

City of Cambridge

(2)

C. Duehay moved

MASSACHUSETTS

Agenda # 22 - Appropriation of \$60,750
to the Human Services Dept.In City Council October 5 1992

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				Mr. Ed Cyr
✓				Mr. Francis H. Duehay
✓				Mr. Jonathan S. Myers
✓				Mrs. Sheila T. Russell
✓				Mr. Walter J. Sullivan
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
		✓		Mr. William H. Walsh
✓				Ms. Alice K. Wolf
✓				Mayor Kenneth E. Reeves
4	0	1	0	

① C Duehay m. swap to take up this item at beginning of meeting
VV/8-0

③ C Duehay m. swap VV/8-0

④ Reversid (C. Dwan) reversid VV/8-0 no

**CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

October 5, 1992

INTRODUCED BY CITY MANAGER ROBERT W. HEALY

AN ORDER CONCERNING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 1992

ORDERED: That in addition to sums previously appropriated by the City Council for the fiscal period 1992-93 the following sum is hereby appropriated in the General Fund of the City of Cambridge:

FUNCTION	DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM	SALARIES & WAGES	OTHER ORDINARY MAINTENANCE	TRAVEL & TRAINING	EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES	APPROPRIATION
Human Resource Development	Human Services		\$60,750			\$60,750.00

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED:

That the above appropriation in the General Fund to be financed by estimated revenues drawn from the following sources:

FINANCING PLAN	REVENUE
Free Cash	\$60,750.00

In City Council October 5, 1992.

Adopted by a yeas and nays vote:-

Yeas 8; Nays 0; Absent 1.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy; *D. Margaret Drury*

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

**Report to the City Council
on
Hunger in Cambridge
Food and Meal Programs Serving Hungry Residents
Citywide Initiatives Responding to Hunger
and
Use of the \$43,000 City Grant**

Submitted October 1, 1992

Prepared by Fred Berman, Planner, DHSP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Section A -- Analysis of Need / Hunger in Cambridge	2
Section B -- Food and Meals Programs Serving City Residents	3
• pantries • food recovery and distribution • SHARE	
• Dollar-a-Bag • School & Summer Meals • Community Meals	
Section C -- Citywide Initiatives Responding to Hunger	5
• 1991 Ballot Referendum • Health of the City Task Force	
• Spring '92 City Council Appropriation to Support Pantries and a Pilot Food Stamp Outreach Program	
• New \$50,000 Federal Grant (with Somerville) to Enhance Access to Food and Nutrition Information	
Section D -- Use of the \$40,500 Food Pantry Grant	7
• Part 1: Overview of Food Pantries / Use of the Grant	
• Part 2: Sources of Income for Pantries	
• Part 3: Sources of Food for Pantries	
• Part 4: Estimating the Cost of Food Distributed by Pantries	
• Part 5: Decisions to Be Made	
Section E -- City-Funded Food Stamp Outreach	13
• Part 1: Overview of Program and Progress Made	
• Part 2: Thoughts About the Future: A Proposal to Fund Earned Income Credit Outreach in Conjunction With Continued Food Stamp Outreach (Funded, in Part, by the Federal Grant)	

Introduction

In the Spring of 1992, the City Council appropriated \$43,000 to fund food purchases by food pantries and meal providers (\$40,500) and Food Stamp outreach conducted as a pilot program administered by the Department of Human Service Programs (\$2,500).

According to reports provided by CEOC, the City's largest pantry and coordinating agency of the local Food Pantry Network, after a little more than six months, the \$40,500 portion of the grant reserved for purchasing food has been exhausted. The usual array of grant and donated resources will be inadequate to maintain the current level of service that the municipal grant has afforded.

Recognizing that **funding pantry efforts is only a piece of the solution**, the Council has requested a more detailed look at hunger in Cambridge and at efforts to address the problem.

Pursuant to that request, this report includes the following:

- an overview of hunger in Cambridge;
- an overview of programs and services addressing the needs of hungry residents;
- an overview of citywide efforts to grapple with the problem, including the 1991 Referendum, the Health of the City Task Force, the \$43,000 City Council grant, and a recently received \$50,000 federal grant partially funding benefits and nutrition outreach/education and a range of initiatives designed to enhance access to adequate food and nutrition; and
- an in-depth look at the flow of cash and food resources through the pantry system, and, in particular, CEOC, the largest pantry.

