

Food Bank of the Southern Tier
Agency Advisory Board
Minutes
December 9, 2016

Present: Jodi Mosher, CC Chemung/Samaritan Center; Kermit Bossard, Spencer VanEtten Food Cupboard; Kathy Greene, Addison Community Food Pantry; Nancy Myers, Lansing Food Pantry; Darlene Bachman, Penn Ave UMC Food Cupboard; Anne Haus, Trumansburg Food Pantry; Kristine Morseman, CC Schuyler/Schuyler County Outreach; Vickie Steck, FBST; Matt Griffin, FBST; Bethany Britton, FBST; Lyndsey Lyman, FBST

Welcome

The meeting called to order at 11:12am

- **Working Agreements Review** – Lyndsey reviewed and no questions from the board
- **Review & approval of October meeting minutes**- motion to approve by Kris M., Kathy G. seconds, all in favor

Review & Updates

Agency Services & Nutrition

- Is this food good to eat? document for clients: Paddy and Elisa (JSY) unable to attend; they've been reviewing best by/expiration dates included in "Is this food good to eat?" document for clients created by Vickie S., they have been reviewing it with clients in the past few months at classes.
- Save the date: Annual Agency Celebration will be on April 28th at Watkins Harbor Hotel

Warehouse

- 2017 TEFAP schedule: Missy unable to attend, schedule is subject to change (see handout), note that first column named "Entitlement/Bonus" is very important- "Bonus" are items those that FBST may or may not receive, "Entitlement" items are pretty much guaranteed
- Menu: A few loads of chicken and a load of lobster will be arriving in the next week or so

Advocacy & Education

- Randi unable to attend; NYS Farm to Food Bank Bill vetoed by Governor Cuomo, Kerm- was interviewed on local news station, the Farm Bureau was disappointed as they were advocates to pass the bill, they felt they had addressed Gov. Cuomo's concerns and not sure why he vetoed; Lyndsey- Gov. Cuomo had concerns about the bill being a duplication of tax credits, in the bill farmers would estimate the value of donation and Gov. Cuomo concerned about how farmers would accurately do that, but that's what that's how other donations are handled in general
- Child Nutrition Reauthorization: Lyndsey- FBST has been working on getting this passed for over 1 ½ years, the bill determines how much Congress will put toward all child nutrition programs, the last bill expired in September 2015, FBST has been working for changes, increased funding, etc. Lyndsey-It's "dead in the water" because Congress has not been able to agree on the wording, Congress is now out of session, the new Congress will not be passing a reauthorization bill; Lyndsey- since Congress didn't pass a new bill, it will continue with current funding unless changes are made to it.
- Lyndsey- In 2018, the Farm Bill will come up again, SNAP is included in the bill; there may be an attempt to block grant it- which basically means that the states can do what they want with the funding, it's like a slush fund for states to do what they want with it as opposed to how it is now as an entitlement program, meaning if you qualify for the program, you get the benefits; FBST will be fighting hard against the block granting, Advocacy will probably start working on it early 2017; Matt- TEFAP is also part of the Farm Bill; FBST Advocacy Department has tried to stay in tune with the change over and keeping up with the changes that may occur

- Lyndsey- NYS Lobby Day will either be on February 28th or March 1st; [post-meeting update: Lobby Day has been officially set for March 1].FBST is working with the Food Bank Association of New York to get a specific date and would like to bring a large number of people to Albany; let FBST know if anyone is interested in going

County Hunger Coalition reports to AAB

- No items to review from October meeting; Lyndsey- reminder that Missy is still working on pricing and decisions on toilet paper, will notify AAB members when there are any updates or decisions have been made
- Matt-Margarine vs butter; we're looking at other alternatives to margarine, butter is very expensive, possibly tub margarine, we will notify AAB as the process continues

