

THE ALASKA FOOD COALITION



ALASKA FOOD COALITION 2005 ANNUAL SPRING MEMBER MEETING FAIRBANKS COMMUNITY FOOD BANK FAIRBANKS, ALASKA MAY 10-11, 2005

MINUTES

Members Present:

Susannah Morgan*	Food Bank of Alaska – Anchorage
Ruth Riley-Elsvaas	Food Bank of Alaska – Anchorage
Annabelle Stevens	United Way of Anchorage
Diane DiSanto	Anchorage Mayor’s Office
Jetta Whitaker	Glory Hole – Juneau
Jim Crockett*	Bean’s Café – Anchorage
Sam Kirstein	Fairbanks Community Food Bank
Trevor Jones*	Kodiak Island Food Bank
Stephen Reshetar	New Hope – Anchorage
Mike Rochin	New Hope – Anchorage
Ken Farrow	Alpha Omega – Delta Junction
Judith Farrow	Alpha Omega – Delta Junction
Maj. Grundahl	SA/FES and McKinnell - Anchorage
Stephanie Wheeler	Faith Based & Community Initiatives – DHSS - Anchorage
Linda Swarner*	Kenai Peninsula Food Bank - Soldotna
Louise Charles*	Bethel Senior Services
Janelle Gomez	WIC & Children’s Services – DHSS – Anchorage
Dan Stellar	Alaska Food Coalition

* 2004 -2005 AFC Board Member

Tuesday

The National Perspective

12:30 – 1:30 Kris Warren, America’s Second Harvest

Kris Warren from America’s Second Harvest – The Nation’s Food Bank Network (A2H) gave a presentation about his organization and the food relief system in America. He discussed the mission, structure and organization of A2H and its relationship with the food banks it serves. He stated that through the nation’s food banks, A2H distributes 2 billion pounds of food annually. However, 90 billion pounds of food is wasted annually. He also emphasized that A2H is a grassroots and not a “top-down” organization. Decisions are made in consultation and discussion with the members – the nation’s food banks. He also discussed the new allocation system created by the Allocation Task Force, of which Susannah Morgan was a key member. This system will result in increased choices for all the food banks. Susannah added that while Food Bank of Alaska (FBA) would now be able to have a far greater choice in the food it accessed, it was now incumbent upon the agencies and community food banks to notify FBA about what their needs were. *(Kris Warren’s PowerPoint presentation is available on the AFC website, www.alaskafood.org).*

1:30 – 2:30 Linda Stone, Western Region Anti-Hunger Consortium

Linda Stone from the Western Region Anti-Hunger Consortium (WRAHC) gave a presentation about WRAHC and its advocacy work, as well as some opportunities for the AFC to get involved in advocacy. She stated that the new Federal Budget Resolution cuts \$35 billion from programs helping poor families, including up to \$3 billion from the Food Stamp Program and a 13% budget cut for WIC.

Linda highlighted some of the challenges facing hunger-relief programs in Alaska and some of the advantages Alaska enjoys. She also discussed several specific areas where the AFC could get involved in advocacy work, such as regarding the school breakfast program and the Food Stamp Program. In both these areas, getting more Alaskans involved in these programs would not only increase federal dollars coming to Alaska, but would also reduce the strain on the anti-hunger agencies. Linda concluded by highlighting specific steps the AFC could take to get involved in advocacy, such as through strengthening its coalition and identifying areas where certain programs can grow. She also invited the AFC to become involved with the WRAHC. *(Linda Stone’s complete PowerPoint presentation is available on the AFC website, www.alaskafood.org).*

The Local Perspective

2:30 – 4:30 Check-in

Linda Swarner – Kenai Peninsula Food Bank

Linda spoke about the new mural at the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank (KPFB) created in partnership with the University of Alaska Service Learning program. She stated that overall numbers have increased from 2003 -2004. They have seen a dramatic increase in food pantry clients but a decrease in soup kitchen clients. They have a big increase in donated food now that they have started picking up food 7 days a week. They have 4 employees through the MAST program. The KPFB has a new gardener and will feature more organic produce this year. They also have new t-shirts for sale, which feature a portion of the new mural.

Sam Castle-Kirstein – Fairbanks Community Food Bank

Sam passed in check-in.

