

**Food Justice Committee Meeting**  
**May 1, 2019**  
**Minutes**

**In Attendance**

Pat Albright, Susan Bloch, Eric Borgstrom (chair), Flo Gelo, Mimi Kahn, Seth Lerman, Jack Malinowski, Julie Martini, Emme McDermott, Sarah Mitteldorf, Jon Scaffidi, Suzanna Urminska, Norm Weiss

**1. General FJC Discussion (Sarah) – see Sarah’s thoughts/notes attached**

Sarah opened the discussion by reminding us of several things, for example, notes are being taken, we are short on time, we are sharing space, etc. She drew our attention to AORTA (Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance) in Philadelphia, and referred to a quote from their website about “collective intelligence.” “Nobody knows everything, everybody knows something, and together we know a lot.” This set us up well for our discussion.

First, she asked us each to state a personal issue that intersects with food justice. Responses included the following: race, hunger, different socioeconomic backgrounds, policies that regulate food access, pricing at the co-op and how some prices are out of reach for many, the multi-faceted aspects of food justice, growing up poor, equality and the desire for the co-op to model equality, anti-poverty and women, feeling privileged and wanting to help others, decentralizing the systems with such things as community gardens, mental health, and technical aspects of food justice like soil health and climate.

Second, she asked us each to share what brought us to the Food Justice Committee. These responses included the following: the magnitude of hidden poverty in Philadelphia, the desire to address hunger in a non-sectarian way and do something concrete to help, the Food For All program and being part of a group committed to food justice, learning about children going hungry in summer without school lunches, learning about the plan to increase the FFA discount, realizing that increasing the FFA discount is more important than the senior discount, dealing with personal issues about having and sharing, and learning to give something away.

Third, she asked us why we come to the meetings. Here, responses included the following, and referenced many appropriate quotes: the value of service is under-appreciated, “an unengaged/unexamined life is not worth living,” our world is not good if anyone in it is hungry, the idea of coming together to reshape the world, if anyone is compromised by anyone else we are both diminished, we cannot be all that we can be if someone else cannot be all that they can be, and the desire to make the co-op live up to all that it is meant to be.

Sharing these thoughts led to broader discussions about the relationship between the co-op and the FJC. What is the appropriate space for the co-op within the larger picture of food justice? What is the appropriate role of the FJC within the Co-op? How do we model the values of our organization? How can we gain a better understanding of food justice issues so that we can do a better job of doing something helpful?

Within the FJC, there is a need for both macro ideas (shared and researched knowledge about food justice/injustice) and micro projects (concrete things can we do, such as revamping the FFA program, organizing food drives, etc.). The two are linked.

Because time was short, we agreed to continue with these conversations at the June meeting and on into the future. We need to have conversations about what we think the co-op can be, and whether the FJC is attached to the co-op or whether it is something that can extend beyond the co-op.

## **2. Food Drive (Jon)**

The food drive will be held at all three WW stores from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fri-Sun, May 31st to June 2nd. Donations will also be collected at the WW Farm Market from noon to 7 p.m. on Friday May 31st.

Volunteers are needed for various 2-hour shifts as well as for setting up and breaking down each day. The sign-up schedule is posted on the WW working members portal. Currently extra shifts outside the collection hours are posted and these erroneous shifts will be removed.

Howard has offered his secure garage (two blocks from the co-op at the corner of Westview Ave and Sherman St) for storing the donations. The co-op will provide wooden pallets to keep the food off the garage floor. Mattie Dixon in Ambler has given us feedback about what items they need. Holy Cross Mt. Airy and St. Luke's Germantown have not yet responded with these details. We still need trucks and/or vans to transport the donations to the storage site. Donations collected at the Ambler store will be routed directly to the Mattie N. Dixon Food Pantry.

## **3. Food for All Update (Eric) – see Eric's handout attached**

A series of four Shuttle articles will be coming out over the next four months, with the first one appearing in the May issue. These will highlight issues of food insecurity in the Philadelphia area, its impact on co-op members, and how members can make an impact.

