Pam Kuechler (PACE):**

- We are in a space right now where things are moving along
- We have gotten donations from public, and of pre-made meals that we are putting out this week

**Michael Jung (Salvation Army):**

- Serving about 300 meals per week, along with Food boxes, along with about 65 meals per week

**Rob Shaheen (NB Food Service Department):**

- Food box distribution has been sporadic
  - o We were able to send extra boxes to PAACA
- If you are able to get to the locations, we can give you boxes to
  - o Contact me through email
- Have not heard if the veggie box program has been extended past June
- Closing on 180,000 meals
  - o We have seen demand go down in the past couple of weeks

00:41:59 *Rob Shaheen: Just a note that every student in the NBPS got a card*

00:42:08 *Holly Fowler: Interesting*

00:43:15 *Holly Fowler: Can it be spent on anything?*

00:43:39 *Kimberly Hoy: I also understand that For PEBT cards also the card will be reloaded one more time. So clients need to Keep their card.*

00:44:29 *Karen Schwalbe: P-EBT cards cannot, unfortunately, be used to for HIP incentives.*

**Holly F:**

- Is demand at food pantries steady, increasing, or decreasing?

**Pam (PACE):**

- Steady, maybe with a slight decline after SNAP benefits
- We are keeping this steady, but preparing for when extra SNAP benefits run out in July

**Liz:**

- Re: extra SNAP benefits; Any of the school districts that have free or reduced lunch, students received an pre-paid EBT card through SNAP benefits
- Every student in New Bedford, Fall River, and Wareham got one of these cards

**Wendy:**

- This was a very poor send out
- It looked like junk mail that people would send out
- There has been information promoted through our programs, and through schools to recognize that this is 'real money' that people are getting
- If people want to donate it, they have to activate it, and could buy a gift card with it
- Or they could go shopping and select from a list and donate to the boxes at the grocery store
- OR they could make a monetary donation and use the card

**John Little (Somerset):**

- We have been pretty steady in terms of demand
- There was a decline in March with seniors afraid to come out

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

- Slight increase, it seems like people are not afraid to come out

**Liz:**

- Wareham is also getting food boxes through YMCA and Good Shepard

**Liz:**

- We had a call on the bulk buying opportunity
  - o If anyone is interested – this is a idea for spending funds through a bulk purchasing order through hunger commission for rice, beans, cereal, kid friendly snacks, tuna fish and peanut butter, etc.

**Victoria Grasela (UWGNB):**

- As far as I know this should be happening soon (potentially by end of June)

00:52:45 *Victoria Grasela: Michelle said yes, we want to order by the end of next week and food will be delivered the last week in June.*

**Holly Fowler:**

\*Add from Chat update from Surveys

- Maybe we could have a 'thank you' in an upcoming newsletter
- One the Farmer/producer we have 45 responses
  - o Thanks to Dan King for doubling our responses!
- The next survey for consumer responses is drafted and being reviewed

**Liz:**

- For new participants - this is an update to the Southeastern MA Food System Assessment that is helpful to all for assessing needs, gaps, etc.
  - o If anyone is interested in reviewing the consumer survey let me know and I can send it to you