

**Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger  
February 11, 2016  
United Way Suncoast  
Minutes**

- **Introductions**
  - **Network Business**
    - **Letter of support**
  - **SFSP (aka BreakSpot) Presentation – Kristin Ervin, FL Impact**
  - **Work Team Updates**
  - **Any additional info to share**
  - **Adjournment**
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**The meeting was called to order at 9:30am by Deborah Lekenta.**

- **Introductions – Deborah Lekenta**
  - Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves and their organization.

**Network business: Letter of support**

- Deborah Lekenta: We don't compete with members' grants but will ask some donors to donate specifically to keep the Network running. Just asking for members to sign so Deb can tell a funder that these people support TBNEH. We don't have a huge staff; on the back is our financials and it shows what we do and how we operate. We get really close to running out of money every year so we need a little help here. If your organization is able to donate to the Network, please see me.
- No questions; passed around letter for signatures.

**SFSP Presentation**

- Kristin Ervin: Florida Impact is working in four counties to start, focusing on increasing participation in three federal childhood nutrition programs: breakfast, after school meals, and summer. We see the participation drastically drop off in the summer and it's not because the need is not there. Ways to help and get involved: become a site or a sponsor helping to open a new location; provide resources like lending a van, providing creative activities and programs, raising money and resources, and recruiting volunteers. For summer 2016, focusing on increasing participation at existing sites through activities, transportation, and incentives; opening new mobile sites; and strengthening and establishing community partnerships.
- Jan: What are the numbers for Hillsborough? Kristin didn't have them but thought they were around 15,000 in July 2015, which is low.

- Pat: The program is already federally funded; but existing sites have such low participation. If the existing sites alone had better participation, which might be a better place to focus our efforts because that alone could make a huge difference.
- Lee: Does it have to be every day if you want to open a site? No, it doesn't have to be every day and it doesn't have to be through the whole summer, but it has to be outside the school year which this year is June 7, a Tuesday and school starts again August 10.
- Rosy: Can any organization apply for after school snacks? There are more regulations around after school snacks so you have to go through the federal requirements. For Pinellas, Lynn can help; for Hillsborough, Kristin. But it doesn't have to be at the school although you do have to have an enrichment program.
- Danielle: Marketing campaign around targeted zip codes in Pinellas this last year was very successful and will continue again this year. Part of the challenge for the bigger sites it's hard to get kids to want to come in from outside so that's why we also need to increase the number of sites, even if it's to bring attention to commissioners and everyone during the school year, superintendents, who can make this happen.
- Rosy: Was it last year that there were mini grants for creating mobile sites or funding activities? Are there any grants available for this year? Kristin will check.
- Getting the word out not just to the kids, but to the communities that are either totally without sites or very under-served, like big community centers that kids avoid, that neighborhood probably still needs more. Whatever efforts we can make, the overlap with the map and the needs and where those concentrations are, St. Luke's took it upon themselves to do something special because they know their neighborhood is needy, and adjusted it to what that community needed. When we're looking for the sites, we need to make sure since there are no cross guards during the summer, that if a site is on a busy road there's some way for the kids to cross safely, walking school busses, those kinds of things.
- Cait: We are working on two pilot programs that we talked about a little bit last meeting: free bus passes for kids under age 18; met with Sandra Merman in Hillsborough and she connected us with Catherine Egan, president of HART, and we will work together to try to extend a current program called Staycation that provides free bus passes from March 1 to June 10. Funding for that has already been approved so we'll see if we can either extend it or just move the dates to cover the summer. Have also been meeting with PSTA in Pinellas and at the very least they can post the Breakspot sites on their website and hopefully can get us bus passes too. Nothing in Pasco yet but we had talked about getting in touch with PCTA to see if we can do the same in Pasco before the end of the month. SFSP will pilot in Pasco starting summer 2016. Pasco workgroup is meeting next week and they will discuss if this is a project they want to do.
- Lynn: Mobile sites are being worked on. Pasco has a school bus that's been renovated to include table and chairs so they can drive through neighborhoods and kids can get on the bus and eat, that may be in Hillsborough as well.
- Cait: We are also working on extending the walking school bus through the summer, and coupling that effort with offering free WiFi to increase participation among older schools, especially high schoolers. We will pilot WSB in Pinellas but Hillsborough was also interested in piloting it in Plant City. Lee Ann Carr has a T-Mobile contact; Robin Ingles (Seniors in Service) has a Bright House contact.

