

**Food Assistance Advisory Committee Meeting**

**October 24, 2024 10:00am – 11:30 am**

Trish Twomey, WFC and Michelle Douglas, Chair asked those on call to introduce themselves and their organization in the chat, along with their email addresses to update the mailing list. Introduced Erik Mora, BMAC as the new chair.

1. **Present:**

Aaron Czyzewski, FLL

Abbigail Angulo, LCCAP

Ahndrea Blue, MADF

Aja Bridge, RRCA

Alan Walker, CDCAC

Angie Wood, PMSC

Anna Hamill, WSDA FA

Cajsha White, WSDA FA

Claire Lane, AHNC

David Bobanick, HAH

Elise Levesque, WSDA FA

Emily Straw, CCFB

Erik Mora, BMAC

Eric Williams, 2H

Heidi Cobun, WSDA FA

James Scovel, WSDA FA

Jay Kang, TCFB

John Carney, WSDA FA

Kevin Perry, PAFB

Kim Eads, WSDA FA

Kyle Merslich, WSDA FA

Lisa White, WSDA FA

Mallorie Shellmer, WSDA FA

Marie Sinkhorn, OCAP

Michelle Douglas, EFN

Mike Hatada, WSDA FA

Peny Archer, CSML

Rachel Bishop, UVMEND

Sam Cook, EFN

Steven Curry, MSC

Taelor Nguyen, WSDA FA

Tarnah Wright, WSDA FA

Trish Twomey, WFC

Trisha Hochreiter, CASC

1. **Approval of minutes**

June 25, 2024 meeting minutes. David Bobanick, HAH to approve, Erik Mora, BMAC seconded, no discussion or questions. Minutes approved with Ahndrea Blue abstaining.

1. **Program Updates**
	1. What’s happening with your programs?
		1. Rachel Bishop, UVMEND: When is the next meeting?
			1. Michelle Douglas, Chair: Not scheduled yet but we will schedule all 2025 meetings at the beginning of the year.
			2. Trish Twomey, WFC: A survey will be sent soon to aid scheduling.
			3. Michelle Douglas, Chair: we hope to have a schedule set by December 15th 2024.
		2. Erik Mora, BMAC: same here as everywhere else, usage is up 200% from pre-COVID. Things are a little tough, we held an early fall food drive, usually get 30k pounds of food, this year there was push back on the plastic bags and we saw a 90% drop in donations. Looking for a sustainable method to have the food drive. The backpack bridge program is popular, looking to surpass last year’s numbers by early spring.
		3. Alan Walker, CDCAC: Support is increasing around the green bag program, individual food donations, special food drives coming up with the holidays with Grocery Outlet. Had the regional meeting with EFAP members and had interest in a bulk buy to share with everyone.
		4. Rachel Bishop, UVMEND: Located in Leavenworth, also interested in the bulk purchase, getting turkeys and chickens. We have a gleaning program that’s ending and stocking apples and pears for winter produce.
		5. Emily Straw, CCFB: Alan recently resigned, and we are recruiting for a new President. Preparing staff for VP maternity leave. We have temporary occupancy in a new building/warehouse/food pantry/food engagement space, which opened on October 1st. Starting off food drive season with Walk and Knock, the nation’s biggest single day food donation drive. We have a busy season in the warehouse. School pantries are running, summer programs are closed.
		6. Ahndrea Blue, MADF: we recently procured a new warehouse and have it up and running. It will also be the home of the BIPOC farmer hub while their building is renovated. Eloise’s Market will open in the next 90 days. Will have 5 pieces of art. Working on the emergency distribution for Thanksgiving at the Tacoma Dome. Food is expensive. Finishing gleaning season, launching youth program Feeding Our Future working with youth to grow fruits and vegetables.
		7. Trisha Hochreiter, CASC: Numbers are still growing, maintaining the same number of senior boxes with a waitlist to fill openings. Madeline got a big donation of pumpkin pies for Thanksgiving. Figuring out what to do when the grants end.
	2. Are there topics you want to discuss or share at the next meeting? (Key things that require a decision)
		1. Rachel Bishop, UVMEND: item for next meeting: EFAP biennium would be a great topic. I think WSDA had an EFAP survey out as well, what were the results of that?
2. **WSDA update** –Kim Eads, WSDA FA
	1. **General Overview for 2025 – see attached slides**
		1. **We Feed WA**
			1. Michelle requested a We Feed WA statement. This was approved by the agency. The We Feed WA concept was intended to end June 30, 2025. We will start to see some things transition back to Food Assistance from the Director’s office.
				1. David Bobanick, HAH: Quick general note – there is still a week left to partner with a local Rotary club to apply for a small $1,000 grant through HAH’s Rotary Hunger Relief Grant Learn more and share link: <https://forms.gle/8emre1BPWkum3JdZ8>
		2. **Food Assistance Legislative Package – see attached slides**
			1. Government Investment per Client: goal is $5 for explaining to legislators financing hunger relief.
				1. Kyle Merslich, WSDA FA: $11M
				2. Michelle Douglas, Chair: Client visits is so much better tracking than unduplicated. Thanks.
				3. State Funding Levels, yellow funds have an end date of June 30, 2025 (and not continuing). New funding is highlighted in green, these are proposed “buckets” just to give you an idea of how we are thinking about these possible new funds in terms of what we pass-through to you, replacing the ended funds (approx.$20 Million) and asking for increased funds to sustain critical needs and increased client visits.
			2. Future
				1. Permanently increase EFAP and EFAP-Tribal passthrough funding
				2. Continue to offer annual grants to any

