**Washington Food Coalition Board Meeting**

**Minutes**

April 15, 2021

**In attendance**: Peny Archer, Chris Benson, Robert Coit, Alan Hamilton, Jennifer Hardison, ***Treasurer;*** Chris Hatch, Dan Lancaster, Bob Mark, Ahndrea Blue, Jeff Mathias, Cecilia Chavez, Ariel Medeiros, ***Secretary***, Tiane Shoemaker, Andra Smith, ***Chair***, Ken Trainor, ***Past Chair***; Trish Twomey, *staff*; and Kris Van Gasken.

Guests: Nancy Bacon, Nancy Bacon Consulting

WSDA Staff: Helen McGovern-Pilant, Kim Eads, Mallorie Shellmer & James Scovel

1. **Introductions:**

Andra Smith, Interim Chair, started the meeting and shard that Leon was unable to make the meeting due to family issues. She asked board members to answer the following question as part of their district updates: *What was your greatest success in the last 60 days, and the greatest challenge in the next 60 days?*

District Updates:

District 1: Greatest success is moving the poundage of food that is coming down the pipeline. There has been a decrease and pantries are bursting at the seams with food. Need is getting food to clients before it has to be destroyed.

District 2: Bob sent a written report since he was unable to attend this meeting.

For **Chelan and Douglas County food banks** (via Alan Walker, ED of the Chelan-Douglas CAC):

• We continue to have support from the National Guard, 12-15 members.

• Pantries are starting to have volunteers return and are working with Guard members and transitioning.

• We still provide the box of food format and drive-through pick-up.

• Numbers are still 150-200% of pre-COVID.

• The Plain Pantry is a new addition to our subcontractors.

• New subcontractor in Bridgeport, local church.

• Wenatchee Food Bank has dissolved, working to establish a new location. We continue to distribute on the day and time previously served by the Wenatchee Food Bank.

• Mobile Food Pantry is scheduled several days a month and expect it to increase.

For **Okanogan County food banks** (via Jennifer Short, Programs Director for the Okanogan County CAC):

• Massive Food Distribution continues to occur with the help of the National Guard throughout Okanogan County. Our local National Guard mission will continue through June 30, 2021; however, we do not know if that will be extended. We are working with our food pantries and encouraging them to build up their volunteerism capacities in preparation for the National Guard’s expected departure in June.

• All food pantries throughout Okanogan County have experienced an increase in clients/households seeking food assistance and we are doing our very best to keep up with demands.

• OCCAC recently applied for the WSDA Supplemental Capacity Grant and was awarded funds to make necessary capacity improvements and equipment purchases in response to the increased demands (due to COVID 19). We are proud to announce that this supplemental grant will be utilized to replace/repair the roof on The Cove Food Pantry (Twisp, WA), a new Walk-in Cooler for Tonasket Food Pantry, some appliance upgrades for Okanogan Food Pantry and Conconully Food Pantry, as well as repairs and equipment for the Omak Food Pantry. As the Food Distribution Center, OCCAC will purchase a new forklift using this WSDA Supplemental Capacity Grant.

• We continue to face a lot of challenges; however, we are celebrating successes (large and small) along the way.

District 3: Everything feels reactionary, things are hard to plan right now. Lots of food is being gotten and given out but it’s difficult to transition when no one knows what is going to happen.

District 4: Malden and Pine City are getting their pantry up and running again after last summer’s fires. Community Action Center getting money for their Mobile Farm Stand. The biggest challenge they are facing is getting producers to sign on and participate.

District 5: Getting lots of food but some pantries don’t have the capacity to hold all the food or get it out.

District 6: Was not in attendance.

District 7: Capacity grant funding for operations and construction. Losing parking lot during construction.

District 8: Capacity grant funding for freezer storage and operations. Supplies will be the biggest need as prices go up for items.

District 9: Running smoothly, 5,352 households in delivery and drive thru. Transitioning will be the hardest as the National Guard starts to leave.

District 10: Program received capacity grant funding, Pierce County is going back to Phase 2.

District 11: April 1st opened a new pantry in Lacy, WA. Assisted other orgs in Thurston County in getting capacity grant funding by acting as an umbrella. Timing of grants and knowing how to write them to send them in on time was an issue for many smaller organizations.

District 12: Not operating as much every day and things are finally calming down, being able to breathe. Finding new methods for distribution but how to get food out to clients, excess of food sometimes.

District 13: Was not in attendance.

District 14: Move food in new ways because of capacity funding getting the equipment needed. How to transition from during COVID to Vaccine COVID, going from drive thru to a different model.

At-Large: Kris Van Gasken - Kids programs: people can get applications in for Summer Meals this summer, waivers have been extended. It is grab and go with parents being able to pick up meals for their kids.

