

**EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
PA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

**Minutes of the October 12, 2017 Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steveanna Wynn called the meeting to order in Rom 405 at the Department of Agriculture. All others introduced themselves, their titles, and who they work for.

Committee Members in attendance were: Joe Arthur, Sheila Christopher, Jane Clements-Smith, Kris Douglas, Kathy Fisher, Heather Foor, Alice Gray, Heather Hallman, Diane Kraft, Rich Kutz, and Steveanna Wynn. Also in attendance from the Department of Agriculture were Cheryl Cook, Caryn Long Earl, Sandy Hopple, Melissa Seiple, and Amanda Wasko.

**AGENDA** - Motion to approve the agenda was made by Joe Arthur, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kris Douglas

**MINUTES (from March 29, 2017 meeting)** – Motion to approve minutes was made by Kathy Fisher and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alice Gray.

**BUDGET: Update on FY2017-18 Budget** – The Legislature passed an FY2017-18 budget on June 30<sup>th</sup>, though they didn't pass enabling legislation necessary to allow the administration to spend the budget money. Nonetheless, state dollars for a majority of programs and services was made available, including funding for SFPP and PASS. Funding for a number of other programs was put into a budgetary reserve. There was a proposal put forth by the Governor when the budget was initially put out – the lease/lease back proposal for the Farm Show Building which was estimated to generate approximately \$200 million. This has resurfaced again as an option because Governor Wolf is looking at state options for funding the budget absent the passage of any necessary enabling bills. There is funding for State Food and PASS for the entire year.

**FY 2018/19 SFPP/FMNP Status** – Hunger Free Pennsylvania and Feeding Pennsylvania have come up with a recommendation. Motion was made to recommend that the Department of Agriculture request \$24 million for the SFPP line item in FY2018-19 – \$21 million for SFPP and \$3 million for PASS, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Arthur. Currently it is funded at \$19.1 million, with \$1 million for PASS and the balance is for SFPP. Motion was made to keep the FMNP funding level at \$2,000,079.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jane Clements-Smith.

**STATE FOOD PURCHASE PROGRAM (SFPP)** – For all counties that have sent in their 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter expense and data report, their 2<sup>nd</sup> payment has been processed. We are still missing 3 counties – Columbia, Venango, and Philadelphia. Once we have all the information, our plan is to use geospatial technology to include in the annual report to paint a better picture. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter report format was sent out and is due back October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM (FMNP)** – There were some additional funds made available for both Seniors and WIC which enabled us to distribute additional checks. Through September, our dollar value redeemed has increased over the last year by about \$77,900 and that will reflect on our redemption rates. Recipients have until the end of November to use their checks.

**EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)** – Amanda provided handouts for everyone to review regarding TEFAP Entitlement Commodities and Bonus Commodities. Currently with entitlement, we have \$9.7 million to spend. Last year the total was \$10.4 million. These numbers are lower, but we tend to get more money throughout the year. There was a survey sent out this year to help determine what commodities the department should offer next year which received 161 responses. The format has been changed some so that everyone will receive a variety of commodities throughout the year and so

that they will not receive the same product that cannot be easily moved. Based on the responses from the survey, there will be two new products that we will bring in – roasted peanuts and vegetable oil.

TEFAP Bonus Update – Looked at bonus for 2017 which was over \$12 million. For 2018, right now, it is \$5.3 million and that will continue to grow. One struggle for bonus is after the product has been requested, it is extremely difficult to change the orders. If you are committing to the product, then the product needs to be taken. There was a bonus transfer form that was emailed out to everyone. If you are transferring your bonus to another TEFAP bonus agency, you will need to fill out the form. USDA will be checking to make sure this form is on file.

**COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CSFP)** - Sheila Christopher provided an update. FY 2017 was finished September 30<sup>th</sup>. We are eligible for expansion, but we are not going to request any additional caseload. We have done some national surveys to see how other states are administering this program based on regulations and the requirement of proof of income. 71% of states that participate in this program responded to the survey. The results were 50/50. 50% of states do self-declaration and 50% do proof of income. There will be more surveys done in the future to dig deeper into this issue. There was another survey that was completed regarding a 6-month certification with CSFP. Every 6 months there has to be verification that individuals are eligible for the program and that they still do in fact want the program. Currently WIC is being tracked. There is hope to be able to remove the 6-month stipulation.

