

ALASKA



FOOD COALITION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

FOOD BANK OF ALASKA

JULY 11, 2008

10 – 11 AM

Toll Free Number: 1-866-316-1519 Participant Code: 723725

1. Welcome, Andrea Thistle, President

- a. In attendance:
 - i. Dana Paperman, Seward Senior Center
 - ii. Susannah Morgan, Food Bank of Alaska
 - iii. Andrea Thistle, Valley Open Bible Fellowship
 - iv. Irene Lee, Catholic Social Services
 - v. Kerri Burrows, Alaska Food Coalition

2. Mini-Grant Proposals

- a. Kerri presented the background of the mini-grant program and announced that The Rasmuson Foundation would not be continuing their support of the mini-grants this year. With that said, Kerri introduced the options for this year's grant program. While the AFC has focused on capacity building for the last several years, the Executive Committee was in agreement that the serious downturn in the economy means that many anti-hunger agencies are struggling and the AFC should refocus to assist those organizations in making it through these tough times.

All members agreed that giving away food is a band-aid and does not push an organization toward sustainability, but all were in favor of giving out grants for food purchase this year. Both Dana and Kerri noted that changing the grants to food purchase could be leveraged in our interaction with legislators for the Food Purchase line item on the legislative agenda this year.

The group decided on 13 grants of \$1,000. There will be no requirement for matching funds. There was some discussion on how the grants would be used (e.g. AFC purchase co-op, credit on CDO account, etc.) but Susannah noted that each winning agency can be dealt with individually on how they would like to receive the funds, but what we really needed to focus on was the process for deciding who gets the funds. Rural areas, increase in need, community profile and community recommendations were all areas that the committee thought needed to be addressed in the grant. Susannah suggested the following process:

- i. Present proposal to membership to change grants to food purchase this year.
- ii. Ask voting members who aren't planning to apply for a grant to sit on a committee to come up with the grant application questions.
- iii. Kerri will use those recommendations to create a new application.

All committee members thought this would be a great process. Kerri noted that with this change, the grant cycle would most likely be pushed back a month or more. Dana noted that this would likely be okay as many organizations really start to feel the pinch in February and March so this money would come just in time.

3. Capacity Building Grant Project

- a. The Coordinated Capital request has not been successful. A few great opportunities to get needed equipment for organizations have fallen through. Coordinating seven agencies in different areas across the state who have directors that are running in different directions most of the time has proven to be very difficult.
- b. In discussions around the mini-grant application, The Rasmuson Foundation questioned why more AFC agencies aren't applying for Tier I grants. In reviewing the status of the coordinated capital request, Kerri presented a suggestion of being the lead on helping the capital request organizations through the Tier I grant process with Rasmuson. While still keeping an eye out for equipment that comes along that might benefit an agency, this might be the best way to get those organizations the funds they need to purchase equipment. The members were in agreement that this would be the next logical direction to take.
- c. Susannah took the idea one step further and suggested that we institute an incentive program with membership fees:
 - i. Double the membership fees. The second half of those fees would be reimbursed to all organizations that applied for a Rasmuson Tier I grant or have applied for one in the previous year. Kerri would be available to work with organizations that wanted assistance in putting together their applications.
 - (1) Irene noted that CSS was applying for a Tier I grant, but for another program in the agency—would that qualify? Susannah suggested that any application to Rasmuson should be accepted, even if it was directed at another program in the agency---after all, if another program gets more funding, funding already on hand could be pushed back into the anti-hunger program.
 - ii. All the members agreed that we need to push agencies to take advantage of the Rasmuson Foundation opportunities. All agreed to try this incentive in the form of reimbursed membership fees for the next fiscal year and evaluate the process next year to see how successful it has been.

4. Wrap-up

- a. With no other news, Andrea adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Addendum: July 14, 2008

Kerri requested through email that Executive Committee members reconsider adjusting the membership fee and instead institute the following instead of the agreed upon proposal at the Executive Committee meeting;

1. Keep the membership fees the same.
2. Look into bringing RF into a teleconference to ask questions about their Tier I grant process.
3. Offer technical assistance to entire membership and, in particular, work with capacity granting group to get them through the Tier I process.

Susannah suggested that the original proposal wouldn't be that much of an imposition on members, but agreed to go with the majority of the committee. Both Andrea and Dana expressed concern about the original proposal and voted to go with the second proposal. Irene was unavailable.

With a majority agreeing with the second proposal, it was agreed that the membership fees would not change this year and we would institute the second plan and evaluate next year to see if further steps should be taken.

Submitted: Kerri Burrows, Alaska Food Coalition Manager
July 15, 2008