

Marion Polk Food Share  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Sept. 24, 2020 — Held virtually via WebEx

**Board Members Attending:** Frances Alvarado, Alex Beamer, Warren Bednarz, John Burt, Courtney Knox Busch, Mike Garrison, Jim Green, Holly Nelson, Linda Norris, Debbie Sailer, Bahaa Wanly, Mark Wilk

**Staff Members Attending:** Kendra Alexander, Eileen DiCicco, Ian Dixon-McDonald, Sayla Elsbree-Kraft, Rick Gaupo, Jim Green, Julie Hambuchen, Corrina Hawkins, Sam Tenney

**Call to Order**

Courtney Knox Busch called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

**Guest Introductions**

Sayla Elsbree-Kraft, former food resource developer, now Executive Support Coordinator & Special Projects Manager. Background in sustainable food systems.

Sam Tenney, newly hired communications manager, in charge of website, social media, printed materials.

**Consent Agenda**

- Board Meeting Minutes, June 2020
- August Financial statements

**ACTION:** Warren Bednarz moved and Bahaa Wanly seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

**COVID (and Wildfire) reflection**

Board Chair Courtney Knox Busch said she wanted to allow some time for board members to reconnect during this first meeting of the fiscal year. She posed the questions: How have you been during COVID? How does this affect the way you think about the work of the Food Share?

Several members, including Linda Norris, Mark Wilt, and Warren Bednarz expressed they now believe COVID will have long-term impacts. That on top of wildfire losses will require the Food Share's intervention. Several, including Courtney, Holly Nelson and Bahaa expressed gratitude for the outpouring of community help and support.

Rick Gaupo expressed concerns for how COVID will impact youth whose educational experience has changed due to COVID, and those who have lost their jobs.

Mark wanted to recognize Frances Alvarado's heroic efforts, going above and beyond, to serve the farmworker community.

Debbie Sailler noted the challenges both COVID and the wildfires have caused for the healthcare systems. She also said she's proud of how nimble the Food Share has been in responding to needs.

John Burt expressed gratitude to the farming community and food processors who have continued to work during these crises to keep food flowing to the hunger-relief network.

Courtney closed with an expression of gratefulness for "all you are doing personally and the work you're doing together."

### **Food Share Programs**

VP of Programs Ian Dixon-McDonald presented program updates, COVID-19 response and milestones for FY20.

- Program Updates

Ian recognized the amazing work of the programs and ops teams in handling the increased needs and food supply challenges associated with COVID-19, and the immediate response to the wildfires. He mentioned several staff were evacuated during the wildfires, and working in the smoky environment was hard, but staff stepped up to respond to the need. He predicted the lasting economic impacts and need for resources from both crises will be long-lasting.

Wildfire response – The Food Share coordinated response with the Marion County Office of Emergency Management, Salvation Army and the Red Cross. We provided 20,000 pounds of food to people accessing the Oregon State Fairgrounds evacuation center and 4,000 pounds to the Salvation Army for meal preparation.

The buildings of our Santiam Canyon partners - Mehama, Mill City, Idanha/Detroit, Scotts Mills – remained standing. Now we are focusing on doing what we can to make sure they have everything they need to serve their communities.

- Community Impact of COVID

Food distribution spiked during the Farmers to Families Food Box Program but is trending down. September is not expected to be a million-pound month (April-August were). The school site distributions have ended. Pantry visits and individuals served remain higher than last year at this time. The food supply is declining, but the need is not.

Linda Norris and Alex Beamer asked what we are doing to deal with food supply issues. Ian said we're talking about purchasing more food; we're expecting more shelf-stable food from Feeding America; retail food recovery has resumed; we expect harvest season donations. However, USDA deliveries have been disrupted and it's hard to even get food purchases fulfilled. We will not be able to maintain former high distribution levels.

Meals on Wheels saw big increases in spring and early summer in home delivered meals. We're pushing 700 clients per day, up from about 600 pre-COVID. Dining rooms are still closed. MOW has held steady, but at elevated service levels.