Claire Lane, AHNC: Q for WSDA: is the federal pass through $$ included in the $93 M budget request?

Kim Eads, WSDA FA: TEFAP Gap is not from USDA. New funding is highlighted in green (pass-through funding) to minimize the number of agreements – will not line up with actual decision package and do not include USDA funding. Again, for this budget break-out, it is for your budget planning purposes, not messaging to legislators.

* 1. **USDA Announcements for future resources – see attached slides**
		1. Another round of TEFAP CCC funding has been approved. Nationally $500M, estimate $11M for Washington.
			1. Michelle Douglas, Chair: what was the previous TEFAP CCC funding?
				1. James Scovel, WSDA FA: 2023 $14M, 2024 $20.8M, 2025 $3.2M spent through March.
			2. Claire Lane, AHNC: so the newly added TEFAP $$ wouldn’t come earlier than WA’s next order?
				1. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: I don’t think so, it’s not typically what they do.
		2. Another round of Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA), (does not include funding for admin) for unprocessed or minimally processed food only. Will build funding back in for admin/operational costs, through the state not USDA. It comes from USDA and the Director’s Office retains 1/3, Food Assistance gets 2/3, we are using that model for estimating the next round. We don’t know the timeframe yet.
	2. **EFAP and EFAP-Tribal Data – See attached slides**
		1. Voucher use depends on the tribe.
			1. Trish Twomey, WFC: Clarifying that these are EFAP stats only, non-EFAP numbers are not included.
				1. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: Correct, and noted that it includes 28 new organizations in EFAP.
			2. Claire Lane, AHNC: Do you ask food providers that get grants for client visit data?
				1. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: Not for Resiliency Grants, but it is built into the application to determine success. We Feed WA may, we can ask Jessica (follow-up – no, this is not included).
			3. Michelle Douglas, Chair: there is stress about how to count individuals or visits, I appreciate the new focus on visits to help tell the story how great the need is and why there is need for funding and donations. Do we need to provide more stories beyond LFPA stories?
			4. Steven Curry, MSC: Thank you Kim!! Great Data! Yes, duplicated client numbers and the number of new clients is very important!
			5. Trish Twomey, WFC: Does this capture agencies with multiple grants?
				1. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: for context, we require a state match for EFAP. Some people will only report up to the required match. Please report the total to help report the need and have better tracking.

Michelle Douglas, Chair: is it true that we can report the full numbers without being accused of double dipping match grants.

Kyle Merslich, WSDA FA: Correct!

* + - 1. Erik Mora, BMAC: Also pantries making more purchases with their reserve funding to help meet the gap.
			2. Michelle Douglas, Chair: How will LFPA function?
				1. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: we issue the funds to hunger-relief organizations (Lead Agencies) and they are responsible for doing the purchasing and distribute to the local hunger-relief organization (Sub Agencies). The Director’s Office will provide a different model.

Michelle Douglas, Chair: exciting to see that continue

* + - 1. Steven Curry, MSC: When food banks talk about increased visits with less money and less food. Pre Covid numbers compared to what we’re doing today, Double the number in context of what we’re doing. Use this information with your boards and advocacy and your community.
				1. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: On our webpage, we have the What’s New section, we’ll try to get graphs on the website tomorrow.
				2. David Bobanick, HAH: I just shared this with our advocacy committee. This will be helpful to get some standardized messaging.

Claire Lane, AHNC: I agree with David that consistent messaging re: data is helpful (and w/ the Legislature, critical). But I think we should be clear about which of these data is most reliable & clearly illustrates the big picture.

Michelle Douglas, Chair: David, please send your responses to Trish to share.