Annabelle Stevens – United Way

Annabelle works on the end of gathering and distributing funds. She has received an increase in need calls. She is working on the NALC Food Drive, which was held on May 14th and she was also involved in the Thanksgiving Blessing.

Janelle Gomez – WIC & Children’s Services – DHHS

Janelle stated CSFP has surpassed allotment. The case load was reduced for FY 05. It is now 2429 – this month 2500 were served, so we could exceed funding. Currently there are two grantees for CSFP, Food Bank of Alaska and the Fairbanks Community Food Bank. An expansion could include remote sites with free shipping such as Kodiak. Janelle reviewed the CSFP income guidelines and discussed how children are more difficult to enroll than adults. Janelle also stated that the School Nutrition Association was very excited about the opportunity to apply for the AFC’s mini-grants.

Mike Rochin – New Hope on the Last Frontier

Mike stated that in September New Hope was serving 120 families per distribution and now they are serving 250. They constantly need more and more food as they are adding 25 to 30 families per week. They will soon be open to clients 2 days a week and are renovating some rooms in their facility so they can leave the food pantry set up all week. Mike reported that New Hope is utilizing the Waste Not, Want Not method and spoke very highly of it. He said clients love the opportunity to shop.

Steve Reshetar – New Hope on the Last Frontier

Steve said that, for their second weekly distribution, New Hope is looking at doing a late afternoon and evening time to serve working poor. He also stated that New Hope used to have people line up very early in the morning to get in first. Now they use a lotto system, which they developed with Susannah Morgan’s assistance, for everyone who is there at 8:00 am, thus alleviating the early morning line up.

Susannah Morgan – Food Bank of Alaska

Susannah stated that FBA had seen a massive increase in poundage distributed, but current inventory is very small. She spoke about the new collaborations, including Thanksgiving Blessing and the collaboration between Food Bank and Bean’s. Susannah said a group would be going to Washington DC for National Hunger Awareness Day on

June 7th. Susannah reported that with the new grant from the Rasmuson Foundation, the new web-based database is now up and running. The four largest food pantries in Anchorage can now put client information on the same database. The hope is to expand this database to all agencies using CSFP.

Jim Crockett – Bean’s Café

Jim said that Bean’s has recently required that all workers receive food safety certification. He said Bean’s has recently instituted collaborations with social service organizations such as 9 Star which is helping with GED Training. Bean’s is looking at measurable outcomes beyond feeding people.

Louise Charles – Bethel Senior Services

Louise said that Bethel Senior Services is getting more and more produce. They are also getting more individual donations from individuals cleaning out their freezers. However, there is a continual increase in need, partly due the gas price in rural Alaska now reaching over \$3 per gallon. Louise also pointed out that there is little money and few opportunities in the villages, so individuals come to hub communities, such as Bethel for vocational training.

Diane DiSanto – Anchorage Mayor’s Office

Diane talked about her work on the homeless task force examining homeless camps and panhandlers. She also talked about the SAFE City Program, where churches give the city a certain amount of money. She said that from her experience the face of hunger is the working poor. She also said that she had participated in the AFC mini-grants review process.

Ken and Judith Farrow – Alpha Omega Life Care Services

Ken and Judith said that Alpha Omega is a multi-service organization and is a care coordinator for the state. They have a new storage building which was built with a grant from the AFC. Alpha Omega is expanding their volunteer program. Ken and Judith reported that the Russian community around Delta Junction is growing and that 50 to 60 percent of their clients are Slavic. Ken and Judith reported that Alpha Omega appreciates the chance to partner with the Alaska Food Coalition and the Fairbanks Community Food Bank. They are learning their logistical problems are not unique. Alpha Omega is becoming extremely busy.

Major Grundahl – S/A Family Emergency Services and McKinnell House

Major Grundahl said she estimates a 20 percent increase in utilization of her programs this year. She encourages her clients to utilize other food pantries as well. Major Grundahl talked about the necessity to educate the general population about the situation of the working poor. She said that more families are accessing food stamps but single individuals are not.

Trevor Jones– Kodiak Island Food Bank

Trevor discussed the new distribution the Kodiak Island Food Bank is doing at the Senior Center. They are also getting other villages on Kodiak Island such as Old Harbor online.