Section A. Analysis of Need / Hunger in Cambridge

A City-sponsored survey at the end of 1991 found that over 10% of randomly sampled Cambridge households -- only a small fraction of whom received public assistance -- reported that sometime during the previous twelve month period, they had either:

- (a) been hungry or had less food than they needed because of lack of money,
- (b) sought help because they had had problems affording food, or
- (c) used a food pantry or soup kitchen.

The results of the survey are supported by 1990 Census data and the finding of a 1991 Project Bread / Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) study of hunger in Massachusetts.¹

The 1990 Census found that 10.7% of the City's residents (for whom income is calculated) -- including 14.6% of all children -- live below the poverty line. The Project Bread / MDPH study suggests that 45% of these people experience hunger.

The Project Bread / MDPH study also found that hunger afflicts many more than just the officially poor: approximately one quarter of households with incomes between 100% and 185% of poverty (the cutoff for WIC eligibility) reported being hungry. In Cambridge, that would include another 3.25% of the population.

Low income is not the only predictor of hunger. The high cost of housing means that many households whose incomes are above the usual measures of poverty are, nonetheless, unable to purchase adequate food. The 1990 Census found that **approximately 27.5% of the City's 30,000 tenants pay more than 35% of their income for rent.** This, of course, does not count the approximately 1,700 low income families and 1,245 low income elderly households that live in Cambridge Public Housing, or the approximately 900 low income families who live in Section 8 housing, since, by law, the rents that these households pay is, at most, 30% of income. Unfortunately, federal food and nutrition programs do not reach all of these people.

¹The Project Bread / MDPH study randomly surveyed non-homeless households living at or below 185% of poverty with children under 12 years of age. The results of the study, published in a report entitled "Children Are Hungry in Massachusetts," include findings that:

- 29% of working families in the sample had experienced hunger
- 42% of AFDC families in the sample had experienced hunger while on AFDC
- 33% of eligible families in the sample didn't receive Food Stamps
- 43% of sample families participating in the Food Stamp program had experienced hunger as Food Stamps recipients
- 52% of eligible families in the sample were not enrolled in WIC
- "After paying for such necessities as shelter, medical care, child care, and transportation, working families [in the sample] spent an average of only \$2.30 per day per person on food [leaving an average of \$20 per person per month for all other household expenditures, including clothing and diapers]. This level of expenditure does not even cover the current cost of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's least expensive family food plan. Also, \$2.30 buys only 57% of the amount allocated for food in the minimum family budget plan developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare."

3

According to the 1990 Census, there were approximately 6,230 households (4,957 unrelated individuals and 1,273 families) at or below the poverty line in Cambridge, yet only approximately 3,000 households participated in the **Food Stamp program** in 1991. Food Stamps, however, are available to households with incomes up to 130% of poverty, so the **3,000 participating households were drawn from a population that probably includes over 8,500 eligible households.**

Statistical evidence of WIC under-enrollment is harder to come by, because of (a) a lack of data about the number of income eligible families including a pregnant woman or child under five years of age, and (b) a lack of program data counting enrollment by city of residence. However, community leaders point to the Project Bread / MDPH finding of 52% under-enrollment statewide as corroboration of their concerns about the local situation).

Both the Welfare and WIC offices have staff capability in Spanish and Haitian Creole. (In fact, half of the Cambridge WIC office's 1,450 household caseload consists of Spanish and Creole-speaking families.) However, community leaders suggest that language and cultural barriers continue to place members of linguistic minority residents at heightened risk of non-participation in these programs.

Unfortunately, **receipt of Food Stamps or WIC is no guarantee against hunger.** For a family of three on AFDC (receiving approximately \$600/month, including a rent and clothing allowance), the maximum Food Stamp allotment is little more than \$200, leaving the family at 90% of the federal poverty level. That \$804 represents less only 72% of the \$1,110 monthly budget recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare for a family of three on AFDC to maintain a minimal standard of living. (Source: Project Bread / MDPH)

Unfortunately, again, such hunger exists in Cambridge despite an impressive array of programs that will be described in the next section. What that means -- and what utilization statistics and anecdotal evidence tell us -- is that many of these at-risk households -- especially households from linguistic minority communities -- are just not being served by the programs out there, even though nearly all of those programs have the capacity to serve more people.