## Work Team Updates

- **Food Recovery – Ace:** met with the recipient agencies to begin the training process. HCC (Shirley Hamilton) is vetting the recipients to ensure they are properly trained in food handling, etc. The restaurants in Gulfport have been contacted. We met with the Mayor of Gulfport to explain the program and they are supporting the food recovery efforts.
  
- **Food Hub - Andrew:** Today is first meeting. Will be taking dry items into the facility today; met with some refrigeration people including St Pete Free Clinic and hopefully RCS because need to have a walk-in cooler in place before those programs can support us to get USDA and other stuff into the hub. Got a three-compartment sink in to prep community garden food, but we are open right now for dry stuff for food drives to have Adopt-A-Block and others distribute it. Once the health department comes in and Okays it, we will be interested in partnering with the Food Recovery team to get more food and worked into the hub. Then they will need help in getting a truck to be able to go pick up recovery food. Also, just met with a mosque who will be helping put food together for Adopt-A-Block, and the goal is that when there is an influx of refugees to the area, the mosque will give food now in return for our teaching them how to set up a food pantry. Finally, Scientologists may be donating money and food.
- **Danielle:** longer term piece is how to get the food to smaller pantries, is that another thing we're thinking about?
- **Andrew:** Yes, the idea is that when you have volunteers from St Pete Free Clinic or anywhere picking up the food with their vehicle, the distance and safety factor is reduced because the food is already refrigerated closer to the pantry, so they're not traveling as far.
  
- **Childhood Hunger - Danielle:** Pinellas initiative, pilots last summer with a small meeting after this for the committee. Getting ready for this summer and focusing on a pilot in a small church in a zip code with high need, and are creating a tool kit for other churches or organization to use for the summer: how does the schedule look, how do you do orientation, what are suggestions for things to do on-site. Will work with Met Ministries to get the word out and also working on the areas that have the highest need again. We realize we started too late last year so we're starting earlier this year. And then working with Pinellas County Schools to see where else we might create mobile sites.
- **Other:** food pantries in high schools; how to reach middle school kids; resources and materials to give to other communities outside Pinellas.
  
- **Earthbox - Mark:** Have 3 sites fully distributed and gone through initial process, all in Pinellas: St Pete Free Clinic, Lealman neighborhood family center, and Hyde Point Neighborhood Family Center. All are going pretty well. Have been using text message communications between participants; don't have a percentage right now but at least half are corresponding with us by text and despite language barriers, we have had people respond with pictures of their boxes. We did our first refill; Mallory Foster did a great job.
- **Mallory:** the families really loved it, they were excited to get more plants and soil and we had some new families sign up.
- **Mark:** looking forward to doing refill for Hyde Point on 25<sup>th</sup> and St Pete Free Clinic on 29<sup>th</sup>. Over in Tampa, seeing the initial boxes get distributed at Meals on Wheels this coming week.
- **Cait:** Launching Meals on Wheels program which is a little different; take the box and plants to the client and plant them with the client, a little Gardening 101, with a Master Gardener

going on the truck to give the lesson. Will start with four boxes directly to the clients and then keep a box for the staff on-site. That will launch next Wednesday.

- Mark: Total participants by this summer will probably be around 70-100 people with Earthboxes, so that will give us a good sense to see that the pilot is over, what have we learned, draw some conclusions.
- Eve: *Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful* has a sustainable garden at the fair grounds, it's an acre, and they would probably love to have you all present about Gardens 2 Go and it's not too late to get on their schedule.
- Rosy: Did 5 sites in Pinellas at senior congregant dining sites. The boxes are being held at the sites and are cared for by a couple of individuals; did a nutrition lesson in Taste It around it and it's going well. Many of the seniors are interested in having a smaller version of the box where they can garden and we've been collecting that information.
- Mark: We have to pay for the soil; some boxes were donated and we're now purchasing used ones, some of those come with soil but there is a question because we don't know what they did at the research facility so we're not sure about using that soil. We haven't used it usually or we at least supplement it.
- Rosy: If we could get compost that'd be great.
  
- **Food Recycling, Eve:** Had a meeting earlier; priorities are legislative in the city of Tampa as well as the state of Florida because food is not included as a recyclable. But food is not garbage; it makes great soil. We're in a little battle with Tampa and I was on a mission to Tallahassee last week and met the legislators to talk to them about changing the recycling bill that identifies what is a recoverable material. And they were really positive about getting that passed this session, not having to wait until next year. Our work team added not only pre-consumer vegetative food material, but also post-consumer vegetative food material. Over half of the states have waste diversion bans to keep foods out of incinerators and dumps, and France just passed a nationwide one; it's a trend globally to recognize food as a resource, not garbage. Everyone is welcome to Bay Mulch Farm in Plant City at 10 am this Saturday to tour.
  