There had been a problem with the fish processors bringing an influx of transient workers to the island and not giving them work, but this appears to be under control. Trevor said stories about this had been in the newspaper every day for weeks, and he thinks this placed enough pressure on the fish processors so they won't keep doing this, although with salmon season coming he is not sure what will happen. Trevor also reported that they are trying to get involved with the Summer Food Service Program but that Kodiak Island was a few percentage points short of being eligible for the program. Trevor reported that he was currently taking a break from the Halibut Bycatch Project and would give an update later.

Ruth Riley Elvsaas – Food Bank of Alaska

Ruth reported that FBA is looking for new ways of bringing food to Alaska such as through the native tribes. The tribes are not allowed to participate in donated food because of their tribal status, but FBA is trying to bring about a change in the tax law through the Alaska congressional delegation. This project is close to becoming a reality. Ruth reported that FBA is also trying to establish the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations in cooperation with the Alaska Native Health Consortium which is acting as an umbrella organization. Ruth also reported that FBA continues to encourage agencies to go towards a client choice model.

Following Ruth's check-in, there was a brief discussion about the TEFAP program, and specifically the current lack of TEFAP goods at FBA. Susannah Morgan reminded everyone that TEFAP is primarily an agricultural support program and not a food relief program. As such, we will never be able to argue for more TEFAP products. However, TEFAP always cycles through, and eventually more goods will become available. By contrast, FDPIR and CSFP commodities come out of a different supply.

Jetta Whitaker – The Glory Hole

Jetta pointed out that the Glory Hole has not been represented at the AFC for a number of years. The Glory Hole is a 40 bed shelter serving 3 meals per day plus a snack. The need for food is outstripping the need for shelter. The Glory Hole is in the second year of their agreement with the Southeast Alaska Food Bank. They currently get most of their food from the Southeast Alaska Food Bank and through food drives. Every dinner is brought by a civic group.

4:30 – 5:00 AFC's Role

There was a discussion about AFC's role. Susannah Morgan pointed out that agencies that need food or have questions about the food supply should be referred to the food banks, while agencies looking for information about what other agencies are doing, or for help with a specific program, should go to the AFC.

There was a brief discussion about whether the AFC would budget money for food. It was pointed out that since currently 100% of the budget comes from the State, we could

not do advocacy work with the state. It was also pointed out that we need a purpose to in going to Juneau. In the past this was the Halibut Bycatch Project.

Jim Crockett opted to conclude the day with Trevor Jones giving an update of the Halibut Bycatch Project.

Trevor reported that the bottom line was that it was a political issue and the halibut industry did not want another stakeholder at the table. He said that the only way he could see it going forward was through a lawsuit. He reported that there was some support for the project but that the Halibut Commission would not even meet with AFC representatives. Trevor said he believed the AFC should no longer be involved in this project, although he may continue to work on it on his own time.

Wednesday

AFC Business

8:00 – 10:00 Review of the Previous Year

The Review of the Previous Year discussion was guided by the FY 05 Expected Outcomes.

- 1 *Develop and implement Fish Project plan and milestones, with a goal of 50,000 pounds of halibut donated annually by FY06.*
This project was unsuccessful, but not through the fault of the AFC. Trevor stated that at this point the Halibut Bycatch Project had become a liability for the AFC. The AFC agreed to drop this as a project.
- 2 *Complete a baseline study on the charitable food distribution system in Alaska.*
This project turned into the Hunger Study. Dan Stellar gave an update on the progress of the study. To date, 276 client interviews have been completed and 130 agency surveys have been returned. Several weeks of data collection remain. There was a brief discussion regarding the concern over the lack of data collection in rural areas. It was decided to see what the final report looks like before trying to remedy this by doing AFC's own research in rural areas.
- 3 *Develop food pantry standard for minimum pounds distributed per client.*
Based on the research from Second Harvest Gleaner's Food Bank of Western Michigan, the number of 234 pounds of food per person in poverty distributed annually was agreed to be a good benchmark. This translates into 19.5 pounds of food, per person, per month. On average, a person in poverty must receive 19.5 pounds of food every month in order to meet their need for food. There was discussion on how to integrate this number, 20 pounds of food per person, per month, with a nutritional component and with client choice.

