



FA Meeting, 1/29/2018

Attendees:

In person: Sabrina Jones – NWH, Angela Burton – Coastal Harvest, Kim Eads – WSDA, Nichole Garden – WSDA, Kevin Schmelzlen – WSDA, James Scovel – WSDA, Kyle Merslich – WSDA, Jen Tennent – NWH, Jessica Hernandez – Port Angeles Food Bank, Ken Trainor – Sunrise Outreach, Terri Turner – MSC, Scott Milne – Hopelink, Kevin Glackin-Coley – St Leo’s Food Connection, Kris Van Gaskin – Des Moines Area Food Bank. Trish Twomey – WFC, Yvonne Pitrof – WFC.

On the phone: Lisa White – WSDA, Alan Hamilton – Clark County Food Bank, James Fitzgerald – Clark County Food Bank, Marki Lockhardt – Olympic Community Action Program, Tiffani Kaech – Food Lifeline, Jeff Mathias – Blue Mountain Action Council, Steven Curry – SE Nourish.

1. Welcome, Introductions, Updates

Updates:

WSDA:

Kim Eads – WSDA, re-introduce Kevin Schmelzlen, newest member to the WSDA Food Assistance team. He represents the north third of the state from the Olympic Peninsula, to the San Juans, and all the way to the Idaho border. There have been some staff changes among some of WSDA leadership: Kirk Robinson, deputy director of WSDA has moved on to new adventures and Patrick Capper is stepping in as the new deputy director. Candace Jacobs, assistant director has also retired, and they are still looking to fill that position. Some notes about the federal budget and impacts on WSDA Food Assistance – They continue to be operating on continuing resolutions, and are currently funded through February 8th. TEFAP orders placed to arrive thru March will still come. Funding through these continuing resolutions has been less, resulting in having to manage cash flows, but they are not anticipating cuts this year.

The FAQ for EFAP/TEFAP is online – their communications department did a nice job on making it more visually appealing. And once again, these are a work in progress – they are considered living documents that will adjust and change as needed over time.

James Scovel update: Food is coming in and there is a new statewide snapshot up on the WSDA website available to check out for those interested. Some things coming in: pears, corn, peas, tomato sauce, peanut butter, rice krispy cereal. Some items are coming in slower than normal (for example peanut butter hasn’t arrived yet). Overall there are not a lot of bonus orders recently – peanut butter and turkey are bonus products that are coming. Placed fruit and veggie orders after input – there were no surprises on the voting/preferences stated.

Kyle Merslich update: The EFAP Close out report just came out. County specific info is not in the report, but available. The report was sent out a couple of weeks ago. Things are heading in a similar direction as the previous year – numbers are creeping down, but seniors still stand out. Need among seniors is concerning. While overall numbers are going down, this is not true in all counties. People can contact Kyle for that county specific info. The number of overall visits is still high and the pounds per client is the highest it’s ever been. A first ever collective data report from all USDA programs administered in WA is coming together in February.

Nicole Garden update: Farm to Food Pantry with Rotary First Harvest report is being finalized with communications team, and will hopefully be out by mid-February. Pounds of food procured both via direct purchase and via farmer donations increased. They are looking into designing a Farm to Food Pantry seal as a marketing tool/label. Also on the horizon is an expansion into Yakima County next year.

A SNAP Ed grant helps fund farm labor and seed costs, helps create policy systems and educational systems at food pantries, including signage, materials, posters etc. My Pantry posters are going through lead agencies, and are also available through the “projects and resources” link on the WSDA Food Assistance website.

WFC update:

Hunger Action Day coming up next Monday (Feb 5th) in Olympia. We are pretty excited as some of our priorities are moving and getting passed, like Breakfast After the Bell finally.

The following Monday (Feb 12th) we are co-hosting with Food Lifeline a Client Intake System Tech Fair at the Food Lifeline warehouse, from noon to 3pm.

2. Roles and Expectations:

Vice Chair Position:

Angela Burton has stepped up as Vice-Chair, and so will be Chair when Sabrina's term ends. However, Angela will be going on maternity leave very soon, so Sabrina has agreed to stay until Angela returns (possibly July). It would be nice to get the next Vice Chair lined up as soon as possible.

Chair duties: send out meeting info and invites, help set the agenda in collaboration with WSDA/WFC, and be on the task forces.

Vice Chair spends the year learning and getting experience to step in as part of our committee's succession planning, as well as Chairs meetings in the Chair person's absence.

Two names came up so far as possible candidates and we are open to all those potentially interested. Jeff Matthias has been interested. He wants to make sure that he can be at the meetings in person and will reflect and think about it. Chris Benson's name also came up.

The FA Advisory Committee should be evolving to meet stakeholder's needs. WSDA is open to that.

3. Task Force(s)**Service Numbers – backpack programs**

Background: The question started with inquiries about counting different types of service, such as those provided through backpack programs. With FA Advisory Committee and WFC board input, the EFAP reporting form was modified to include an optional reporting piece that could begin to capture the numbers from additional programs such as these. But there is more work to do.

Kyle M. - We acknowledge that there are lots of varieties of these types of programs going on. Kyle put together and shared a handout to help the committee start this conversation with the aim of building shared clarity. This raises the larger issue of service counts. It is currently not clear how people are reporting.

Discussion:

Scott Milne raised a question: Hopelink works with another organization who rents space to come and put together backpacks, but this is not really Hopelink's program. How does this fit in, or not, with what this committee is trying to get a handle on?

Kyle shared that there are currently 7 contractors that are consistently reporting backpack programs. *Kim Eads* shared that in many cases TEFAP foods are being used to supplement backpacks, and that new policies just came out supporting this. In EFAP decision making at the county level, there are questions as to whether contractors should or do set up allocations to include these numbers or not. *Angela Burton* pointed out that there are lots of programs that do not understand reporting already. There was discussion around being able to provide forms training and possible templates to educate folks.

Also mentioned the larger problem as it relates to how services are being counted, and that each county may have differences.

Scott Milne mentioned the emergency bags that they hand out that they could be reporting, but are not.

Kris Van Gaskin encouraged that those should be reported, and pointed out that if program numbers/services are not reported, then people do not realize that it happens.

Next Steps – name what additional programs are happening and start agreeing on definitions.

Task force meetings?

Service Counts Task will next meet on March 6th at 11am

4. Next Full Committee Mtg – Monday April 30th 10:30am**5. Close**