

**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 4, 2021 @ 9am**

*Chat Box Notes are in Italics.*

**Attendance: 27**

**Victoria Grasela (United Way of Greater New Bedford):**

- Update on USDA Boxes:
  - o We haven't heard back from Produce Alliance
  - o New Bedford Police Dept. is working to get us refrigerated trucks so that we can distribute boxes
  - o We'll get 1,000 boxes a week
  - o People need to preregister for boxes and pick them up
  - o This round is coming from the Cape Cod Military Support Foundation
  - o It is tough to for programs to get boxes as they're coming in on Saturdays
  - o Pick-ups are on Saturdays from 10 – 2 at New Life Church in the South End
  - o Starts next Saturday – goes thru March 6
  - o I will drop link in chat for people to register
  - o You do not need to be a New Bedford resident
  - o You can pick up multiple boxes for others
  - o Military Foundation is asking for names and addresses, which we don't endorse and will ask for them to reconsider

**Kim Smith (United Way of Greater Fall River):**

- The same opportunity came to Fall River through rotary clubs
  - o Fall River declined the opportunity
    - the Durfee school is already distributing 1,000 and there were 200 extra boxes last week
    - we don't want to have boxes unclaimed

00:07:11 Kim Smith: <https://mmsfi.org/>

**Ashley Brister (Sharing the Harvest):**

- Our walk in could perhaps stores some boxes

00:08:11 Liz Wiley: *Saturday 10-2 at New Life Church*

00:10:25 Christine Sullivan: *can an organization pick up multiple boxes for clients?*

00:10:56 Victoria Grasela: *Yes, but you'd still have to provide their information*

00:11:15 Ashley Brister: *This time of year, the walk in at Sharing the Harvest is not being used. how much sq footage would be needed?*

00:11:34 Liz Wiley: *Good Idea Ashley*

00:12:10 Pam Kuechler: *we may be able to help with our truck*

00:12:14 Victoria Grasela: *I'm not sure Ashley, it would depend on how many boxes would be unclaimed. With the registration, we should have a better idea on this later this week*

00:12:20 Victoria Grasela: <https://mmsfi.org/food4vets-copy/>

00:12:31 Christine Sullivan: *is there a deadline for this?*

00:12:47 Victoria Grasela: *Not this Saturday - Feb 13<sup>th</sup>*

00:18:41 Ashley Brister: *My guess is that we could probably hold 300?*

00:19:05 Victoria Grasela: *Ashley, how many pallets can you hold?*

00:20:44 Ashley Brister: *So the door is not wide enough for pallets. They would have to be unloaded. I can take some measurements to get exact capacity.*

**Liz Wiley (Marion Institute):**

- We could provide volunteers to help on Saturdays
- Pam and other food pantries, could you go and get boxes on a Saturday?

**Pam Kuechler (PACE):**

- Yes, we can do pick-ups on Saturdays, we could store a month's worth of boxes
- We can revisit idea of renting a truck and having it available for those Saturday pick-ups
- We could put Sergeant Ortega in touch with people we worked with last summer

**Kim Smith (United Way of Greater Fall River):**

- Does anyone have storage in the fish houses?

**Pam Kuechler (PACE):**

- We do have storage in the maritime but they don't have a lot of extra space

**Dave Perry (Greater Fall River Food Pantry):**

- I work with Durfee High School, I pull in 5 pallets every Wednesday
- Stop & Shop might have a refrigerated truck we can use

**Dave Perry (Greater Fall River Food Pantry):**

- There was a USDA law that was passed last October citing that only proof of residence can be requested and it doesn't need to be a legal document
  - o You also can't ask for a picture ID

**Victoria Grasela (United Way of Greater New Bedford):**

- I'll go back to the Military Foundation and let them know about the USDA law and see if they'll waive it

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

- It could be that the Military can bypass the laws since they're able to do that in general

*00:25:48 Christine Sullivan: I am on the registrations site and they are asking for military status, number of household and anyone over 60 years*

**Christine Sullivan (Coastline Elderly):**

- Also since people need to register with email, they're automatically preventing those without an email address from getting the boxes

**Liz Wiley (Marion Institute):**

- Tori, would you please communicate to Sergeant Ortega that this is perpetuating some of the problems we're trying dismantle with equity and access

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

- This goes back to my point about advocacy, and needing a person dedicated to speaking for us so that we ask for what we deserve vs be happy with the little we get

*00:33:15 claudia arsenio: We are still shuffling things around too much to be able to take advantage of the USDA boxes. Still no driver, no storage. I do get them at times from the Fall River School Department when we are in a pinch, like next week when we do not get our Monday delivery because of the Holiday. The Y is changing its day and location for New Bedford markets and of course it is now on Saturday, so our truck is in use. Sorry not more help!*