Section B: Food and Nutrition Programs Serving City Residents (see also Section D, Part 3: Sources of Food)

Considerable efforts have been made to address the food and nutrition-related needs of low income residents of Cambridge.

A **network of nine pantries** serves over 1,500 low income households every month; CEOC, the largest pantry, distributes food to over 900 households/month, and has helped more than 2,900 households over the past two years. **USDA bulk commodities** are distributed on a quarterly basis through a network of neighborhood-based sites, including CEOC, housing developments,

4

and, most recently, community schools to approximately 4,500 low income households.

"Food For Free," a local non-profit **food recovery and distribution** program supported in part by a \$20,000 Community Development Block Grant and \$14,500 from Project Bread, salvages approximately 10-15 tons of mostly produce and dairy every month for distribution to some two dozen pantries, shelters, meal programs, day care centers and drop-in programs serving the Cambridge/Somerville area.

Two relatively new programs, **SHARE** and **Dollar-a-Bag** (sponsored by Fair Foods), provide the only programmatic access to low cost food that does not depend on income eligibility. There are a number of SHARE program sites -- CEOC and, during the school year, six or seven of the Community Schools -- but they serve a relatively small number (150 to 250) of households. Presently, only CEOC and one Community School program sponsor Dollar-a-Bag, serving 100-plus households; however, some of the Community School SHARE programs are considering a switch to Dollar-a-Bag.

Centro Presente, a local agency serving the Latino community, coordinates a **cooperative food buying program for Spanish-speaking persons**.

The Cambridge School Department is an active participant in the federal **school meals** program. An aggressive campaign last Fall (1991) to enroll income eligible students, enabled 49% of the city's elementary school students to participate in the free or reduced cost lunch programs. (School Department officials believe that additional improvement is possible, particularly at some schools where parents' return of income forms was low.)

Of these eligible elementary school children, an average of 84% participated in the lunch program (until the weather starts improving in late spring...), but, on average, only 20% ate the school breakfast, for a variety of reasons having to do with transportation and other logistical problems that stigmatize or make it difficult for participants.

Although high school students presumably come from the same socioeconomic strata as their younger brothers and sisters in the elementary schools, only 18.6% of CRLS students returned approved applications to participate in the meal program. Lack of interest was reportedly due, in large part, to the stigma attached to using coupons to purchase lunch.

Over an eight week period this summer, City-affiliated camp and drop-in programs served two federally funded meals (or one meal and a snack) per day to up to 900 youth at fourteen sites throughout the City (up from 750 children at twelve sites last year). (Other children and youth received federally-funded meals through participation in child care programs or privately operated summer activity programs.)

Unlike other food and nutrition programs in Cambridge, most of the cities' **meal programs** are over-subscribed. The Salvation

5

Army serves 630 lunches every week (six days only), and evening meal programs at a variety of mostly Church-based sites in Cambridge serve from 75 to 130 individuals/night. The federally funded Area Agency on Aging (Somerville Cambridge Elder Services), coordinates delivery of 550 meals to homebound elders, and congregate meals for 260 well elders.

Section C: Citywide Initiatives Responding to the Hunger Problem

Voters, providers, advocates, and City officials have all acknowledged the need to do more to address hunger in Cambridge. A 1991 Ballot Question calling on the City to "recognize the right of every resident to accessible, safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable and affordable food, without barriers and without stigma" was overwhelmingly approved by the electorate.

Many of the goals articulated in that citizen referendum -- increased access to benefit programs, increased participation in school and summer meals programs, improved school-based nutrition education, increased resources for pantry and meal providers, review of overall City policy regarding food and nutrition, and participation by a diverse committee of City residents and providers in developing goals and strategies for addressing hunger -- were echoed in a subsequent report by the **Hunger and Nutrition Action Group of the Cambridge Health of the City Task Force**.