- **Pinellas Collective Impact - Caitlin H-Joy:** Focusing on (1) addressing fact that people are hungry in the first place; (2) providing food for them to eat while addressing the underlying causes. We decided to focus on increasing the number of people in Pinellas who are accessing SNAP benefits because most people who are eligible are not taking advantage of it. We talked to Minnesota Network to End Hunger and they put together some helpful pieces about how to target people and get them to sign up. We are also working on figuring out the key indicators we should look at to have a definitive starting point and we're looking at whether we can make a difference to get more people to sign up for SNAP. What is the information our partners might care about, and can we look at that as well to engage them? So we're also looking at that. Also talking to Feeding America and St Pete Free Clinic to increase availability of food in Pinellas County because there are still a lot of meal gaps; how do we increase the amount of food resources we have.
- Danielle: this also links back to what Andrew's group is doing, how to make the food at the larger sites available to smaller locations.
- Mark: If we are able to have refrigeration at the local level, Feeding America could provide a lot more fresh produce into the neighborhoods; the problem is the last mile distribution, they don't have the capacity to do that last bit so it really is at the grass-roots, neighborhood level.

- **Deb:** United Way wants to track meals so they can tell their board how they're tracking the money they're receiving.
- **Jane Walker:** Pantries can convert pounds into meals served and that's what we need to track, we can put it on the Network map and UW wants to look at it as well. Problem is that a lot of food they get is not part of a meal; if half the food we get is soda or chips or cookies, those aren't actual meals and that doesn't meet the other piece that we're trying to do – the nutrition value.
- **Andrew:** Until we get Feeding America to change the process, the social workers actually going to the pantries who are more of a voice for the mentally ill; only 50% of the food in the box is nutritional. Fresh produce has to be broken down before it's distributed; it can't be given out whole. No one wants to track the meals because we gave them three meals and ten pounds of junk, nutritionally.
- **Cait:** We were talking about a 0-100 rating system for nutritional value.
- **Pat:** A food bank in upper NY State had a nutritionist on their staff and they would assign a rating to the food that would come in, so when the pantries were ordering, they would see the nutritional value of what they were getting. You'd have to put zero on a lot of stuff but it was a way of letting people see what they were really getting for their dollars, and also for writing grants to be able to say what the donated food was worth and what you still had to go out and buy. Best practice is for a social worker to be able to come in and "shop," but it's hard to do.
- **Jane:** We've had an offer to help us build another facility; Daystar has a "two-butt" pantry and we don't have enough room. So we're looking at different sites in high-need, low-service areas for that along with a demonstration kitchen because some of the fruits and vegetables that come in, or beef hearts, unusual things people aren't familiar with to introduce them in a way they will be comfortable with that's hopefully healthy too. We had a bunch of beautiful kale but nobody was taking it, so finally I went out there and told them what I do with it so then finally they took it. It gives them choice, which is dignity.
  
- **Research and Data – Allison:** Had worked last year on transportation study; regrouped a few weeks ago and we are going to reach out to other work groups to see what their assessment and evaluation needs are. Have talked about trying to get a sense of the needs of the different committees, potentially having liaisons from different committees to come to the research group and report what they need or just be a point of contact, and get a sense of who would be interested in a training on assessment and evaluation.
  
- **Healthy Eating Club- Physician Rx – Ariel:** Had first meeting on Monday; next meeting is Monday, March 14 at 12 pm probably at the Panera here in Tampa. Three goals for the next year: (1) work with Humana, coupons for healthy food, etc; (2) Publix nutritionist in some stores, pilot program for them, but getting a nutritionist into stores where lower income people shop or in pantries in food deserts; (3) grow a functional forum in Tampa, a group of physicians who are growing healthy food awareness and access in the community and bringing in medical students who will be practicing in the future. Hopefully will have those meetings at Met Ministries once a month. Need a name for the committee that encompasses all three of those goals but separates us from the other work teams with similar names.
  
- **Healthy Corner Store - Jan:** First meeting will be on the 18<sup>th</sup> here at UW.

