

Poverty on the Palouse Forum

February 1, 2018; 5:30 p.m. – City Hall Council Chambers

Introduction

In December of 2017, a group of local citizens representing faith communities visited with me to discuss a concern with increased food insecurity needs in the community. This issue was also identified several years earlier, during the original Poverty on the Palouse Forum series held last in 2014. In 2014, homelessness was the issue brought to the City by Steve Bonnar, Sojourners Alliance Executive Director. Results from that forum included the development of Family Promise of the Palouse.

Mayor Lambert is interested in reinvigorating the Poverty on the Palouse Forum approach to address this current pressing issue of food insecurity. The City is happy to facilitate this discussion and invites all interested community members to attend. This initial issue-framing meeting will consist of information sharing and brainstorming to allow the group to share and learn about opportunities and challenges that can drive goals and tasks. Information gathered from previous work as well as more current statistics on food insecurity in our community is included in this packet for reference.

The City looks forward to facilitating this process. The Forum will be held on February 1, at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 206 E Third Street, Moscow Idaho. Please join the conversation. If you know of anyone who may be interested in participating, please don't hesitate to forward the information and invite them to join as well. Thank you in advance for your support of the community.

Agenda & Notes

Welcome & Introductions b Mayor Lambert

Mayor Lambert welcomed all in attendance.

Overview of Food Insecurity by Elizabeth Stevens

Elizabeth thanked all for attending and thanked Mayor Lambert for his assistance. Elizabeth then shared a snapshot of food insecurity facts (presentation included).

Poverty on the Palouse: Food Security

Coming Together to Help Feed our Neighbors

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Snapshot: Food Security Facts

- Population of Latah County: 38,339
- 17.8% of residents are food insecure (approximately 6820)
- 51% are below 130% of poverty, and so are eligible for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), WIC (Women, Infants and Children), Free lunch, CSFP (Commodity Supplemental Food Program), TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program)
- 18% fall between 130% and 185%, and are eligible for WIC and reduced lunch
- 32% are eligible only for a charitable response

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What about kids?

- Total population under 18: 7114
- 17.4 % or 1240 are food insecure
- Of those, 70% are likely income-eligible for federal nutrition assistance
- Summer food program (Moscow): approximately 100 meals served a day, Monday-Friday.
- Weekend “Backpack” program: over 1100 bags distributed (approximately 100 a week)

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How do we compare?

- According to the Daily News, May 13, 2017: Latah County has **second highest** food insecurity rate in Idaho.
- Average monthly dollar amount of Food Stamp benefits per capita is **far lower** than average (statistics from 2010):
 - Latah County: \$13.31
 - Idaho: \$16.12
 - National: \$19.50

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Grocery Stores

- Low number of grocery stores per 1000 residents (0.183 v. 0.197, national average)
- Low number of WIC eligible stores: 5; National average: 16
- Grocery stores: anecdotally, they have more food they could donate

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Other Places People Get Food

- Very high access to farmer's markets but:
 - 0% WIC access (US average 17.8%)
 - 0% Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (US over 20%)
 - 0% WIC cash (US average 8.7%)
- Higher than usual number of fast food restaurants

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It was noted for Farmers Market – the Moscow Farmers Market does accept Washington benefits, but Idaho does not provide that benefit.

Resources

- Food banks in Moscow, Genesee, Potlatch, Troy, Deary, and Kendrick/Julietta
 - Volunteer run
 - Limited hours
 - Reporting and increase in traffic
- Backyard Harvest, Palouse/Clearwater Food Coalition, Palouse Cares
- “Pop up” pantries on campuses, 1912 Center, churches, etc.
- What else?

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Other resources:
Community Action

What Stories do these Numbers Tell?

- People are going hungry.
- Fruit is withering on the vine. (Food, funding is out there.)
- Economy of scale: doesn't work for volunteer driven organizations
- Loaves and Fishes moment.
 - We are making the 'ask.'
 - What do you have that you are willing to share?
 - When we pool our knowledge, what ideas or strategies rise to the surface as the most productive and possible 'next steps'?