The City was presented with an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to addressing hunger when the Food Pantry Network came before the City Council to alert its members to an impending crisis last Spring (1992): pantry resources were near the point of exhaustion, and the next infusion of grant money wouldn't arrive until October. The Council responded with a **City appropriation of \$43,000**, which included \$2,500 for a pilot Food Stamp outreach program and \$40,500 to enable pantries to keep their doors open through the summer, and to enhance their ability to offer nutritionally balanced foods for distribution. (An analysis of the way in which those funds were used follows in the next two sections.)

The goals articulated in the voter referendum and the recommendations by the Health of the City Task Force -- including a call to create a nutrition ombudsperson for the City, and a call to address the growing problem of pediatric obesity², formed the basis of a **successful \$50,000 federal grant application** submitted by the City's Human Services Department (working in cooperation with the Somerville Mayor's Office of Human Services) in June, 1992.

²A January, 1991 Massachusetts Department of Public Health report ("Nutrition Counts") found that 17.3% of Cambridge Head Start children were overweight. Dr. William Dietz, chair of the Hunger and Nutrition Action Group of the Cambridge Health of the City Project, reports that lack of activity and improper diet have combined to make obesity one of the most prevalent -- and, when future health care costs are factored in, costly -- nutritional problems faced by schoolchildren.

6

That grant, whose implementation will begin in October, includes a series of initiatives designed:

- to improve coordination of existing private and public food assistance resources serving low income persons,
- to promote policy and programmatic changes that enhance access to programs and benefits serving low income persons, and, in particular, persons from linguistic minority communities, and
- to develop and support a campaign of multi-lingual, culturally appropriate nutrition outreach and education that can help low income households get the most value out of their food resources, and shape diets and lifestyles which promote health and minimize the risk of disease or illness.

Grant and leveraged funds will pay for:

- the services of two half-time Project Directors, one based at Cambridge Hospital (where she will continue to work as a half-time nutritionist) and the other based at Somerville Community Corporation (the host of Project Soup), who will collaboratively work with public and private agencies:
 - to establish policies and protocols which enhance low income access to benefit programs, such as WIC, Food Stamps, school meal, and summer food service
 - to coordinate and enhance planning and fundraising capabilities of organizations providing food and nutrition-related services to low income persons,
 - to develop and support initiatives such as a surplus food recovery program, creation of a pantry delivery service, etc., which enhance access by low income persons to food and nutrition-related services
- the recruitment, training, and stipending of a multi-lingual corps of part-time community-based outreach workers, who will provide information and assistance with benefits enrollment and basic nutrition education; and
- the services of nutritionists and nutrition (or nursing or health education) student interns, who will, in accordance with their level of expertise and experience:
 - provide basic nutrition counseling,
 - provide training for nurses at community clinics and parent aides staffing home visiting programs,
 - teach basic nutrition classes in affiliation with community-based programs serving low income persons,
 - work with pantries, meal providers, etc. to enhance the nutritional value of food/meals offered, and to develop multi-lingual, culturally appropriate nutritional information which addresses the needs of clients.

An Advisory Board, including municipal, professional, and community participation, will provide guidance and support.

Section D: Use of the \$40,500 Food Pantry Grant

Part 1: Overview of Food Pantries / Use of Grant

As was indicated earlier, Cambridge residents are served by a network of nine food pantries. The largest, CEOC, serves upwards of 900 households per month. It is estimated that Margaret Fuller House and St. James Church serve a combined total of 400-500 households per month. The remaining pantries vary in size, some serving only one or two households per week, others serving close to 100 households per month. Although all pantries experience an increase in utilization when hard times hit, it is the three largest pantries, and in particular CEOC -- whose identity is largely associated with its pantry and food distribution programs -- that see the most new client households.

The \$40,500 grant from the City was primarily intended to bolster the dwindling food-buying resources of the City's pantries, and, in particular, the resources of CEOC, whose clientele had doubled in the space of a year. In addition to ensuring that no pantry would have to close its doors for lack of food to distribute, the grant was intended to help pantries enhance the nutritional value of the food they distributed. The money was also intended to help cash-strapped meal providers purchase food ingredients, both through the pantry/Food Bank system and from retail supermarkets.