- **Transportation - Kevin:** Working on a survey to build on the Four Square survey from Las Vegas, and gather information on how people can access pantries. Right now we are dealing with internal university institutional review process. Haven't finalized the pantries to be included so it's not too late if anyone is interested. Will hopefully collect data relevant to whole region. Planning to have a meeting later this month and potentially the 25<sup>th</sup> for the group and whatever pantries are involved.
- **Fifteen Acre Initiative - Will:** It's still there. There is a sign out front now with the address. Next week I'll put a mailbox in. Will be asking for help with a flyer in the future. Problem with the rain has caused additional ponds on the property in addition to the existing ponds and most of the roads are flooded right now. Zoning is agricultural so that will not be a problem and we're now friendly with Juarez Farms right next to us, and I've located someone with a tractor who's willing to come up.
- **Jan:** Florida Hospital Heartland would like to talk to you about the project so I'll connect you. It's called Hardee Farms on the record books and we'll leave it that way for now.
- **Mobile Pantry - Tony:** Pilot project is at 1814 N Fremont Ave in West Tampa. There's a church on that corner that let us use a vacant lot so we could set up there. A lady from our church has been heading it up and going out there every Monday between 1-3. This past Monday there was actually a crowd developing. These people are really hungry. They didn't drive there, they walked. The demographics were a lot of elderly people, single moms, even some children walked up with empty bags to be filled. It was a really touching thing. We brought about 1000 pounds of food to cover all the food groups – meat, vegetables, fruit, mac and cheese, Meals of Hope, and bread. Not just trying to hype up numbers; something complete for families. I'm seeing this mobile pantry is becoming a common thing. There are three others we're not heading but are affiliated: Winston Park, 40<sup>th</sup> St, and Robles Park Project.
- **Pasco County - Jennifer:** Last meeting we planned to pick our project but instead we had an entertaining debate or discussion, a couple members from Pasco County Food Policy Advisory Council came in. Next meeting is next Thursday at 9:30, Rasmussen Land o Lakes camps on 54, room 108, to pick a project, everyone should come with ideas to sell or if we want to work with another already established work group. The pilot for the summer Break Spot is actually a mobile site, I wanted to point out.
- **Suburban Hunger, a new team - Pat:** Lee Ann and I are focusing on suburban hunger. We finally have the beginning of a team for New Tampa. I presented to David West, Wesley Chapel Rotary, focusing on suburban hunger, the working poor. All these work teams, the idea is to get people engaged so we can offer some of these programs on a consistent basis. Start with awareness and then have a way they can get nutritious coupons. There aren't a lot of food pantries up there and we need a new way of doing it. That's the challenge and we're just finding our way right now, is probably the best way to describe it.

### Additional Info to Share

- **Cait: Community Café in Bartow** Pay what you can, the first one in Central Florida. It's a really interesting model. They did a \$200,000 renovation, a really nice restaurant atmosphere, you walk up and order off a menu, there's a suggested donation and if you can't pay you let the cashier know and they give you a token to pay. It's discreet. You can

also volunteer to earn tokens if you're able bodied. After they close around 4 pm, they do team night, happy hour, senior nights, so they use the space during the week during the evenings where they also provide free meals. Just a really interesting project.

- **Kind Mouse:** serving professional displaced due to the economy, and they're having a Relay for Milk so I'll pass out the flyers.
- **Student Nutrition in Hillsborough County:** We have two mobile trucks that go out with food, moving meal busses. That'll increase to 4 or 5 busses and we've almost tripled the number of stops for the summer. If you know of a place where kids or families could be gathered, we can drive our bus there. We've added all the WIC offices now to have stops there, we go to the libraries for the kids' reading clubs; vacation bible schools, the obvious parks and apartment complexes.
- Cait: I know there's interest in Plant City. They already have about six stops in Plant City.
- **Jan: Food is Medicine** is now in 16-17 locations, moving to South St Pete, north Pinellas, and will be opening a location in Plant City.
- **Robin, Seniors in Service:** Have funding for three years to recruit volunteers to work in food pantries, I can recruit volunteers for you. We engage people 55 and older in volunteerism, so let me know if you need volunteers in your facility. We're Hillsborough but I can hook you up with people in Pinellas.
- **Lynn, FL Dept of Ag:** Have results of last year's Summer BreakSpots broken down by zip code. I target the whole county, but we're trying to target certain areas. If you'd like to see them, I have a zip code map. I'll get with Danielle on that too. It's available for all counties.

## Adjournment