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Description automatically generated** **Food Assistance Advisory Committee Mtg**

April 12, 2022 9-10:30 a.m.

**AGENDA**

**Welcome / Introductions** –Please share your name, organization and are you new to your position in the last three months, if not, how long have you been in your role?

**Present:**

Michelle Douglas, EFC Chair

Claire Lane, AHNC

Kate Ortiz, Public Health Seattle -King County

Stacey Crnich, Bonney Lake Food Bank

Ahndrea Blue, Making a Difference Foundation

Mariela Barriga, Highline College

Eric Williams, 2nd Harvest

Leslie Stewart, City of Seattle, HSD

Axel, Lopez Food Share

Contessa, Lopez Food Share

Lynn Morris, Food Lifeline

Amelia Paul, Feeding WA

Andra Smith, Sequim Food Bank

Paul Saelee, Food Lifeline

Alan Walker, CDCAC

James Mabbott, Okanogan County CAC

Emily Straw, Clark County Food Bank

Tina Clark, Clark County Food Bank

Trish Twomey, WFC

**WSDA Staff:**

Kim Eads

James Scovel

Mallorie Shellmer

Nichole Garden

Lindsey Robinson

Patrick Merscher

Kyle Merslich

Erin Kester

Heidi Cobun

Natalie Paris

Lindsey Wilson

Lisa White

Anna Berry

1. **Approval of Minutes** from January 26th, 2022, meeting. Natalie Paris will be taking notes today. Minutes were voted and approved.
2. **WSDA Updates – Kim Eads**

Staffing updates. Natalie Paris and Nichole Garden have accepted new roles at other agencies. Kim made a public service announcement encouraging anyone that if you have ever felt compelled to work for the state to apply – lots of job openings. WSDA is always looking for top talent.

**TEFAP Food - James Scovel**

**TEFAP Food Ordering Committee Update** (July – Dec.)

* In 2022, 739 food shipments were ordered. This year’s food shipment amount was much smaller than the previous two years due to funding, but it’s still a decent amount.
* In 2022, total canceled orders took a dip to 143. 19 percent of all orders were canceled due to production and staffing issues.
* James discussed the cost of food per pound, in 2022, the cost of food per pound skyrocketed to $1.42. We’re receiving far less food for more money. The pandemic has had a tremendous impact on food cost trends and quantity.

**Update on upcoming products:**

* For July through September, WSDA purchased 150 trucks of food. A menagerie of fresh, frozen, and canned produce, nuts, dairy items, starches, and meats will be distributed.
* 1.8 million dollars in entitlement funds will be spent for October through December. A food order workgroup will be convened in May to discuss the orders.
* Orders have been made for next year’s fruit and vegetable boxes. Items were selected based on votes from the Food Order Work Group. We did select some of the frozen fruits and vegetables for the upcoming year.

**TEFAP Mixed Produce Boxes:**

TEFAP mixed produce boxes will continue from August to December 2022 with boxes going to the contractors who already are getting boxes. In November and December there will be only one delivery each month rather than the normal two deliveries.

**We Feed WA Boxes: Kim Eads**

Katie Rains has been providing updates for ***We Feed WA*** at stakeholder meetings.

Through the generous support from the legislature, extra funding was awarded for the state fiscal year of 2022 and state fiscal year 2023. There are plans to help mitigate our planned reductions for the We Feed WA portion, which provides the produce boxes that many of you participate in. Farm vendors should be reaching out to the contractors that participate in this program. Starting July 2022- June 30th, 2023, increased funding will be available for the fresh produce boxes that will be administered through ***We Feed WA***.

There are plans to revert to production levels last seen in 2021. Considering food and transportation increases it is not clear what that will mean in terms of the number of boxes you will receive.

**USDA Local Food Purchasing Assistance Cooperative Agreement**- We are still planning to put in our application based on your input in the Survey Monkey. Currently, Food Assistance will be receiving 70% of that funding.

Part of our focus is to provide goods for tribal organizations, who are not applying directly through USDA.

The three tribes that have confirmed they’re applying through USDA are Colville Confederated Tribe, Yakama Nation, and Quinault. The data you provided in the Survey Monkey made it possible for us to use the results in the LFPA Application. Thank you for providing this information!