Items from November coalition meetings

- Schuyler County: Kris M.- group decided to not create any by-laws
- Tioga County: Kerm B.- group did not have anything to report;
 - Kerm B. had concern with delivery times: requesting deliveries for a certain time when ordering on PWW yet that is not the time that they receive delivery; Darlene- suggested FBST calling agencies late afternoon the day before to notify agencies of the time they can expect a delivery the next day; [post-meeting update: Vickie followed up with Dave about this and he says it is not feasible because there is too much room for error, given that the time it takes for the products to be picked from cold storage the morning of deliveries can vary widely, so it would be very difficult to give an accurate arrival time the afternoon before; Vickie- also if there is a weather concern, whether or not the FBST will deliver that day is decided on in the morning, similar to school closures
- Kerm B.- had a 3-hour late delivery, FBST had the wrong phone number on record, Kerm called FBST, Bethany will follow-up on correct contact information
 - Kerm B.- concerned about drivers' safety with how pallets are stacked in truck; also stacking totes on top of each other; Darlene B.- concerned with volunteers being able to unload/unpack heavy pallets that are stacked [post-meeting update: Dave has been alerted of these concerns. Re: stacking of totes: This has been happening in order to maximize space on delivery trucks. Feel free to cut holes in the sides of the totes to get to the product. If you are unable to take totes in that fashion, let Dave know directly.]
- Jodi M.- Are agencies still supposed to be saving boxes from FBST? Jodi M., Darlene B., and Kris M.- heard that drivers were communicating to volunteers that agencies don't need to save boxes; Vickie will look into this; [post-meeting update- Warehouse has confirmed that agencies should continue saving the following:
 - Boxes with a large, red dot
 - Boxes with Food Bank logo
 - Banana boxes
 - Totes

Vickie sent a reminder message to agencies via Listserve on December 9th; Bethany sent the same message to AAB members on December 9th]

Discussion & Decisions

- **FBST Strategic Plan – 2016 Updates & Plans for 2017 (Matt)**
 - It was valuable for FBST to get feedback from agency representatives during feedback sessions in 2015; these updates show how FBST has changed
 - Last year FBST crafted strategic plan; it's a living document, which means that it's not meant to be an exercise in some kind of theory- FBST really wants to live it, to improve food distribution and to end the meal gap

- Strategic Framework from last year – “Feed”- directly getting to the food gap that we have; “Lead”- how do we provide leadership in the fight against hunger?, FBST sees AAB members as key leaders; “Strengthen”- how do we build our capacity to keep up with the other strategies?, making sure our foundation is strong
- Feed- addressing the problem of hunger today
 - Expanding PDP- FBST has been able to link agencies with local food efforts
 - FBST has exceeded our goal as of the end of September
 - Vickie and Missy have been doing a very nice job of helping agencies with questions and providing them with equipment
 - Only 40 agencies are currently participating; Kerm B. and Kris M.- Why?; Kris M.- Should this be brought up at coalition meetings? Jodi M.- Only 40 agencies participation because agencies are not reporting or because they are not receiving the items from local sources? Vickie-a mix of both
 - Kris M.- Will FBST at some point require agencies to report PDP? Matt- that would be a major shift; Lyndsey-when FBST rolled it out, we wanted to get people on board in waves; when the next PDP strategic groups meet again, they will discuss the next phase-what happens from here;
 - Kerm B.- there are other benefits that FBST should highlight; Matt- good idea for peers to share with other agencies so they understand it; Jodi M.- maybe agencies don’t understand the bigger picture; Lyndsey-some agencies fear the burden of reporting and keep track, once agencies hit the 25,000 pound mark, their Shared Maintenance Fee is reduced for the following year; Vickie-some agencies may not have heard of the impact that has benefited other agencies
 - Assessment and initiatives for delivery channels-
 - Assessment: working with Binghamton University on mapping food insecurity, trying to match up need and response; this can inform our efforts on how we might have to make shifts in MFP sites
 - Initiatives- ways to look at better alignment with our deliveries and agency distribution schedules, also ways to supplement additional deliveries (possibly two deliveries per week); also we have plans for 5 new trucks in the works, we’ve received grants and working on funding to replace/add to our fleet; Just In Time Deliveries- try to complement agencies’ distribution- if FBST is making a delivery in the area of an agency on their distribution day, FBST is working on this as well; Mike L. -CHOW pre-boxes meals, it makes for more work in warehouse, but breaks it up and makes it easier for agencies and clients, for example- instead of sending a tote of corn, the warehouse breaks it up ahead of time for the agencies, still client-choice
 - Healthy Harvest-
 - Purchased produce/prime market produce, FBST is trying to head in that direction; FBST is projecting over two million pounds of produce distributed in 2016; the healthy harvest goal was 1.3 million pounds and it looks like we will be close to hitting that goal; Jodi M.-very impressed with quality of produce and clients are very grateful
- Lead-Educate – we aim to educate ourselves and our community
 - FBST Harvester newsletter that was posted on our website in the Fall was about Speakers’ Bureau, this group can really inform the community and speaks for the work that FBST is doing

