

3/17/20 – MFPC Meeting Notes
ZOOM conference call

Attendees: Liana Orlandi, Adriana Rabkin, Heather Gilardi, Wendy Tobiasson, Paula Freeman, Lauren Klein, Felicia Chavez, Reba Meigs, Bonnie Nielsen, Steve Schwartz, Conscious Kitchen, Marchon Tatmon, Cathryn Couch, Irene Garcia, Maggie Gori, Alexandra Danino, Ryan Thayer, Madeline Hope

Introductions & Announcements – Julia Van Soelen Kim

- Liana: AIM farmers markets are open (considered an essential service) with new safety precautions in place
- Adriana: Marin VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster)
- Paula: Covia run home delivered grocery program and market days are all closed through March, Margaret Todd is closed through the end of April
- Reba: Innovative Health Solutions serving as fiscal sponsor for MFPC, will have updates later
- Marchon: Food Bank pushing recently passed house bill HR 6201 first Corona virus response act
- Cathryn: call with Director on Aging and folks from food banks trying to figure out capacity in each county to provide delivered groceries & meals, as well as estimate the loss of volunteers that orgs are experiencing currently and how to aid this
- Conscious Kitchen: Bayside MLK school in Marin City is serving meals for pick up
- Maggie: Catholic Charities programs providing breakfast to kids in schools are closed, loss of frontline staff (furlough)
- Wendy: Drawdown Marin group meetings postponed

Roundtable Discussion – Julia Van Soelen Kim

Impact of Corona Virus on Emergency Food Programs, Food Insecurity, and Older Adults in Marin

Guest speakers: Cathryn Couch, CERES Community Project; Adriana Rabkin, Marin VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster) Coordinator; Linda Jackson, Aging Action Initiative

Cathryn Couch, CERES Community Project –

- Currently all aid organizations are losing volunteer resources while getting increased requests for services – orgs need to coordinate with partners across the community.
- Meeting every other day with Director of Aging about additional resources community orgs will need to meet increased demand.
- Precautionary food safety measures ramped up: social distancing for all deliveries including packing boxes rather than food self-selection (food banks are looking at this as well), limiting people in kitchens to 10 at a time, spreading out, staying home if sick, no volunteers over 65 allowed in kitchen, increased sterilization efforts, hourly hand washing, following Sonoma Co Health Department guidelines and reminding staff to read them.
- Pulling together info on current org capacity, potential to scale up, resources needed (assets and challenges). HEAL Food Now taskforce is working on a similar aim. Two levels of work: 1) assessment of our providers and what we are doing, 2) need for contact with community members, template for line of communication. Food resource guide specific to Marin City is an example (Marin County HHS should see this, can work on similar resources for Canal, West Marin, and other vulnerable communities – Reba to coordinate). Share assessment tools and response efforts!
- Please send any assessment tools that you are using to help expand reach to Ryan Thayer, HHS at: Rthayer@marincounty.org.

Adriana Rabkin, Marin VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster) Coordinator –

- VOAD Marin (all Bay Area counties have one) is a collaboration of variety of community-serving organizations, great resource for community resilience, only org that represents all community orgs and has a seat in Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – thus a two-way communication channel with EOC for all of us and our clients/community.
- People need to expect to operate at a 20% work force (for those orgs remaining open).
- Able to help with volunteers (coordinate groups around the county, can encourage Marin EOC to open emergency volunteer center drawing on a database of 1000s of volunteers if enough need is demonstrated.
- In addition to older adults and people with pre-existing conditions, the homeless community is also hugely impacted.
- VOAD food service provider call – which orgs should be on this? If you want information about the Marin VOAD or wish to be included in any task forces (presuming Adriana can bring you in) contact Adriana Rabkin at MarinVOAD email: marinvoad@gmail.com; phone number: 415-295-5660.
- If you have volunteer needs – or want to volunteer – you can post them on CVNL (Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership): <https://cvnl.org/volunteerism/disaster-services/>.

Linda Jackson, Aging Action Initiative –

- Non-profits working with food for the vulnerable are all open for operation (working from home), recalibrating services under separation guidelines, but having the challenge of volunteers. Whistlestop is delivering food (packets of 5 frozen meals) one time a week, West Marin Social Services doing the same, InstaCart and markets such as United have home delivery options as well. 22,000 older people in Marin are living alone. County is expanding their resources to provide more meals on wheels delivery registration – spread the word. AIM mobile farmers market is looking for places that may need weekly visits. Go-to volunteer place is CVNL (see above), encouraging all orgs to go through CVNL. 457-INFO for people over 60 and disabled in need of assistance.
- Desperately in need of volunteers across the board since many are over 65 years old.

