

Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2020 @ 9am

Chat Box Notes are in Italics.

Attendance: 24

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- Last week we had the Food is Medicine group with us; everyone should have links from that group
- They are interested in seeing if we as a Food Policy Council want to join their coalition
- We heard that Carol Cordeiro who runs Damien's Pantry is retiring

Victoria Grasela (United Way of GNB):

- This was the last week we were able to get food boxes from Costas
- We sent a letter to our congressman explaining the help these boxes made
- We still have tons of soup, so let me know if you're interested

00:13:45 Victoria Grasela (United Way of GNB): *vgrasela@unitedwayofgnb.org*

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- Some may not know about the soup. This is coming from Blount Foods – anybody that's running a food pantry or program, reach out to Victoria to get drop-offs of it

Victoria Grasela (United Way of GNB):

- We typically get 4 pallets every Wednesday (sometimes frozen, sometimes fresh), but I also have additional pallets in storage
 - o It's all frozen in storage

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- I wanted to ask about the food boxes, they came in for relief - are pantries now dependent on them?

Pam Kuechler (PACE):

- We didn't become dependent on them for all of our supply, but they did make distribution easier
- We were able to give clients additional items accompanying the boxes
- The boxes provided a level of convenience and a well-rounded variety of supplies

Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River):

- Although our distribution was not through food pantries, the boxes were able to get fresh fruit and veggies to people that would have probably relied more on packaged and processed foods
- Many of these families would not go to the food pantry, but benefitted from the boxes

Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River):

- As people are looking for bags, bulk buying could save a lot for price

Pam (PACE):

- We are looking for the types of bags that will work

Desa VanLaarhoven (Round the Bend Farm):

- We purchased the Chico bags for the Manifest Love project. They give 100 free to every non-profit. They can hold 25lbs – 40lbs
- We were able to get the bags back because we have the same distributors who would take back that bags
- We washed them, and they hold up well
- I think they were about \$2 / bag

00:15:44 *Desa VanLaarhoven: Here is the Chico bag: <https://chicobag.com/collections/shopping-bags/products/original> - again we did get a discount which I believe brought them down to \$2 and 100 free. Again I know super expensive but they have been amazing!*

Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River):

- We had some good canvas bags, but they were never returned, and the extra time of laundering them
- One time we did get mismatched bags that were cheaper

00:16:50 *Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River): "Kristen" <Kristen@dmgpromo.net>*

Victoria Grasela (United Way of GNB):

- We use the reusable totes at our market, and have had some luck with people returning them

00:25:01 *Jackie Millar: I have worked with UMASS Extension-SNAP Ed with our mobile farmers markets and they donated very large reusable bags. Let me to check to see if they have bags available to donate to this group.*

00:26:27 *Liz Wiley: That would be great Jackie - thanks for looking into it*

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- To think about the environmental foot print, if you can get 100 free bags, I'm wondering if people would buy them for 50 cents and return with them

Dave Perry (Fall River Food Pantry):

- Some of our clients are not even able to purchase bags at that price

00:27:54 *Sarah Labossiere (Mass in Motion): Back in the summer, United Way shared a link for heavy duty gusseted plastic bags used for take-out. They said they were pennies, and much more affordable than reusable cloth shopping bags. Here is the link:*

<https://www.uline.com/Product/Detail/S-9702/Take-Out-Bags/Gusseted-Take-Out-Bags-15-Mil-24-x-20-x-11-White>

00:28:07 Patricia Geggatt-Midurski: *Vibra Hospital has canvas bags to donate if anyone is interested.*

Scott Stubbs (United Outreach - Dartmouth):

- We haven't missed a beat in Dartmouth, we are still operating out of the church, Pam has helped us get food to deliver
 - o We supplement what we can buy with what we can get from PACE
- We are delivering to a lot of the elderly facilities
- We are doing a grab and go at Smith Mills church (last week about 120 cars)
 - o Tuesdays from 5-7:30
 - o Every week we are seeing an increase
 - o We have become more efficient with getting food to those who need it more
- We were able to rent a truck and get some storage for our delivery services

00:29:35 Patricia Geggatt-Midurski: *Scott, are you getting requests to deliver to folks with covid who are in isolation and quarantine?*

Ashley Brister (Sharing the Harvest Farm):

