

**FOOD BANK OF THE SOUTHERN TIER  
ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING  
July 15, 2020  
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
AGENDA**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME</b>
1. Welcome and Check-ins	Erin Summerlee	Discussion	15
2. Approve June 1, 2020 Meeting Minutes	Erin Summerlee	Approve	5
3. FBST Advocacy Updates a. NOEP Advocacy Letter b. Poor People's Campaign c. TEFAP Attestation d. Congressman Brindisi Visit	Lyndsey Lyman/Natasha Thompson/ Randi Quackenbush	Discussion	15
4. Advocacy Guiding Principles a. Overview of Proposed Process b. Discussion & Feedback	Lyndsey Lyman	Discussion	30
5. August Recess Planning a. Gillibrand to CFD? (Nourish NY) b. Reed to Summer Meals Distribution? (Summer Meals Waivers)	Randi Quackenbush	Discussion	20
6. Committee Member Updates	Erin Summerlee	Discussion	15
7. Action Items	Erin Summerlee	Discussion	5
8. Wrap up / Adjourn	Erin Summerlee	Discussion	5

**Next Meeting**  
**October 5, 2020**  
2:00-4:00 p.m.

**FOOD BANK OF THE SOUTHERN TIER**  
**Advocacy Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**June 1, 2020            2:00-4:00 pm**

Committee Member	In Attendance	Unable to Attend
Erin Summerlee (Chair)	X	
Lorna Swaine-Abdallah	X	
Mark Bordeau	X	
Catherine Rogers	X	
Wendy Pursel	X	
Nancy Eckstrom	X	
Steve Fowler	X	
Maggie Coffey	X	
Dave Radin	X	
Jessica Gosa	X	
Tess McKinley	X	
Joe Thomas	X	
Charles Thomas	X	
Kathy Greene	X	
Samantha Hillson	X	
Jackie Bogart		
<b>Ex-Officio</b>		
Natasha Thompson	X	
<b>Staff</b>		
Lyndsey Lyman	X	
Randi Quackenbush	X	
Lynn Dates	X	

**1. Welcome and Check-ins**

**2. Approval of February Minutes**

*Dave Radin made a motion to approve the February minutes.  
Maggie Coffey seconded. All were in favor. None opposed.*

**3. FBST COVID-19 Updates**

Natasha reviewed the COVID-19 Advocacy Committee Update which focused on Response, Operations Changes, Client Demand, Federal and State program participation, and Recent Advocacy Actions. She reviewed the Food Bank’s Response Timeline and explained the functions of Community Food Distributions (CFDs) and Food Hubs pointing out that registration for CFDs was 50/50 registering online and by phone. 2/3 of all food was distributed by Partner Agencies; total distribution since 3/16/2020 = 3,975,107 vs. 1,908,116 in 2019 (108% increase). She explained that Food Hubs will be phased out soon due to tightening of supply chain and lack of non-perishables and she noted a 53% increase in households served in April (56% in March) pointing out that we are serving fewer seniors through CFDs compared to Mobile Food Pantries (MFP). Also noting that unique views in Food Finder have increased by 164% in March and through the funding provided by the Feeding America/Jeff Bezos grant we’ve developed a client-focused advertising campaign distributed through all available media outlets to reach people unfamiliar with Food Bank services. She reviewed Federal and State programs that have either been newly created or have received increased funding: Nourish NY provides funding for Food Banks to purchase local agriculture products, USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) with funding for perishable food boxes, USDA The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) with

## **FOOD BANK OF THE SOUTHERN TIER**

### **Advocacy Committee Meeting Minutes**

**June 1, 2020**

**2:00-4:00 pm**

additional funds for food, storage and distribution, and NYS Pandemic EBT Program which provides funds for families with school-aged children who receive free/reduced meals. The group discussed SNAP advocacy focusing on Congressman Tom Reed.

#### **4. Committee Member COVID-19 Updates**

The group shared the effects of COVID-19 on their constituents: Mark Bordeau reported that most school meal programs are losing money, possible teacher layoffs in the fall, and the possibility of shutting down summer programs unless waivers are provided for all schools, not only the neediest. He noted that the HEROES act was approved but unsure of the amount and said that he reached out to Brindisi's office to see if he might help urge the USDA for a waiver. Dave Radin reported that he reached out to a group of Veterans while seeking new Advocacy Committee members. Maggie Coffey reported that the Humane Society of Schuyler County offered to give pet food that could be distributed through CFDs. Jessica Gosa reported that PetSmart provided money to Meals on Wheels and that they can track who owns pets and what type of food they need. She reported that there was a 50% increase in senior need since March 2020 averaging 1,000 meals each week; they are currently serving more than normal, but not as many since the start of COVID-19. She pointed out that human contact is equally important as a meal, but social distancing has made that impossible, however, frequent phone calls help nurture a feeling of connectedness. She added that Wellness & Nutrition and Community Services for the Elderly are funding streams through the NYS Budget that are areas of concern right now. The group discussed priorities for their organizations/constituents given COVID-19: Natasha reported that the NOEP program that funds the SNAP outreach position expired July 1, 2020 because NYS isn't signing new contracts.

#### **5. Updated FBST Legislative Priorities Given COVID-19**

Lyndsey introduced several Legislative policies to the group for discussion and how these measures could be adopted by the Advocacy Committee through a framework of short-term and long-term advocacy efforts using either passive or active support. She reviewed the following: The Farmers Feeding Families – Coronavirus Response Act (H.R. 6721) - Senate companion bill (S. 3655); The Relief for America's Small Farmers Act – announced by Sen. Gillibrand Apr. 13 NY Health Act; Universal Paid Sick Days/Leave; Worker Relief & Security Act; Urge Congress to include federal support for State and Local Services (schools, fire, police, healthcare/hospitals, Coronavirus testing & tracing, USPS) in the next COVID relief bill. The group discussed long-term priorities and integrating politicians as volunteers into food distribution events.

#### **6. Committee Next Steps**

Erin pointed out the need for a process to zero in on the Food Bank's priorities and noted that the Advocacy Committee should determine which specific issues and policies would need to go before the Board of Directors. Natasha, Lyndsey and Randi will identify priorities, send to Erin, and then to the Advocacy Committee. Lyndsey proposed listening sessions at CFDs and will come up with questions to connect with constituents, so they feel comfortable sharing their stories.

#### **7. Wrap up/Adjourn**

– Lyndsey requested that Advocacy Committee members share any potential bills that could be supported or discussed. Randi reminded the group that U.S. Representative Anthony Brindisi would be volunteering at an upcoming CFD at SUNY Broome. The group requested a July meeting. Lynn will send a Doodle Poll to determine the best July date.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:59 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,  
*Lynn Dates, Executive Assistant to  
Natasha Thompson, President & CEO*