*00:33:22 Sarah Labossiere: Pat Baker at Mass Law Reform Institute: pbaker@mlri.org Victoria Negus: vnegus@mlri.org MLRI is really on top of all the legal aspects and ask to be informed when service providers see issues*

*00:35:21 Josh Smith-My Brother's Keeper: My Brother's Keeper is also going to have to opt out on the USDA box opportunity due to the information sharing requirement*

*00:35:52 Sarah Labossiere: Above is the letter from July. I will look for the info that came out this fall*

*00:37:48 Wendy Garf-Lipp: <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-issues-advisory-to-support-food-pantries-and-fight-food-insecurity>*

*00:39:30 Sarah Labossiere: This might be what Wendy just read. No date on it*

*00:40:12 Sarah Labossiere: I downloaded that letter December 12, I think that's the time it came out again*

**Liz Wiley (Marion Institute):**

- Tori and I have been working have gotten Fish Chowder and Oysters approved
  - o There was just one round of oysters this time, so they went quick!
  - o We'll be working on getting another round – right now the next rounds are going to the Cape and Western Mass
- There's a possibility to get more potatoes through Baycoast

**Deloris Joseph (Dartmouth Youth Advocate):**

- Right now we don't have the space to store food, but I'm in touch with a church here that might be able to
- I'm trying to help as many organizations in Dartmouth area as possible

**Claudia Arsenio (Full Plate Project):**

- Shah Foundation is looking for new sites, including in Wareham

**Sarah Labossiere (Mass in Motion):**

- I have two new interns from UMass, Hannah Foley and Megan DeCosta
- Olivia, Karen and I from SEMAP are working on a survey that we will have translated
- Can Coastal Foodshed share any info about coming to Fall River?

**Liz Wiley (Marion Institute):**

- Yes, Coastal Foodshed is coming to Fall River at Gromada Plaza on Saturdays from 3 to 6

*00:51:31 Sarah Labossiere: Gromada Plaza is right outside FR Govt Center on Main St. side and will (I think) have their Mobike market*

*00:51:56 Sarah Labossiere: On Fridays 3p-6p, starting 2/12*

*00:52:20 Sarah Labossiere: the fb link above I think is a link to an event on FB*

*00:53:43 ndecas: Please contact Jackie who is the director at Damien's Pantry*

*00:53:50 ndecas: Jacqueline Arsenault <mrsjarsenault@msn.com>*

*00:54:07 Pam Kuechler: pamkuechler@paceinfo.org*

**Olivia Hart (SEMAP):**

- Last week I sent out a flyer on HIP to the food alert listserv
- We also have it in Spanish and will hopefully be getting it in Portuguese

*00:47:25 Olivia Hart: olivia.hart@semaponline.org - email me if you'd like Spanish flyers!*

*00:48:02 Liz Wiley:from Patti: <https://www.facebook.com/events/956810858460077/>*

**Christine Sullivan (Coastline Elderly):**

- We're planning to put in some gardening beds for the elderly after covid

**Elizabeth Murphy (Unitarian Church of Fairhaven):**

- We're working with the covid tracing team to identify people with covid who don't have food, baby food and diapers
  - o We're completely funding it through the church right now and are looking for funding as the demand is growing significantly
- We're doing all our deliveries in New Bedford

**Kim Smith (United Way of Greater Fall River):**

- You can connect with Citizens for Citizens for preset grocery bags
- Personalized groceries can get tricky
- The resources are there, you don't need to spend money

**Pam Kuechler (PACE):**

- We're connected to people in New Bedford doing that
- We can help provide you with food, Elizabeth

00:55:52 Pam Kuechler: *hi Pat.. definitely!! you were on today's follow up list. feel free to call my cell at 508 5617965*

00:55:53 Liz Wiley: *Reminder for anyone that has not signed up for Southcoast FoodAlert listserv to do so by sending an email to Portia asking to be put on the list*

00:56:12 Pam Kuechler: *Liz you call me as well*

00:56:13 Kim Smith: *elizmurphy22@gmail.com*

00:56:23 Sarah Labossiere: *The continuing event in FR is called "Winterbridge", and the tag line is "A Place to Warm Up and Chill Out" :) from 2/12-3/20*

00:56:48 Josh Smith-My Brother's Keeper: *New Bedford (Fall River, Dartmouth, and Westport) residents can call My Brother's Keeper for a free food delivery: 774-305-4590, Tues-Fri 10am-12pm*

00:58:05 claudia arsenio: *carsenio@ymcasc.org I may be able to add a few things to my orders for you so you are not spending out of pocket money*

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

- We can deliver food for free, each day from 10 – 12
- We're taking requests and are working with covid tracing