

SFPC Quarterly Meeting Thursday, October 13, 2022, at 12 noon-1 pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83233982521>

Agenda

Hi, I am Christine Smith, Program Manager for the Southcoast Food Policy Council, a Marion Institute program. Welcome to the SFPC Quarterly meeting. I will go over the agenda, and then we can get started.

- 1.) Introduce CAB, Working Group, and Food Equity Advisors on the call
- 2.) History of where we have been, and some general updates
- 3.) Share what we have achieved in the working groups
- 4.) What will we do moving forward in Working Groups
- 5.) Food Equity Advisors and their accomplishments
- 6.) Invitation to join the CAB and Working Groups
- 7.) Candidate Forum invite
- 8.) Final questions, comments
- 9.) Continue quarterly meetings on Thursdays at 12 noon

1a.) We are celebrating one year of operation. Yeah! I invite our Community Advisory Board members, Working Group, or Food Equity Advisors to introduce themselves and where you work or live.

- Karen Schwalbe is leaving the SFPC Community Advisory Board and SEMAP (Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership) and going to the MA Farm Bureau. You can reach Karen at her new email at karen@mfbf.net.

2.) History. Review of the year:

- We have been meeting with the Community Advisory Board for one year. During this time, the Community Advisory Board was also trained in Food Equity, Legislative Advocacy, and Food System Assessment.
- We completed the 2021 Southcoast Food System Assessment. The Community Advisory Board used that Assessment and a dialogical decision-making approach to create 26 priorities using the research as a basis for our discussions.
- We have created 4 Working Groups: The Policy Working Group, the Food Access Working Group, Education and Communication Working Group, and the Capacity Building Working Group. We have peppered those 26 priorities into each of those working groups.
- We invited more community stakeholders into the Working Groups, which averaged about ten people per working group.
- We drilled into the Working Group priorities to develop short and long-term goals.

3.) What we have achieved in the Working Groups:

- FOOD ACCESS WORKING GROUP
 - We will develop programs and best practices to reduce food waste and put more food into the local food system.
 - Moving forward, we plan to look at the possibility of creating a gleaning or food harvesting program for the region to increase the amount of fresh produce in the Southcoast.

- We have had more people using the Southcoast Food Alert email list to share resources, grant information, and a place to find help in the food resources network.
 - ✓ Chat: Shannon Hickey from SEMAP: I imagine you've connected with Hope's Harvest and/or Boston Area Gleaners but let me know if you need an introduction to either org!
- EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION WORKING GROUP -Gioia:
 - The second Working group is Education and Communication. We will create several education campaigns about the local food system.
 - We already succeeded with our September Hunger Awareness Month, which shared places to volunteer and donate food and opportunities for food system education, such as attending the virtual Food Summit.
 - We achieved excellent attendance at the virtual Food Summit: The Intersection of Food and Basic Needs: Transportation, Housing, and Healthcare. We had over 130 people registered for the night event, and 89 attended.
 - In the future, we plan to build this campaign into a more robust one, with food literacy and education promoted through various avenues to increase public knowledge and support of the food system.
 - We will look into the possibility of expanding the Food Summit into an in-person conference for our region.
Question: Who is the audience? The Southcoast Food Stakeholders, so we hope to build it out over time to encompass a large stakeholder group.
- CAPACITY BUILDING WORKING GROUP-
 - We plan to build out physical infrastructure and networking capacity for our region.
 - Moving forward, we plan to evaluate existing storage and refrigerate space needs and examine the potential for additional regional space.
 - Look to build our networks around Farm to School and Farm to Institution.
- POLICY WORKING GROUP
 - We will advocate for the following items through district visits with legislators, writing letters of support, and providing testimony during hearings.
 - ✓ Advocate for the permanent funding of the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) in the budget.
 - ✓ Advocate for the permanent funding of the Farm to School program in the budget.
 - ✓ Advocate for medically tailored food programs and pre-made food to be covered by SNAP.
 - ✓ Advocate for the Food System Budget funding priorities by the MA Food System Collaborative.
 - ✓ Advocate for Equity in Agriculture and other equitable food policies.
 - During the last Quarterly meeting, we achieved a few items, such as the Legislative Advocacy Training in July. You can see the link in the chat <https://youtu.be/qijvbSRyZ5E>
 - In partnership with SEMAP (Southeastern Massachusetts Agriculture Partnership), we are hosting a Candidate Forum on October 25, from 6:30 pm – 8 pm online for House of Representative candidates from Bristol County, District 8 and 10. District 8 is the race between Evan Gendreau and Rep. Paul Schmid, and District 10 is the race between Jeffrey Swift and Rep. Bill Straus. Register here: bit.ly/candidateforum2022

3.) Another significant area of work is ensuring Food Equity. We want people impacted by policy changes to have a voice at the decision-making table. To that end, we have invited people with lived experience of food insecurity to join the Southcoast Food Policy Council. We started with three people representing Taunton, Fairhaven, and Fall River. Two of those Food Equity Advisors have moved into Working Groups.

Food Equity Advisors thus far have provided video testimony to the White House Conference on Hunger, written some testimony that went into a letter to the federal Representative, helped us with a Focus Group in Fall River at Cardinal Medeiros., and spoke about how vital HIP (Healthy Incentive Program) is to fund permanently at a Fall River Farmers market where the TV and legislators were attending to support local farmers and HIP collectively.

- We have finished two Focus Groups with people with lived experience of hunger to run our plans by them to listen to their input and revise our plans accordingly. We will also invite people from these Focus Groups to be Food Equity Advisors. These Focus groups were run in Fall River and Wareham and included 32 people. We are setting up more Focus Groups in New Bedford.
- Question: Can we share the video Sarah sent to the White House listening session? Sarah was on zoom, and we asked Sarah, and she said that would be fine.

4.) Other general Achievements include:

- We have updated our website, which you can see here: <https://www.marioninstitute.org/programs/sfpc/meetings>. Click through the tabs on the right to see more information.
- One of our Community Advisory Board members, Stephanie Taylor, from Martha's Vineyard Vegan Society, shared an update on a Land Right case involving a family on Martha's Vineyard from the Wampanoag Aquinnah tribe. Troy Small's family has been in a land rights court case. Stephanie brought this to the attention of the CAB. The CAB immediately stopped the meeting and discussed how we could help. We met with the family, and they asked for some specific information and networking. Stephanie said, "Troy and Patrece are in trial today re the Land. Said they are in land court, but the judge is not a land court judge." Being in a land court is good, but having a judge without a background in land rights cases could prove problematic. We asked Stephanie to keep us informed and asked if there was anything the SFPC could do.

5.) Invitation to join the CAB and Working Groups:

In light of everything the Southcoast Food Policy Council is working on, it is, first and foremost, a community-driven Food Policy Council. To that end, we will seek more people to join the Working Groups, Community Advisory Board, and Food Equity Advisors. Please contact me, Christine, at sfpc@marioninstitute.org if you would like to be a volunteer with the Southcoast Food Policy Council. We welcome all suggested contacts. We will meet with those people, and onboarding will begin in January each year.

Our Food Equity Advisor asked that we focus on recruiting a more diverse group of people, especially Cape Verdeans, and people living in our communities, including non-mobile people.

6.) Any final questions or comments? We want to know what you think of our work. You can send your thoughts to sfpc@marioninstitute.org.

The next Quarterly meeting is in January. Information to follow. Thanks!