The grant supported food purchases made during a six month period, from March through August. (Approximately \$3,500 that had not been accounted for as of the August invoice was presumably spent in September.)

Most of the funds were spent by CEOC on behalf of CEOC clients; however, representatives from Margaret Fuller House, St. James, Cambridgeport Baptist, and the Committee of Elders have stated that City funding enabled them to get through the summer without closing their doors, and, in fact, allowed them to stock some very basic items (e.g., soup, cereal) that they would have otherwise been unable to afford. The City grant was only source of funding for the new Haitian American Cultural Center pantry, which had not yet received Project Bread or FEMA assistance.

As part of its contract with the City, CEOC was asked to work with the DHSP to develop a better understanding of the flow of food and cash resources through the pantry network, so as to better anticipate the funding needs of providers. The results of those efforts form the basis of the discussion which follows.

Part 2: Sources of Income for Pantries

Pantries receive annual grants from Project Bread³ in October.

³Project Bread requires annual reports from the pantries it funds, including food budget information (current year's budget and projected budget for next year); information about non-food expenses (salaries, rent, refrigeration equipment, etc.); hours of operation; eligibility guidelines; number of households/individuals served; whether the pantry participates in

8

Grant size depends on the proceeds of the Walk for Hunger, the size of the pantry (number of clients, etc.), the extent of community support, demographics of the area, size of the previous year's grant, etc. **At least 80% of the grant total must be spent on the purchase of food**, with a few exceptions. Grants awarded in October 1991 ranged from \$500 to \$25,000, and averaged \$7,000; CEOC received approximately \$13,000. According to Eileen Boyle at Project Bread, the October 1992 grants are more or less comparable to those awarded last year; some agencies got a little more, some a little less. The October 1992 grants are listed at the end of this section.

In addition, Project Bread routinely awards **"emergency grants"** of up to \$2,000. Applications for a second or third emergency grant within any given year receive considerably more scrutiny. Last year, CEOC received one such emergency grant for \$2,000.

Each November, Project Bread also distributes **"holiday grants"** which ranged from \$50 to \$3,000 this past year. CEOC used its \$3,000 grant to buy SHARE packages for hungry households.

Project Bread also awards **"new initiative grants"** of up to \$5,000 to support new pantries, etc. This year, a new pantry serving the Haitian community has been awarded \$2,500; a new Cambridge Hospital-based pantry for people with AIDS has received \$3,500.

A pantry may also receive a **federal FEMA grant** every January (which can pay expenses incurred during the federal fiscal year beginning the previous October 1st). Grant amounts vary widely, but are typically based in large part on the size of the grants for the previous year. CEOC received a \$3,785 FEMA grant this past fiscal year.

Pantries do considerable fundraising in the community, which generates both **cash and food donations**. The value of the cash donations is not typically public information. **The value of the food donations is not recorded.** CEOC has indicated that it fundraised \$3,948 in cash donations and received an additional \$5,250 of the total \$22,103 that was fundraised by the pantry network. Executive Director Elaine DeRosa indicates that corporate giving is down, and that "can drives" have replaced cash donations in many instances, limiting pantries' flexibility to acquire and distribute nutritionally balanced grocery bags.

As described in the chart that follows, pantries received approximately \$111,500 in Project Bread and FEMA grants for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1991. (See note above about comparability of 1991 and 1992 Project Bread grants.) Combined with approximately \$28,000 in fundraising (including \$2,000 from the River Festival) and the \$40,500 City grant, pantry cash resources appear to have been \$180,000.