- We have an abundance of butternut squash, and our usual outlet is not sure if they'll need all of it
- The hunger commission has a need for it, in the past we have set aside percentages for organizations

Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River):

- Right now in Fall River, we are under discussion about how we can thanksgiving meals to clients
- We are not able to do the cooking at BCC
 - o If vocational schools are able to do the cooking, then we would love to take it

Scott Stubbs (United Outreach - Dartmouth):

- If the Family of Christ Church is not going to use our commercial kitchen, it can be open for use

Victoria Grasela (United Way of GNB):

- We are still planning on doing our Thanksgiving meals
 - o Our numbers and need have gone up from 1000 to 1600

Ashley Brister (Sharing the Harvest Farm):

- I have an update from Robyn from YMCA
- She wanted to let everyone know, that they will be starting distribution in November in New Bedford, Swansea and Wareham
- From the Fall River meeting last Tuesday
- We had Brittney from DTA on the meeting
- There are stats that I will try to add to the chat
 - o She went over PEBT: people are getting it, and if you don't have EBT already they need to put their ID number (from schools) and case number they can get from the website by putting in the ID number.



00:40:53 Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River): *Reimbursement for Missed School Lunches in September: All FRPS students will receive this benefit even if they do not qualify for EBT/SNAP*

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- We can try to spread the word about this through New Bedford Food Service

Sarah Labossiere (Mass in Motion):

- I will email a summary of the notes from this meeting

Desa VanLaarhoven (Round the Bend Farm):

- I went and visited Dave Perry's site last week with our Terra Corps members, it was a really nice experience to see how he was working that
- It was great as part of the farming community to see the other site

Sarah Labossiere (Mass in Motion):

- Karen and I exchanges some emails about not focusing on the winter markets and trying to get more information out on HIP and markets for the 20-21 season
 - o We don't yet have a farmer interested, so it's still on the table

Stephanie Perks (Coastal Foodshed):

- We are still looking for a space for our Winter Market
 - o One option is the Strand Theater on Acushnet Ave, but we are not sure it will work
 - o The YMCA may be an option until January
 - o If anyone knows of any spaces (even outside of New Bedford) we are looking
- We are looking for partners for market pickups or delivery to specific groups of people in the region
 - o HIP benefits will be available for this all winter

Scott Stubbs (United Outreach - Dartmouth):

- We are close to the mall, but we do have a good size hall that could be available

00:42:14 Scott Stubbs (United Outreach - Dartmouth): *Dartmouth United Outreach (Smith Mills Church) 11 Anderson Way, Dartmouth, Ma 02747 . My contact info is Scott Stubbs, 508-269-3654, sesses2100@gmail.com*

Peter Muise (First Citizens' Federal Credit Union):

- How much space do you need, and is parking needed?

Stephanie Perks (Coastal Foodshed):

- We will have about 12 vendors
- Parking is always an issue
- I will get back to you on the square footage needed
- We are looking to do it on a Friday



Peter Muise (First Citizens' Federal Credit Union):

- Give Rick Kidder a call at the Chamber of New Bedford. There are a lot of restaurants that may be closing for the winter
- With the volumes of customers, they are having a hard time breaking even

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- I've been working closely with Steve Silverstein, maybe they could use the deck of the Black Whale

Liz W (Marion Institute):

- There was a national food security call last week, it was a great call
- I will provide the link to you – I highly recommend watching it!
- Karen Washington spoke, and she was amazing

More on P-EBT from Wendy Garf-Lipp (United Neighbors of Fall River):

Reimbursement for Missed School Lunches in September

All FRPS students will receive this benefit even if they do not qualify for EBT/SNAP

Eligible students who receive DTA benefits will receive their P-EBT benefits on their existing EBT card.

Eligible students who do not receive DTA benefits, but were mailed a P-EBT card in the past, will receive their P-EBT benefits on their existing P-EBT card. Families who lost their P-EBT card can request a new one at DTAConnect.com/pebt starting October 1.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2020

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Federal Approval for September Pandemic EBT

Over 470,000 students will receive P-EBT benefits starting September 30, 2020

BOSTON— The Baker-Polito Administration announced today that it received federal approval to issue additional Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT, benefits in September to promote increased food security for families who participate in the United States Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program (NSLP).