



Hunger Free Lenawee!

Food Hub/Oasis Subcommittee

Minutes

September 21, 2021

1:00PM

In-person and Zoom

- Call to Order/Introduction: Madeline DeMarco, Vickie Pfeifer, Laura Schultz-Pipis, Emily Pickney, Anne Walker, Debra Davies, Pam Byrnes
- Goals of meeting
 - Revisit goals of food hub idea
 - Idea for the hub came from conversations where so many different food distributions were happening in the County, but they weren't always being reached by the folks who needed it most.
 - This led to the discussion of creating a food hub in Lenawee County similar to what's being done in Monroe and the surrounding area
 - Surveyed local pantries to gauge who and what they're currently serving, what their needs are, and their interest in participating in the hub.
 - The Hub would be a centralized resource for providing food and coordinating resources for local pantries so that the folks who need food assistance most are receiving it.
 - We don't want to be "In control" because pantries aren't interested in being told what to do.
 - Each pantry is serving a very different population. The Hub would get the food that each pantry wants to them rather than just giving all the same things.

- The importance of providing hygiene products instead of just food.
- We would like to provide educational opportunities to specific pantries to help patrons learn how to use fresh, nutrient-dense food.
 - Growing Hope in Ypsilanti has a great educational model for us to look into
- Discuss best way to tally and summarize data from surveys
 - Anne collected a great amount of surveys from many of the County's pantries. She also provided a colorful map that we can utilize to help map the data.
 - A lot of pantries are funded by their sponsoring church, schools, or local businesses wanting to give back.
 - As a result, many pantries are beholden to the guidance and directives of the church or overseeing body that holds nonprofit status.
 - # of households served isn't always the most accurate number because some families are served by multiple pantries, some folks completely rely on the pantries while others only pop-in once a month...
 - Social component (and importance of) to meal service
 - The importance of getting folks the culturally appropriate food they actually want, know how to use, and will eat was highlighted.
 - Many pantries are in need of volunteers
 - Many pantries are also staffed by older adults. Multigenerational staff is needed for sustainability.
 - Pantries are interested in sharing (equitable opportunities), better access to resources, cost-savings.
 - A lot of pantries are not sure what the Hub is or what it can offer
 - We placed pins on the map to represent where all the responding pantries are geographically located.
 - Black = Pantry/distribution.
 - Green = Holiday boxes
- Next steps
 - Vickie will ask MSUE staff to compile the survey data into both individual and aggregate responses.
 - It will be important to have specific names and their preferred contact method
 - Anne and other subcommittee staff will reach out to the pantries that haven't yet responded to the survey.
 - Win the hearts of the pantries! We would ultimately like to have some sort of townhall meeting about the Hub where we explain what it is and what it would provide to different pantries. This is important for providing a cohesive message about the Hub.

- No matter how awesome we make the Hub, if pantries don't believe in it, it won't get used. Therefore, creating trusting relationships with and gaining buy-in from the pantries is vital to our success.
 - Involve pantries in the building process. Participation is a great way to build buy-in!

■ Adjournment

- Next Subcommittee Meeting

October 19, 2021 @ 2:00pm via hybrid