**PASS Update** – The program has completed its 2<sup>nd</sup> full year. For FY 2017, 13 subcontractors around the state have distributed 2.7 million pounds of food. There was 2.7 million pounds of food distributed last year with \$1 million of appropriations not only for food but other expenses. Since inception of the program, 5 million pounds of food have been distributed. 3.8 million pounds of that was fresh fruits and vegetables. Also 500,000 pounds of eggs and 577,000 pounds of cheese, milk, and yogurt. For FY 2017, over 493,000 households were served. Currently there are over 95 farmers and other producers involved in the program. We are still looking for geographical locations to expand as well as farmers and producers. Outreach is currently being done with agricultural individuals. Trying to get these individuals on a committee that will help steer the program. This committee will be about 8-10 persons.

**TEFAP Management Evaluation** – Caryn reviewed preliminary results of the TEFAP Management Evaluation conducted by the USDA FNS Mid-Atlantic Regional Office in September 2017. While the review went well, we do anticipate several findings and recommendations will be identified in the final report that will need to be addressed by the Bureau. These will include (1) the need to update agreements with Lead Agencies, Soup Kitchens, and Distributors to include updated language required by USDA, (2) the need for an improved process to verify the tax-exempt status of local agencies working with TEFAP Leads, (3) additional guidance on self-declaration forms and procedures, and (4) the need for an updated State Plan.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Blueprint to End Hunger/Governor's Food Security Partnership** – There will be an event October 20, 2017 regarding the Blueprint and where we will be going in the future. Pat Dombrosky from FNS/MARO will be speaking on the Farm Bill and Ellen Vollinger from the Food Research and Action Center will be coming to discuss nutrition title and key priorities for Pennsylvania. We will be celebrating some accomplishments we have had and discuss where we go from this point. After this meeting, we will have a small meeting to go into some specific goals and what steps will be taken next.

**SFPP Food Standards** – Thank you to Sheila Christopher who took this and made it into a very nice format. A copy has been provided to everyone to get some feedback with changes. Once the feedback

has been provided, we will finalize this and have it put on the website. Any comments should be sent to Caryn by October 27, 2017.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Upcoming Committee Nominations** -A new plan was put in place because of the number of members going off at the same time before Joe Quattrocchi left. This plan established a rotation for the 12-member committee that results in 1/3 of the Committee cycling off in a given calendar year. The members whose terms will be ending in December 2017 are Joe Arthur, Diane Kraft, and Steveanna Wynn. (Steve Craig would have cycled off in December too, but he resigned his position in September.) One of the problems is an individual cannot come back on the committee in the position category that they just filled. One concern is the chair position. Steveanna is willing to stay on the committee but cannot in the current position she holds.

Motion was made by Sheila to rotate the individuals that are going off and bring them back in under a different category. Joe Arthur nominated for Food & Nutrition Advocate Representative, Steveanna Wynn nominated for County Government/Emergency Food Provider Representative, and Mary Ann Warren nominated for the 2<sup>nd</sup> County Government/Emergency Food Provider Representative position. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kris Douglas. Diane Kraft also provided some recommendations to fill the Dietician/Nutritionist category.

**Hunters Sharing the Harvest** – Caryn gave a little history on this program. Currently this program receives up to \$140,000 to help defray the costs of processing the venison that is distributed through the emergency food network. They have asked for an additional \$10,000 to help with some of the costs. Caryn has made a soft commitment to them for \$5,000 with the understanding that this would be discussed with this committee since the money is coming from the TEFAP administrative fund. In the past if there has been additional funding there is a 5<sup>th</sup> quarter payment that has been provided. Anything more that would be provided to HSH would be coming out of that 5<sup>th</sup> quarter payment.

Sheila Christopher made a motion to give Hunters Sharing the Harvest up to \$145,000, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Arthur. Sheila Christopher made another motion that before HSH's next contract, Food Distribution will come to this committee to discuss, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kathy Fisher.

**Increasing the TEFAP Income Limit in PA** – Sheila Christopher and Jane Clements-Smith provided information on this proposal. Rachel Schneider is an advocate from Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank who did some research on her own. The state has the ability to change the eligibility limit for TEFAP within the state. Sheila conducted a survey with Feeding PA and Hunger Free PA member so to see if we would increase eligibility from 150% of poverty to 200% of poverty how that would impact the work that our agencies do. There were 2 maps handed out that showed the increase in newly eligible individuals per county and individuals presently above the 150% poverty line. There are quite a few states that are at 185%, Sheila and Jane recommended that PA increase our eligibility threshold to 200%. The case study that was conducted in Pennsylvania found that there was no negative increase when the change was made. After some discussion with the EFAAC committee it has been determined this was not the right time to make this change.

Next meeting – scheduled for March 21, 2018, 10:00 am.