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Brainstorming of Opportunities and Challenges – Group Led

More than 100 participants broke into smaller groups to brainstorm ideas and take down those ideas and the City assist in compiling for future discussions.

Mayor Lambert brought the group back together to debrief on brainstorming and bring some of the ideas and thoughts forward. All comments shared at the meeting as well as notes collected and transcribed after the meeting have been organized below into common themes:

Access

- Access and transportation
- Access issues, should id?, too many hoops
- Close the gap of eligibility between eligibility and participation
- More access, kitchen, food bank, cooking classes
- Seniors
- TEFAP
- 600 home visits in Latah County
- St. Vincent De Paul go into homes of the poorest in the County to assist directly

Community Support

- Connecting the community
- Invite more people with connections, Mayors School lunch program store owners
- Sense that individual are very supportive
- Systemic and stigma issues

Equipment

- Backyard Harvest and food recovery, need storage
- Cold storage to salvage produce and perishable foods
- Commercial/industrial refrigeration
- Donated refrigerator equipment
- Freezers
- Fridge and freezer needed!
- Fridge network
- Make cold storage from shipping containers
- Moscow Food Bank does utilize grocery stores, NEED refrigeration!
- Need for storage cooler
- Need refrigeration
- Needs space for refrigeration and frozen foods
- Place for cold storage
- Refrigeration
- Refrigeration
- Refrigeration is a need to use all available food sources
- Refrigeration trucks

Facilities

- Add on to current food bank, food bank does deliver
- Add walk in freezer/fridge at the new Police Department
- Commercial kitchen at Fairgrounds
- Commercial kitchen at Latah Fairgrounds, example Spokane 2nd Harvest
- Community action pantry
- Community kitchens
- Donates warehouse space, incentive?
- Electricity needed for fridges,
- Fixed site, chill room like Coop
- Food bank at back of grocery store
- Food needs, fridge, freezer, dry goods
- Kitchen at the Fairgrounds
- Martin Wellness Center – Use refrigeration, has freezers not being used
- More space needed to distribute food
- Moscow, no shortage of food, but issues with storage and distribution
- Need space
- Warehouse or Trailer
- Commercial kitchen
- Coordinate center – Colfax central foodbank model
- Facilities
- Facilities at food banks – refrigeration
- Facilities needed for storage – large central storage
- Martin Wellness Center has facilities
- More access and integrated services kitchen food bank, etc, all in one space one hub.
- Processing don't have the facilities to process food strawberries into jam
- Push for community kitchens and gardens.
- Walk-ins at Fairgrounds
- Zoning needs for add on to existing food bank

Funding

- Board members access to money and young people to help
- Cash Drive to allow banks to purchase food needed
- Emphasis on tax write off
- Food Drives and Auctions – Cash Drive?
- Funding
- Grant applications
- Grant-based
- Grants
- Grants – Dairy Council opportunity?
- Tax incentives

Gardens

- Community gardens
- Edible landscape
- Edible landscape, plant and share farms
- Push for community gardens
- Share gardens
- Soils club is planning extra rows

Information

- Available statistics for public
- College students are going hungry
- Community services
- Daily News
- Dollars not getting into community
- Feeding the GAP reasons
- Fewer grocery stores/1,000 residents, 5 eligible for WIC, 16 national average
- Having more information on food deserts and who is affected,
- Identify hungry people
- Information on food deserts and who is really affected
- Latah second highest rate of food insecurity in Idaho
- Metrics, people are not aware of metrics, Resources need to be compiled – libraries, known county-wide
- Need for a resource guide, where do you go, what are the hours, what's offered, paperwork requirements.
- One stop resources, have metrics and statistics available for all, use libraries, reach out to more rural areas in Idaho and Washington, no always online as some don't have access online.
- Only 5 WIC qualified stores in Moscow
- Palouse Resource Guide – managed by Pullman Regional Hospital. Supported by Whitman County Health Coalition.
- Palouse Resource Guide – Palouse Alliance in Pullman
- Palouse Resources Guide
- Resource guide/directory need for active and current food banks/paperwork
- SPDC, app to connect those in need to those who have