Sarah and Suzanna are working on the member survey, which will have four questions included in the annual WW member survey. The responses will allow us to

gauge interest in the OPT-OUT and TOP-OFF programs (we are considering new names for these programs).

The ice cream social, which will publicize the FFA program and efforts to improve it, is scheduled for June 16th from 1-3 PM at the WW Chestnut Hill backyard.

In July Eric will be moving 30 miles away. Thus, we need to discuss leadership positions for both the FJC Chair and the FFA task force that will need to be in place by July.

#### **4. Saul's Country Fair (Eric)**

Saul's country fair is May 11th, 11-3. FJC volunteers will be tabling at the event to provide information about the FFA program.

#### **5. Announcements**

General Assistance has now been included in the list of things that qualify someone for the Food For All program.

The co-op's Spring General Membership meeting will be May 4th, 4-6 PM at Germantown Academy, 340 Morris Rd. Fort Washington, PA.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

- FFA Task Force Meeting – Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 7 PM
- FJC Meeting – Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM
- July FJC meeting is changed to Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup> due to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday

FJC Discussion Thoughts from Sarah  
From May 1, 2019 meeting

Goals of these discussions as stated:

1. To understand our individual and collective understanding of food justice (and the potential future growth/evolution/maturation of those understandings).
2. To understand our shared knowledge about the landscape of the social justice issues that food justice is a part of (and the collective expertise that we represent).
3. To understand the visions, dreams, and goal of our committee members.

This will help us:

1. Articulate our current mission (and set ourselves up to evaluate it as the committee changes and matures as individuals and as a whole).
2. Guide initiatives and priorities.
3. Develop educational programs that serve the group as its mission.
4. Place our work as a committee in the context of the larger history of the committee.
5. Contextualize our work within the larger context of Weavers Way.

**Issues that felt compelling to folks at the meeting:**

- The possibility held within a diverse group of people to find and enact change.
- The idea of service and the act of service - as unappreciated, as necessary to life, as a change in a person, etc.
- Needing to do something and needing to feel like we are doing something
- The issues of inequity and the discovery of the realities of some of these issues as being what sparks the desire to participate

**Questions that we stated that we want to ask:**

- Where do we see the co-op as existing in the social, economic, environmental, etc landscape of food justice? As a committee, what do we see as our relationship to the Co-op? (ex. Are we an off shoot of the co-op that can capitalize on being part of a larger organization (if so, how? what resources does being part of it give us?) Are we an organization that, in the paraphrased words of one of the members, encourages the co-op to be "better" (and what does "better" mean to us and how has and does that idea evolve)? Etc?
- Related: What do we see the co-op as? What do we think the co-op could be?

**Questions that rose out of the discussion:**

- A number of committee members discussed the idea of service as something that inspires them and as important to them, but also as something that they want to see more. Is the idea of service and of social initiatives something that the committee wants to look at more, or is it more of a driving force behind the work?
- What is our relationship to the issues that bring us here. Do we need the space to discuss our evolving understanding of the questions that brought us here, or do we want to
- What would you want to see incorporated into the educational component? What would help you (or do you see helping others) contextualize the work we do? What would help you discover opportunities for new initiatives?
  - Related: Would anyone be able to direct some kind of study of an issue that might help us better understand how to move forward as a committee? Ex. political/public policy, water issues, employment issues, wage inequity, some forms of hidden poverty, etc

- What is change? What is change that we can be part of?