**Food and Funding All Sources Update:**

There will be lots of strategies and planning that will be needed to think about the timing of when products are coming in and ways to maximize the resources from multiple programs and initiatives.

Anticipation of the LFPA award coming sometime in June or first week of July. TEFAP Reach and Resiliency Grant Round 1 should be awarded within the next few weeks. As you plan for your organization’s future needs, the Resiliency Grants may also be a significant funding opportunity.

Even though there is funding coming in now for all of these programs, it is still not enough to make up for significant gaps anticipated in TEFAP, increased food and operational costs, and the rise in client need. We really need to increase the support for TEFAP and our other hunger relief programs. The amount of support we provide to these programs will be critical because the federal support will continue to diminish. We are working on strategies to increase the food at the reserve warehouse to offset reductions in TEFAP food and increasing client needs. The next federal fiscal year could look significantly different. In 2021 TEFAP food was at about $40 million, in 2022 it will be around $24 million, and in 2023 (if no additional support) it will be closer to $12 million.

Since it costs money to distribute and pay for operations (staffing), it will come as a shock when we resume to a normal TEFAP operational funding level (think 2018 levels or less). That is another reason why the Resiliency Grants are so critical - to help fill gaps. Try to be mindful of sources coming in and sources going out. We have strong support from EFAP. When Kim has time, wants to create an overall picture from all funding sources and hand it out to all participants in this meeting.

**Resiliency Grant - Updates from Lindsay Robinson:**

About ready to launch the second round of the Resiliency Grants.

The application window is April 18th, 2022- June 10th 20022 (54 days). Website: agr.wa.gov/grants

Review of applications will occur June 10– 30, 2022:

* + - Review and selection period.
    - Finalization of grant awards
    - Notification of award status

Contracts will be sent out July 1-8, 2022.

Anticipated contract period will be July 1st, 2022, to June 30th, 2023.

There’s much more funding this time, close to $16 million in total funds.

Feeling optimistic about the impact this can have on the Hunger Relief Network. This will help strengthen our network which includes food purchases, staffing, projects, and equipment.

Since there’s more funding, the new application will be more in-dept. Please start the application early.

Round 2 Resiliency Grant funding priorities:

1. We’re looking at recommendations of the Capacity Survey Report that was created by Harvest Against Hunger with collaboration from University of Washington.
2. Support BIPOC- led organizations, and organizations with BIPOC- strong partnerships.
3. Support Rural, less dense regions and underserved communities.
4. Receive statewide representation

Round 2 Resiliency Grant funding objectives:

1. Collaborations- strengthen the relationships of regional, interregional, county, and food hub partners.
2. Local purchasing- Invest in local businesses and local agriculture.
3. Service operations- Support staffing, equipment and capital improvement.
4. Client experience enhancement

Round 2 Resiliency Grant funding categories:

1. Equipment and installation costs- Award size is up to $4,999 to use towards equipment and installation costs.
2. Contracted hunger relief organizations- At least 30 percent of award projects will be to organizations who participate in WSDA Food Assistance programs.
3. Regional Distribution Organizations (RDOs)- At least 20 percent of awards will be to organizations qualifying as RDOs with projects related to those functions.
4. Hunger relief organizations not currently contracted with WSDA- At least 30% of awarded projects will be to organizations who do not currently participate in WSDA Food Assistance Programs.

Eligibility requirements are similar to the previous round. It is open to non-profit, tribal, and hunger relief organizations. See [website](http://agr.wa.gov/grants) for more information, including frequently asked questions.

Grant program contacts: Lindsey Robinson and Anna Berrey [foodassistancegrants@agr.wa.gov](mailto:foodassistancegrants@agr.wa.gov)

**Questions:**

With so much more funding and resources available, is there anticipation to expand staffing or operational support re: reduction of client barriers? No plans for expansion of these services. Would like to see these services strengthened instead of expanded. Would be up to the organization’s discretion. WSDA has hired a new staff member to partake in site visits for monitoring organizations.

**Compliance Reviews -Updates from Kyle Merslich**

Ahead of time with our schedule to get contractor and subcontractor forms updated and revised.