Open conversation –

- Irene, SF-Marin food bank: changes in pantry network, recommend for agencies to look to food locator (refreshed daily) as situation changes frequently – refer people to: <https://foodlocator.sfmfoodbank.org/>.
- Bayside MLK will be adding groceries to meal services for families, coordinating with other schools to do the same. San Geronimo may become a pop-up distribution site next week, stay tuned.
- Liana, AIM: Rollin Root is affordable food available for purchase, will be available to do more work out in the community based on need.
- Reba: working on putting together community-specific resource guides similar to Marin City, even though things are changing so quickly; content may need to change in terms of how info is grouped.
- Steve, Interfaith Food: thinking about making sure small farmers stay in business as sales go down, want to make sure farmers markets stay open. Looking at congregations that have kitchens for use in making prepared meals. Market match proxy (if you are sick, have someone else redeem for you at a farmers market).
- Andy: farmers markets started getting shut down in different jurisdictions about a week ago, operators began meeting and worked on an advocacy campaign and were able to get farmers markets IDed as essential services during the Shelter in Place order, community members can buy food and use EBT

and market match programs. Some markets have closed due to local issues, such as if located in a mall, etc. Dramatically changed layout and model of markets: no on-site seating, all food is to-go, working on pre-packed food, no entertainment or arts and crafts for sale. Response at markets has been strong, people feel safe shopping because it's easier to maintain distance than in a grocery store. Fewer people are shopping but avg transaction is higher (shopping for the whole week). Some small farmers have been severely impacted, particularly if over 65, many local restaurants have cancelled orders, some Marin farmers have lost 90-100% of restaurant orders, and some farmers have excess produce. Spoke with Marin and Sonoma Farm Bureaus (statewide call with Secretary Ross), supportive of operating farmers markets. Any policy support needed?

- Marchon: HR 6201 Coronavirus Response Act background: HR 6201 contains important provisions to give families and children some critically important resources to help put food on the table and stay safe during the COVID-19 emergency. This is a promising first step toward ensuring that low-income and vulnerable people are not disproportionately impacted by this public health crisis. Congress is expected to move additional coronavirus package(s) in the coming days and weeks to address other urgent needs. The act has passed the House, in Senate now (pushback: doesn't go far enough). Protects public health workers, establishes free testing, funds SNAP program more. Republicans may be holding for an elimination of payroll tax, which will help corporations more. More info: <https://frac.org/news/food-research-action-center-commends-the-house-for-passing-the-families-first-coronavirus-response-act?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=906e7add-00ee-4eab-9c30-3775ce49d5fa>. Call your Senators at (202) 224-3121 (Capitol Switchboard) and urge them to quickly pass H.R. 6201 - Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Can also reach out to your Senators on social media. Can also text COVID19 to 747464 or call toll-free at 1-844-633-2048. Vote to support HR 6201 – **passed **JVSJ to confirm**
- Linda: movement in the housing community on eviction moratorium, info to be coming soon. Would be municipality by municipality (starting with BOS), could also be statewide. Farmers, farmworkers, food service workers, people in tourist economy are all going to be impacted and housing has a direct connection to food security, so MFPC will continue to share info related to the housing topic – please share as items come up.
- Alex: SF-Food Bank working over the phone, challenging for some older adult volunteers. CalFresh Marin hotline: 415-767-5220.
- More work on the horizon: Ensuring Emergency Food Security Act, Pandemic EBT Act, and COVID-19 Child Nutrition Response Act – all following under Families First Coronavirus Response Act. For more info: <https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats.appropriations.house.gov/files/Families%20First%20summary.pdf>.

Policy Updates – Steve Schwartz

- CFFN bill list and voting results: extended voting because of legislature taking time off. Want to make sure that Gov. budget list responds to COVID-19. CFFN advocated for bills that deal with food in various ways. MFPC has the opportunity to prioritize work on food access, support for small farmers, food security for older adults, etc.
- Updates and next steps on legislative asks: MFPC endorsed a couple things on nutrition for seniors, Levine's office said they would be interested in making a budget ask for funding for senior serving institutions, local farms, and community gardens. Next step would be requesting a meeting with Levine. Reba to join effort, open to other MFPC members. Funding/budget ask before bill ask; deadline for the bill allegedly has passed, though unclear timing now.

- Advocate to our local members of Congress to extend sign-up period and process (ie by phone?) for Disaster CalFresh. Potential to be woven into CalFresh.org website?
- Update on meeting with Mike McGuire, Save the Date: CFFN has monthly meeting with folks from around the state. Small meeting, perhaps 10 people from outside of Marin, handful of folks from MFPC to participate, plus some folks from the state. If you are interested contact Liana or Julia. Had been looking at April 3 at AIM, though will reschedule due to Shelter in Place – stay tuned.
- CalAIM project: Request endorsement for public comment & discuss opportunities for engagement
- Info from USDA Food and Nutrition Service: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19>

Mapping Our Network – Wendy Tobiasson

- Continuing survey of members and their organization’s work, but somewhat on pause now. Can get in touch with Wendy at: (415) 694-3801 or wtobiasson@gmail.com if you haven’t been interviewed for our membership survey yet. Working on cards with member organization info that could be circulated at MFPC meetings.

Council Business – Julia Van Soelen Kim

- Update on policy platform, breakout groups, and focus areas for the year – heading in this direction, but COVID-19 received priority for this meeting.
- Update on membership with CFFN & CAFPC

Closing – Julia Van Soelen Kim

- Lauren Klein shares Richard Levins reading
- Coronavirus underscores how important a resilient local food system is
- Linda’s reminder that we are experiencing *physical* distancing, not *social* distancing
- Paula Freeman shares virtual senior center: [Well Connected](#) and [Well Connected Español](#) connect individuals to virtual classes, conversations, and other activities and are accessible by telephone. Programs are available in both English and Spanish. [Social Call](#) matches individuals for weekly friendly phone chats (and in-person visits in San Francisco, Alameda, Marin, and Sonoma counties). To refer anyone to any of these programs, please have them contact us at: **(877) 797-7299 (English), (877) 400-5867 (Spanish), or coviaconnections@covia.org**

Virtual meeting closed at 5:00 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 21 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Stay tuned for information regarding whether the meeting will be held in-person or on Zoom again.