- 4 Improve capacity at food pantries and other anti-hunger agencies through mini-grants, with the outcome of enabling distribution of at least an additional 20,000 pounds of food annually.*

The 2005 mini-grant applications have been reviewed and many have been awarded. A small group of applicants were notified they may receive mini-grants contingent on AFC's budget. In order to determine whether 20,000 pounds of food will be distributed annually through the mini-grants, the AFC Coordinator will conduct a survey of awardees to see how many incremental pounds of food the mini-grants will allow them to distribute.

- 5 Plan and implement AFC annual meeting for networking, outcome measurement and planning for FY06.*

This has been accomplished.

A few additional points about mini-grants were raised including a discussion over whether applicants should be required to offer matching funds. It was agreed that they would be required to do so, as long as in-kind donations, such as labor, could be considered. In response to concerns about the mini-grants, Jim Crockett asked Susannah Morgan, Janelle Gomez, and Dan Stellar to serve on a committee to work on a scale to evaluate the mini-grants.

Jim Crockett also asked Dan Stellar to research possible sources of freezers and refrigerators for agencies which had received mini-grants but were unable to find them.

Susannah Morgan, AFC Treasurer, presented the FY 05 Budget and gave the Treasurer's Report. The AFC is within its budget in all areas. There were no questions on the budget. (The Treasurer's Report can be found below).

10:00 – 12:00 Plan for the Coming Year

A slate of officers recommended by the board was presented to the AFC. The slate was:

President:	Linda Swarner
Vice-President:	Jim Crockett
Treasurer:	Susannah Morgan
Secretary:	Louise Charles

The slate was voted on and approved. The new officers were congratulated.

Susannah presented the proposed FY 06 Strategic Objectives:

- 1. Integrate the baseline study completed into FY05 into a comprehensive review and planning process, which will identify gaps in service and make recommendations for expansion of the statewide anti-hunger network.*

2. *Distribute mini-grants to food programs throughout the state to improve their ability to distribute food to hungry Alaskans.*
3. *Develop materials to educate the public on the anti-hunger network in Alaska.*
4. *Maintain the Alaska Food Coalition network, through teleconferences and annual meetings.*

There was a discussion of what activities the AFC should undertake to meet these objectives. The following activities were agreed to be necessary for the AFC to undertake.

1. *Replace, maintain and encourage a competent coordinator.*
2. *Continue the mini-grant program.*
3. *Reimburse agencies for their travel costs to the annual meeting.*
4. *Formalize dues process. AFC Coordinator will send out invoices to agencies, notifying them of their balance due.*

Jim Crockett directed the members to vote on what three other activities they would like the AFC to undertake. The following three activities were the winners:

1. ***Develop printed education materials** utilizing the results of the Hunger Study*
2. ***Strengthen the Coalition** by adding more members, including rural members, politicians, and representatives from the food retail industry*
3. ***Capacity building research** – undertake study of statewide anti-hunger agencies to determine what their particular needs are for capacity building. This could be in preparation for a large grant proposal.*

A few final issues were brought up, including the need to create by-laws for the AFC covering issues such as travel to the annual member meeting. It was mentioned that travel should only be paid for agencies which had been AFC members for one year, and only for one member of each agency. Members should also make an effort to find the lowest possible airfare.

Susannah Morgan gave a quick update on the checking account situation and explained that in the future, the checking would be handled through Food Bank of Alaska's banking system, solely for the purpose of simplifying the accounting process.

It was also decided that this year's schedule, with the meeting taking up one afternoon and the following morning worked well for people and should be used again next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Stellar
AFC Coordinator

**ALASKA FOOD COALITION
BUDGET TO ACTUALS
MAY 9, 2005**

	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	Total Actual	Budget	Difference
Personnel Services	1,803.34	3,689.97	6,751.21	3,395.67	15,640.19	18,000.00	(2,359.81)
Travel		1,192.30	1,984.61	919.19	4,096.10	8,500.00	(4,403.90)
Supplies	7.03	269.01	919.99	330.37	1,526.40	3,000.00	(1,473.60)
Equipment		1,739.00	277.14		2,016.14	3,000.00	(983.86)
Other			22,944.00		22,944.00	32,500.00	(9,556.00)
Total	1,810.37	6,890.28	32,876.95	4,645.23	46,222.83	65,000.00	(18,777.17)