Inventory

- Food bank does deliver if needed
- Inventory can be an issue especially in the spring
- Production issues, edible landscape

Nutrition

- Community action cooking classes
- Cooking classes based on what's available
- Education about food and nutrition
- Education kids on food nutrition
- How to keep people fuller longer, sustain hunger with types of foods, wellness...
- Ideas to educate kids on how to eat good food to bring that home to parents options in classrooms.
- Teach people to cook

Operations

- Extended hours
- Extended hours
- Extended hours for food banks
- Hours of distribution
- Moscow Food Bank all day hours
- Moscow Food Bank, short hours, middle of day, participants allowed 1 visit per month
- Structure

Organizations

- 2nd Harvest delivers pastries
- Backyard Harvest
- Community Action Center
- Community Action Partnership "gas station" fridge
- Contact City and County planners
- Council on Aging
- Council on Aging in Whitman
- Distribution Back Yard Harvest
- Easier access grocery stores
- Hamilton Indoor Recreation Center or Latah County Fair Grounds as potential sites
- Idaho coalition
- Idaho food Bank not willing to deliver to Moscow, can't go to Lewiston to pick it up
- Idaho Hunger Taskforce
- Martin Wellness Center Palouse River Drive
- Option for Fire Departments to participate
- Partner with schools
- Potlatch food pantry collects perishable food from Walmart, not sure of WinCo food waste, large new cooler, 6 freezers, open morning and evenings 2x/month, 60-70 families, built with grants
- Pullman model, old pantry, rental space combo
- Reaching out to youth programs
- St Vincent De Paul makes home visits
- Troy Food Bank Volunteers, 35 households, 90 individuals
- Work with existing groups
- Working with existing group to facilitate

Programs

- Backpacks
- Expand backpack program
- How to keep summer lunch program going.
- Summer lunch program

Recovery

- 60% food waste/recovery
- Commercial food recovery
- Community action food recovery
- CSA and Washington type approaches
- Farm to food bank
- Food Recovery efforts on the Palouse, happens in Pullman, and to some extent on the Palouse. Taking unserved commercial prepared food or packaged fresh food and redistributing to those in need.
- Palouse Tables – WSU Dining recovery efforts
- PUWa employer redistributes event food, recovery
- Restaurant donations
- Restaurants interested
- UI and Sodexo

Regulations

- Change in regulation and laws to allow restaurants and stores to be able to provide food.
- Difficult to fill out paperwork – TFAP needs
- Food insecurity, problem is in system
- State regulation changes
- Food regulations
- UI Sodexo, \$1M insurance liability for donating, WSU (independent dining) donates to Community Action Center w/o liability

Staff

- Create paid coordinator will make sure food is picked up and distributed
- Difficult to run food pantry with volunteers only
- Need for central person apply for grants, paid person, food hub central location ample cold storage, inspiration from Potlatch food pantry apply their successes to Moscow
- Need paid person to coordinate and organize
- Need volunteer coordinator
- Need volunteer coordinator
- Needs include a central paid person to organization to avoid volunteer burn out.
- Paid person to run it support by City County group and individuals
- Paid positions
- Paid staff person in Moscow
- Paid staff/director
- Volunteer Coordinator needed, paid to address grant writing, etc.

Supply

- Coop has racks at front to collect food, shoppers can buy their food and extra putting extra on shelf on way out, also can contribute food from other stores add additional store donations locations
- Federal commodities and community donations
- Include volunteer collecting stations at major food sales, i.e. Rosauers cereal sale
- Supermarkets, place needed to store excess food they could donate to pantries

Transportation

- Transportation
- Truck mobile, diesel

Volunteers

- Need a volunteer Coordinator for Trinity Baptist
- Churches have volunteers
- Have volunteers, need work for them to do
- High School and UI students to volunteer
- How to really pull in UI and student who need hours
- More volunteers
- Need more volunteers
- Student volunteers, credit for certain classes
- Trinity had many of these things, had lack in staff/volunteers
- Volunteers to sort food

6:30 p.m. Adjourn | Next Meeting: March 1, 2018; 5:30 p.m. – City Hall Council Chambers