**Approval of Minutes:**

***Chris Hatch motioned to approve the February minutes. Dan Lancaster seconded the motion, motion passed.***

**III. Treasurer’s Report** presented by Jennifer Hardison:

Jennifer reviewed the Financial Statements from the past quarter. Shared our bank balance is over $105,000.

***Motion to accept Treasurer’s Report by Alan Hamilton, Ken Trainor seconded. Motion passed.***

**IV. Executive Director’s Report** presented by Trish Twomey:

There have been more trainings offered this past quarter. We hosted a Tech Fair – highlighting various Client In-take systems. Trish was able to hire someone to manage the ZOOM call for the Tech Fair.

Dietetic Interns from Seattle Pacific University are still assisting us in revising the Special Dietary Needs manuals.

Offered the Food Bank Certification Course online for the first time and had 100 signed up. 71 people took exam and received certificates of completion. We will be offering this course again in May.

Proposed a new task for the USDA contract, which resulted in an additional $15,000 to produce the Food Bank Certification Course. We proposed to make individual videos on each section of the Course and will put on our website so individuals can take the course on their own time.

Trish reported that we now have 317 members. She is excited to report that programs on Island and San Juan counties have joined as members and we are working to get Jefferson County to join.

Public Health Seattle – King County has recently included the WFC into their CDC grant to develop a statewide Nutrition Policy.

**V. Committee Reports:**

**Food Assistance Advisory Committee/WSDA update** by Kim Eads and James Scovel:

There are some competitive bid contracts, emergency extensions that are going away.

$3 million capacity grant, turned into $6.4 million, which was used to fund 50 contracts across the state, 36 direct contracts, 14 roll up contracts between 46 subcontractors. Helen McGovern-Pilant was hired to manage these contracts. A presentation on April 20th at the General Check-in meeting will be delivered by Helen.

Farmers to Families Food Boxes will end at the end of May. Mixed Fresh Produce Boxes will be offered through WSDA, June - September, which will run through TEFAP.

The FAAC continues to talk about reducing client barriers and there is a subcommittee looking into future steps. A subcommittee was created to work on creating a statewide nutrition policy through a grant with Public Health Seattle - King County.

**Transition Committee** by Dan Lancaster:

The Committee is made up of the following individuals: Dan Lancaster, Andra Smith, Chris Benson, Andrea Blue, Cecilia Chavez, Alan Hamilton, Bob Mark, Jeff Mathias, Kellie McNelly, and Kris Van Gasken.

First step is to have the first meeting when everyone is available, they will have the board restructuring proposal, supplemental materials, and bylaws for that meeting. A deadline will be established for review of those materials and a second meeting will occur to talk about the big picture, the main tasks, the timeline, and required reports.

Progress report at June meeting and action report at the fall meeting.

**Special Events/Conference Committee** presented by Kris Van Gasken:

The Committee is still trying to figure out whether to host an in person or virtual conference. The Conference Committee sent out a survey asking if people would want to go in person or virtually. We received 125 responses with about a 50/50 split in responses. Costs for conference generally run about $35,000-$37,000 for in-person or virtual.

Kris opened the floor for discussion:

* Kris Van Gasken would prefer in-person
* Ariel Medeiros would prefer in-person. How would participants be mitigated if more people want to go then would be allowed? Not sure yet, depends if we make that first number.
* Chris Hatch would prefer in-person
* Alan Hamilton would prefer in-person, maybe try to broadcast some presentations if possible.
* Andra Smith would prefer in-person. Is there a break even number for attendance? Yes and no depends on the cost analysis, sponsors, and contract with USDA.
* Robert would send staff if in-person but not virtually.
* Peny said it would be hard to get away with how the day-to-day operation is so frantic.
* Ahndrea Blue said virtual would be better if the cost is about the same.
* Dan Lancaster prefers virtual.

**Advocacy Update** by Robert Coit:

Robert wrote a letter from the WFC Advocacy Committee to the FAAC asking the FAAC to hear feedback from programs across the state on recent WSDA grant processes. It was suggested a subcommittee be created t gather that feedback and eventually share with WSDA.

Two budgets to be in Conference Committee soon or currently in. Legislatures have been very supportive in both budgets. Capital budgets also has money specifically for food assistance programs.

**Learning Strategy** presented by Nancy Bacon

Nancy was invited to share with the board what a Learning Strategy is.

What do your members need to do to thrive? What would you like to see or hear?

* More time and the ability to plan.
* Nutrition policy

Learning is for people to be able to do things differently. Formal training, in time learning, job aides, connections and reflections, and a whole system of learning support. Strategy is intention, and getting things done and not just talking.

What do you want to move the needle on and see things are different? What needs to be done to be able to see that change?

Trish thought this type of planning would be helping for her and the coalition as we move forward.

**Ken Trainor motioned to end the meeting. Robert Coit seconded, motion passed.** Next meeting will be in June 2021.