We would like to see contractor and subcontractor forms completed soon, so we have more time with our contractors and subcontractors on more beneficial topics in person. Working towards getting these forms approved by our agency soon. Once we have a list generated of prospective subcontractors, we collaborate with our TEFAP contractors for review and intake for the upcoming fiscal year. We will be updating the income guidelines on the new form. Looking to have a client intake subcommittee, facilitated by Michelle Douglas.

Wording will change on these forms. Ultimately, we want the form to be easy to understand for our clients.

Certain requirements will be removed on the intake form to reduce unnecessary confusion and hardship for the contractors and WSDA data pulled

1. **Review work in progress:**
   1. **WSDA Subcontractor Resources Task Force (Michelle Douglas):** On hold. Unsure when they’re coming back due to COVID.
   2. **Statewide Nutrition Policy – Trish Twomey**

Received additional SNAP Ed funds from Public Health Seattle-King County to work with pantries across the state on Nutrition Policies. We have a part time consultant to assist with this work. A survey was sent out to contractors and subcontractors regarding nutrition policies. Trish is asking that all invitees complete it and send it back. So far, we’ve received about 100 surveys. We will be touching base on nutrition policies in sessions at the WFC conference in April and September. If you would like to sit on the committee, please reach out to Trish at trish@wafoodcoalition.org

* + There was a question from the group about if the new nutrition policies and will food boxes accommodate diabetes and other health issues? Partnered with the interns at Seattle Pacific University to update the special dietary needs manual. There are new sections listed in the manual for diabetics.

1. **Discussion topics:**
2. **Client Intake Subcommittee Updates:**

FAAC Client In-take Subcommittee has had some great discussions over the last several months.

Recently had a subcommittee meeting with a great turnout and progress.

This subcommittee has been working for the last two years with the focus on reducing barriers and increasing client access. Education materials used from last year that were focused around not requiring ID and participating in education components were used to reduce barriers.

1. **TEFAP Income Guidelines Conversation: Kim Eads**

Changes were made to 400 percent of income guidelines, based on studies out of King County (2019).

The change from 185% to 400% was intended to be long-term but USDA sees this as temporary and will need more updated information for longer-term use. At this point, we will be getting the 400% income guidelines approved for one more year. If a request of 250 percent or higher is requested, we must get approval from USDA. We can only make it 400 percent (longer-term) with updated data. Discussion: USDA would like to see our logic for this – several members offered to help. Take the lead and advocate for other states to follow our lead and push for the 400 percent goal.

1. **TEFAP ID and form changes:**

Discussion from last week. We’ve made big changes to the new TEFAP form. New form excludes “You shall not barter, exchange, or sell food” under the self- declaration page. On the bottom of the new intake form, a small caption stating, “food is not for resale.” Information regarding TEFAP visit amounts (duplicate count) has been removed. Adds clarification on what is NOT required: Social Security, ID, Proof of immigration status, household size or income, and proof of citizenship/ immigration status isn’t required. Transition to these new forms when you can.

* Ongoing conversations on Duplicated and Unduplicated
* Subcommittee Meeting report out

1. **What do people need going forward?**

Support and Sustainability-

Trends for 2022, what have you noticed?

* Jefferson County- increased number of visitors. Concerns of the availability of food.
* Pierce County- increase in over 30% due to the price of gas and food. Heavier traffic with food banks in Pierce County in recent weeks. New clients coming in after rent increases.
* Chelan- Douglas County- Low unemployment but seeing a lot more clients coming in for food assistance is alarming.
* Clark County- Less food in the warehouse, but still ready for more clients.
* Contessa- Increase in clients, housing instability
* Eric Williams- up 10 percent of distributions this quarter. Feels like we’re reliving early days of COVID. Experiencing oddities in the supply chain.
* James from Okanagan- Increase in new applications, concerns of the food amount.
* South King County- increase in clients, more clients speaking different languages.
* WFC Conference updates, April 21 & 22nd, Wenatchee, WA

**Good of the Order**: **Contractor Calls** - Next call: May 6th at 9 a.m.

*Contractor calls are meeting once a month.*

**General Focus Calls** – Next call: April 19th, 9 a.m.

*General Focus calls are meeting once a month.* **WFC Board Meeting** – Hybrid meeting -April 21st at 9 a.m.

**Future dates for the Food Assistance Advisory Committee and WFC Board Meeting**

* + Tuesday, July 26th
  + September 28th
  + January 2023