**Strategic questions that we need to develop some consensus about, or at least shared discussion:**

- There were several mentions of how the work that we are doing with the FFA program and Food Drives should be contextualized as "stop-gaps" in the larger context of an approach to food justice. How do we, as an committee, articulate what that "larger context" is and where do we fit into it? Is our intention to continue to create these "stop-gap" initiatives while acknowledging a wider context? Is it to begin to explore and prioritize initiatives that would respond specifically with that wider context? Is it to continue to research that "wider context" so that we can discover new initiatives that attempt to address that in ways that we might not see or be able to articulate now? Some combo? What do we need to learn about/ understand to continue to figure this out?
- Related to the above question: There are a lot of groups that are trying to address these issues. Where does WW and the FJC fit into this landscape not only of inequity, but also of people, organizations, politics, etc of change?
- Are there angles/issues that members want to see addressed more specifically? (This could mean beginning with knowledge shares or research in the hopes of it becoming initiative, desire to learn more about to make the group better, etc.) Ex. Policy.
- How can we imagine what the potential of this group is? The co-op? Membership? What can that potential lead us to discover that we can do? What info do we need to figure that out? What discussions? Where does that potential come from (mentioned: diversity, desire to give and share, momentum after town hall)?

**A few things that seemed to have some consensus behind them, once surfaced:**

Current projects include

1. Food Drives
2. Improving the FFA (first, discount amount)

No current intention to look at community gardens or other initiatives at this time.

Note: someone mentioned that we used to collect food at meetings and some folks might miss that initiative/practice.

Note: Discussed in previous meetings - committee has, before, participated in programs that help subsidize food in other ways before by raising money and stuff. Just to keep it noted.

Idea: How can open discussion and specific research/education help guide us to new initiatives? How can we learn from each other and each others' expertise?

**A quick list of issues that came up as connecting to Food Justice:**

- National and state policy
- Co-op as able to model what an org. can be: social vs. commercial
- Anti-poverty work
- Federal welfare
- Inequity around mothers, waged and unwaged work
- Climate change
- Decentralization of power (and wealth?)
- Soil health and water quality

- Mental and physical wellbeing
- Injustice in education, poverty, employment, safety
- Local

# FOOD JUSTICE COMMITTEE

May 1, 2019

## Food For All Update

1. **Shuttle Articles:** The FFA Task Force (subcommittee) decided to present a four-part series of articles about food insecurity in Philadelphia and Ambler, its impact on Weavers Way members, and how WW members make an impact.

Part 1 – Making Ends Meet: The Voices of Food For All Shoppers

Part 2 – Testimonials of Food Insecurity From Weavers Way Members

Part 3 – Here, There, and Everywhere: Food Insecurity In Our Communities

Part 4 – Forging Ahead: How Weavers Way Members Can Effect Real Change

We still need some authors and contributors for Parts 2, 3, and 4. If you know someone who may be interested in providing a testimonial about food insecurity, whether past or present, please have them contact Mimi or Eric. Testimonials can be anonymously attributed.

2. **Member Survey:** Sarah and Suzanna worked with Kirsten Bernal to have 4 questions included in the annual Weavers Way Member Survey to gauge interest in the OPT-OUT and TOP-OFF programs. While the survey has not been finalized, GM Jon Roesser expressed that he anticipated our questions to be included.

3. **Ice Cream Social** – June 16, 2019, 1-3 PM – WW Chestnut Hill Backyard

We need a volunteer to be the point-of-contact and coordinator for this event. We have 100 servings already donated by Chilly Philly. Norman Weiss is approaching Zsa's and Weckerly's for up to 200 more servings. Norman will be our staff liaison for supplies. Dean Stefano, the WWCH Store Manager, has approved the event.

A. Publicity – Flyers, Email Blast, June Shuttle (May 13<sup>th</sup> deadline)

B. Volunteer Servers

C. Volunteers for Cleanup and Setup

D. Connect with Kirsten for Working Members Hours on Schedule

E. Define the hours of the ice cream social

4. **Project/Task Leaders for upcoming FFA events**

5. **Saul Country Fair Day** – FJC volunteers will be tabling to provide information about the FFA program. Membership and FFA applications will be available for distribution. Farm Market accepts EBT, Philly Food Bucks, and Farm Market Vouchers. HGC is open on Tuesday and Friday from 12-7PM. Saul Country Fair Day is May 11, 2019 from 11AM-3PM.

6. **Next FFA Task Force Meeting** – May 16<sup>th</sup> 7PM (if agreeable to prospective attendees).

7. **Rebuilding the FFA Momentum**