* + - * 1. Michelle Douglas, Chair: thinking of a new practice, are we making our numbers clear to others, are we shaking the system? We get the pressure to spend the money on food. Tremendous pressure on the food system to spend this funds.

Erik Mora, BMAC: clarification I was talking about pass through funding.

* + - * 1. Ahndrea Blue, MADF: kudos, love the numbers.
	1. **LFPA**
		1. No cost extension to use unspent funds.
1. **Committee Updates & Topics to Discuss**
	1. FAAC Committee Make-up & Standards
		1. Chair Position: Erik Mora
		2. Facilitator: We are in the process of identifying a facilitator
		3. Feedback form – please see handouts attached to the email
	2. **Client Intake Committee**
		1. 2nd follow up report from josh martinez – EFAP (see attached)
			1. Initial Report: Future Emergent consultation provided recommendations to improve EFAP.
			2. 2nd report is an impact perspectives report regarding how the recommendations impacted the sub agencies.
				1. Mallorie Shellmer, WSDA FA: To view both reports Kim is referring to, written by Future Emergent, you can view them at this link under "EFAP Recommendations": <https://agr.wa.gov/services/food-access/hunger-in-wa>
				2. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: josh can attend the FAAC January meeting to go over his reports.
		2. **WSDA Survey outcomes** – Program Changes Survey start conversation. See attached slides.
			1. Kyle Merslich, WSDA FA: EFAP and EFAP Tribal Surveys, 142 responses
			2. Public survey whether they participate in hunger relief or not, regarding possible changes short of legislation.
				1. Reports are still in development. slides

Claire Lane, AHNC: Is it possible to analyze the responses re: admin $ analyzed by organization type? (ie EFAP lead vs local food pantry/bank)

Kyle Merslich, WSDA FA: not EFAP vs non-EFAP, but we are working on other demographic breakdowns. Can add EFAP vs non-EFAP to the next survey.

Steven Curry, MSC: Yes, this would be extremely useful for coalitions to assure voices are heard from all level of programming especially with the expansion of new members and unique programs.

* 1. **Nutrition Committee** – Brainstorming session/survey results – Trish Twomey and Dana Cordy, WFC
		1. Would like to see support for donations from grocers for more healthy foods.
		2. How to make pantries aware of nutrition services provided by WFC.
		3. Mentoring for Nutrition programs.
			1. Michelle Douglas, Chair: there are nutrition resources on the WFC website.
	2. **Advocacy Committee** – Claire Lane, Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition, Aaron Czyzewski, Food Lifeline
		1. Elections are less than 2 weeks away, talk to your staff, volunteers, and clients and help them get registered and encourage them to vote.
			1. Aaron Czyzewski, FLL: See results from our candidate questionnaire & info on initiatives: [Advocacy Policy | Food Lifeline](https://foodlifeline.org/advocacy)
		2. Facing a serious state budget gap in 2 and 4 years. If the initiatives are defeated, still looking at $5M in 2 years and another $5M for 4 years. The Governor needs to balance the budget based on the current revenue available. Can submit a Book 2 with plans to raise money to balance the budget, but it’s up to congress to pass it.
			1. Staffers are reporting that they are looking to Gregoire’s actions during the Great Recession, but the gap is greater now than it was then.
			2. This is going to make it hard to ask for additional funding for hunger relief.
			3. Legislators currently in session haven’t experienced this situation before and will need hunger relief education.
				1. Michelle Douglas, Chair: Has Hunger Action Day been scheduled?

Claire Lane, AHNC: not yet.

* + 1. Food Security comes before any other need. Need to work together and have organized and standardized talking points. It’s difficult to boil down such complex topics to be short and well understood to new legislators.
		2. Initiatives on the ballot.
			1. Claire Lane, AHNC: Last election encouragement: AHNC has endorsed the NO on ALL initiatives this year — each initiative in its way is bad for low income people and really bad for our state budget (also, specifically very bad for funding K-12, for funding child care, for people needing long term care, for climate change, and for energy efficiency)
		3. The Food Fighters Caucus is expanding.
		4. Possible Legislative committee workday centered on food systems.
			1. Claire Lane, AHNC: On Dec 9, the House Health Care committee will hold a work session on Impacts of Access to Universally Free School Meals on Childhood Health & Nutrition!
		5. Kim Eads, WSDA FA: Certificate of Appreciation for Michelle Douglas, a heartfelt thank you to Michelle for being FAAC chair for so many years.
1. **Good of the Order**:

**Lead Agency Calls** – November 1st, 9-10 am

**General Focus Calls** – Resume in January 2025

**Hunger Action Day - TBD**

1. **Close**