Ian noted that there is a direct correlation between increased service numbers and geographic areas that are hardest hit by the coronavirus impacts including NE Salem and the Woodburn. Those areas are the most racially diverse — Latinx, Pacific Islander, Black — and agencies serving them saw the biggest spikes.

There was discussion about how we reach out to the most vulnerable populations. Ian noted AWARE and Iskam are doing amazing work. AWARE is providing mobile pantry services to farmworker families and home delivered food boxes to housebound families. Iskam has added home delivery services and remote distributions.

It was noted that coordinators at both pantries are building relationships with trusted community partners to let food-insecure people know the pantry is a safe place to go for food. Frances Alvarado lauded AWARE for its work in building relationships and trust, especially within the farmworker community.

Rick noted that AWARE, Iskam, Ella Curran and Silverton Area Community Aid are examples of pantries that are seen as community partners.

We will be looking more deeply into where we have partners; what their geographical reach is, who remains underserved, and how to best reach them.

- Major Milestones

	FY19	FY20
<b>Pounds Distributed</b>	8.8 million lbs.	11.1 million lbs.
<b>Pantry Visits</b>	120,000	145,000
<b>MOW Meals</b>	178,000	211,000
<b>COVID-19 Relief Visits</b>		20,000

MARION POLK FOOD SHARE

Alex Beamer asked about using some of our FY20 \$3 million surplus to buy more food, noting unemployment rates are still high and need may outweigh food availability. Rick said the Ops team has been authorized to spend \$300,000 on food purchase. Ian added that it would take hundreds of thousands of dollars to make up the difference in food availability. To illustrate, Kendra noted we can spend \$25,000-\$50,000 on one truckload of food depending upon the type (i.e. corn vs peanut butter or tuna) and it may only last 7-8 weeks. She also noted there are

disruptions in the food supply nationally and internationally. Ian said we are trying to be strategic about purchases.

### **Preview of October & December Meetings**

President Rick Gaupo outlined upcoming meetings. Given the crises, it's been hard to have those longer-term conversations.

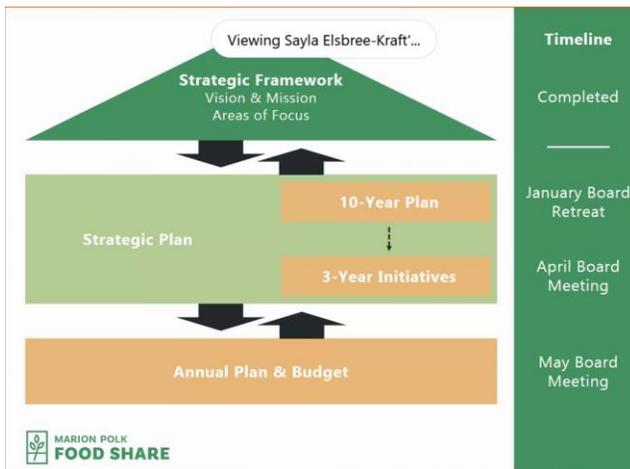
Oct. 22 — fiscal update; learnings from CV19; focus on rest of FY; finalized by the audit

Rick wants to plan for the remainder of FY21, identifying 1-2 big targets.

Dec. 3 — revised budget; hopefully focus on 2-3 highest priorities for FY21.

Jan. 30 — board retreat (probably virtual) – dig in with focus on 10-yr plan – start talking long-term.

Rick said the process outlined below is solid, however, the timeline is more tentative.



### **Adjournment**

Courtney adjourned the meeting at 9:34 a.m.

### **Dates to Remember**

**October Board meeting — Oct. 22**

**December Board meeting — Dec. 3**

**January Retreat – Jan. 30**

  
[Warren Bednarz \(Nov 5, 2020 12:21 PST\)](#)

*Warren Bednarz*  
Board Secretary

# Board Meeting Minutes 2020.09.24

Final Audit Report

2020-11-05

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