

Food Bank of the Southern Tier CEO Report - May 2021

Strategic Investment Fund Update

I am pleased to report that the Finance Committee approved the **Net Asset Designation and Use Policy** developed by Tim and a small subcommittee. That policy calculates the amount of our Strategic Investment Fund after setting aside three months of operating reserves and the amount needed to preserve the Capital Asset Fund. These funds will be calculated annually and allow us to maintain a Strategic Investment Fund for as long as we continue to see annual operating surpluses.

Given last year's unprecedented surplus, we have calculated **our Strategic Investment Fund at a little over \$5M**. Our initial plan is to spend these funds over a three-year period on projects and activities that align with at least one of our Strategic Priorities, address at least one of the recommendations from the Needs Assessment, or build our organizational capacity. We created an RFP process where staff members could work collaboratively to develop and submit proposals for funding. **To date, we have received nine proposals requesting a total of \$3.1M**. All proposals will be reviewed and scored tomorrow morning by a review committee comprised of myself, Tim, and Meghan. We plan to share funding recommendations for BOD approval at the June strategy session.

2021 Hiring Plan

As many of you are aware, we budgeted for four new positions in 2021. Two of those positions, the **Receptionist and the Nutrition Resource Manager**, were reinstated after being vacant in 2020 and were added to the operating budget. The other two positions, the **Client Registration Specialist and an additional Truck Driver**, were added to the Disaster Relief budget as they were essential to our COVID response efforts. Since the beginning of the year, we have planned for the addition of three new full-time positions support key initiatives such as **Programs & Partnerships and PantryTrak** as well as one temporary, part-time position to help manage increased workload in Development. We also decided to upgrade our **Communication Manager into a Director-level position** in recognition of the level of responsibility associated with that role and anticipated supervisory responsibilities over the **Digital Manager**. We are currently in the process of finalizing two additional positions, a **Community Empowerment Coordinator** and a **Client Communications Manager**. These positions will be incorporated into our Strategic Investment Fund as part of our client engagement efforts. Finally, we plan to add one new position, a **People & Culture Manager**, and upgrade two existing positions, Director of Business Services & Logistics Manager, as part of our COO transition plan. We plan to share a final hiring plan with the BOD at the June strategy session.

Equity Lens Work

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has been working with Batiste Leadership since March on developing an Equity Lens to guide our work moving forward. As you may recall, Equity was one of our five Strategic Priorities and was also the primary driver of our recent Needs Assessment. The SLT has discussed what Equity means in the context of the Food Bank's mission & vision and whether or not our current values support an inclusive organizational culture. We determined that our values needed to be updated and worked through that process over a couple of weeks. As I mention in my BOD education presentation on values, we are going to be creating a **Values in Action** plan to ensure that they infuse the culture in a positive and lasting way. Our first step is to deploy a survey to all staff to determine how well we are currently living those values. This will provide us with a baseline from which to work towards improvement. In the meantime, the SLT is continuing to work with Batiste Leadership through the end of June when we hope to have a variety of tools and techniques available to all staff that help guide our decision making through an Equity Lens. We will also need to decide what the next stage of this work will look like.