- Faith for a Fair New York Conference- Natasha attended; many of our agencies are connected with faith-based places of worship, to what extent can we capitalize on this tradition with education both in communities and churches?
 - Kerm B.- the Speakers' Bureau wants to speak more and would love to get out if any agencies are interested, contact Randi
- Christine Ector teaches Hunger 101, which is a perfect opportunity for volunteers, Boards of Directors, etc. to learn about the experience of food insecurity first hand
- Advocacy & Education Department had elected officials visit summer food sites and pantries; "Community Café" in Binghamton where community members, elected officials, etc. got together to address issue of hunger; some agencies have been participating in advocacy classes, and also taking part in legislative visits like Darlene B. who went to Washington D.C. and Anne H. who went to Albany
- Strengthen- looking at ways we can incorporate more client feedback/input and how it impacts FBST programs; how to inform FBST to take a more client-centric approach; debunking stereotypes
 - Technology- Client data-tracking: FBST is currently contemplating the costs and benefits, there is a monthly cost per site, FBST is considering using client data-tracking at MFP sites and brick and mortar sites; FBST is contemplating whether or not the costs are justified; what else does FBST need to do in terms of hardware (for example-computers) – more information to come in the spring
- **Strategic Plan - Agency Capacity highlights**
- Piloted two Peer Groups
 - Created Partner Agency Education Framework
 - Piloted new "seed money" goal setting framework
 - Piloted Supplemental Delivery program with select agencies
 - 2017 Agency Calendar coming out in January with all events for entire year
- **What did you find eye-opening?:**
 - Anne H.- concerned about leadership sustainability at pantry; Nancy M.- issue with volunteers not wanting to change, "this is the way it's always been" attitude, "I've been doing this for 30 years", etc.
 - What does this mean to you and your agency? Anne H.-being a completely volunteer run pantry- have to look at who the majority of volunteers are-seniors, still hard to get more volunteers, still a case of a lot of volunteers are needed and no one is stepping up, she reaches out to community and still not much response
 - Matt- Anything here that FBST missed, anything we need to know moving forward?
 - Kerm B.-how can communities work to take a more holistic approach? Lyndsey great thing to talk about at peer group; FBST approach- story telling, letting people who have lived through this experience share their story, then asking people what they think of it.
- **Brainstorm Activity: Communication Between Agency Advisory Board and Coalitions**
 - Partner Chat: 2 minutes each
 - Have the topics you've brought to coalitions:
 - Had concrete results?
 - Felt useful?
 - Generated discussion?
 - Have you felt prepared to bring these items up at coalition meetings?

- Key points- Darlene B. and Mike L.-Attendance, getting people to contribute is difficult; Mike L.-not all pantries are on the same page because of different situations – pantries are operating at different levels and have different challenges
 - Anne H. and Nancy M.- Discussion pertains to Ithaca (city center) – don't pertain to outlying pantries, Nancy M.- discussion goes flat, find a way to keep people involved
 - Mike L.-have we ever sought feedback of coalitions, to find common elements to bring back to AAB?; Lyndsey-that's the function of bringing questions back to AAB meeting – the topics from coalition to AAB are supposed to be higher level topics, something the Food Bank may need to help out with instead of operational, day-to-day items that are taken care of over the phone, etc; Lyndsey wants to find a way to portray this more clearly; Mike L.-may want to consider making a one-pager/infographic of “this is why we're here” for coalition members, a one-pager with purpose of AAB + coalition
 - Jodi M.-trouble getting enough people to coalitions, poll coalitions participants – what is important to them?; Better explanation to coalition meetings about purpose of AAB + coalitions; Mike suggested this as a conference topic, topic for January coalition meetings, or a listserve message
 - Kathy G. and Kerm B.- many things AAB members bring back to their coalitions is covered by FBST when they attend
 - Kerm B.- some issues are low attendance and conveying what purpose is of coalition; has found more purpose from the peer groups than coalition meetings
 - Lyndsey-thinks that there has been a lot of confusion on this; Lyndsey being at both meetings, and also bringing up the items at AAB; intention has always been that this is a democratic process, AAB members are the elected reps by county; we will take this up at next AAB meeting (meeting ran over)

1. Closing

- **Identify Items to Share at County Hunger Coalitions in January** – see attachment.
- **Meeting adjourned 1:05pm**

Our next meeting is February 10, 2016, 11 am – 1 pm

Handouts: *October Meeting Minutes; 2017 TEFAP Schedule; December 9 Meeting Follow-Up – Coalition Engagement.*