9

Program	Proj Bread Annual Grant ⁴ Oct. '92	Proj Bread Emerg Grant Oct. '91 - Sept. '92	Proj Bread Holiday Grant ⁵ Nov. '92	FEMA Grant ⁶ Jan. '92 (spending 10/91-9/92)	Totals
Pantries					
CEOC	14,000	2,000	3,000	3,785	22,785
Margaret Fuller	15,000	1,000	3,000	5,000	24,000
St. Pauls AME	7,500	2,000	1,000	7,042 ⁷	17,542
St. James	6,000		800	2,272	9,072
C-port Baptist	5,500	1,500			7,000
East End House	4,000	1,000	600	4,750	10,350
Pent'l Tabernacle	500		240		740
Haitian American Cultural Ctr (new)	2,500				2,500
Cambridge Hospital AIDS pantry (new)	3,500				3,500
Comm. of Elders (pantry and meal program)	7,000	2,000	1,000	4,000	14,000
Pantry Sub Total	65,500	9,500	9,640	26,849	111,489
Meal Programs					
Salvation Army	7,500		800	14,000	22,300
Mass. Av. Baptist	7,500	1,000	200	5,679	14,379
Pilgrim Congr'l ⁸	6,000	2,000	400	3,719	12,119
Metrop. Baptist	5,000		100		5,100
Union Baptist	4,000	1,000		3,407	8,407
Harvard Sq. Church	3,500			1,500	5,000
Bread and Jams	6,000				6,000
Meal Sub Total	39,500	4,000	1,500	28,305	73,305
Other					
Food for Free	12,000 ⁹	1,500	1,000	5,000	19,500
All Programs Total					204,294

⁴With a few exceptions, at least 80% of Annual Grants must be spent on food.

⁵Pantries typically do not use their holiday grant to fund year-round distribution, but, instead, use it to purchase turkeys and other festive foods that would ordinarily exceed their budgetary capacity.

⁶FEMA funds must be spent entirely on food.

⁷Includes money for rent and a rehab project.

⁸Although the congregation has changed, the Church will maintain its meal program.

⁹This \$12,000 pays for "food rescue" (i.e., food transport).

Part 3: Sources of Food for Pantries¹⁰

Food pantries in Cambridge obtain / purchase their food from a variety of sources at unit costs that vary substantially:

- Pantries may obtain **surplus commodities at no cost** from USDA on a weekly basis.¹¹ Not all pantries participate in this program, which requires record keeping above and beyond the capabilities of some all-volunteer staffs. The mix of surplus commodities varies from week to week, and may include such staples as **cornmeal, rice, peanut butter, canned vegetables, and macaroni**. These items are warehoused at the Food Bank. Food for the Hungry, a Red Cross affiliate, can deliver USDA commodities to pantries which are unable to arrange the transportation.
- Pantries purchase a variety of **packaged food and personal hygiene products** from the Boston Food Bank (which receives donations from supermarket chains, etc. through the national Second Harvest network) at a cost of **12 cents a pound**. Some pantries purchase directly from the Food Bank, while CEOC acts as an intermediary for others. The kind of products available through the Food Bank varies from week to week, and may include such items as **juice, crackers, soup, pasta, cookies, coffee, cough drops, cottage cheese, yogurt, soap, feminine hygiene products, candy bars, cereal, pudding, etc.** Pantries are limited in the amount of food that they can purchase from the Food Bank during any given week. Food for the Hungry can deliver Food Bank purchases to pantries which are unable to arrange the transportation.
- Pantries purchase **salvaged produce and bread**, and, periodically, **salvaged dairy products** from Food for Free and Fair Foods at a subsidized cost of **12 cents a pound**. (Food for Free receives \$20,000 in block grant funding from the City to support its salvage and trucking operation.) Additional foods would be available to city pantries but for the lack of adequate trucking resources, and, in particular, a refrigerated truck.
- CEOC and certain other pantries receive **donated foods** from individual residents, institutions, local supermarkets (e.g., Bread and Circus, Central Square Market), business entities, and certain companies (e.g., Prince Spaghetti), as well as **surplused vegetables** from the Chelsea Market, and "scavenged" food distributed by Food for the Hungry, the Red Cross, and/or Project Bread.

¹⁰Note that CEOC does not expend resources on the SHARE program or on Fair Foods' "Dollar a Bag" program, even though it serves as a host site for those programs. No other pantries are currently involved in these programs.

¹¹ USDA surplus commodities available for distribution by pantries on a weekly basis should not be confused with the USDA surplus commodities available for quarterly distributions at multiple sites.

- 11
- **City grant funding** has been used primarily to enable CEOC and other food and meal programs to enhance the nutritional value of foods distributed/served through purchase of **wholesale canned, packaged, and frozen foods (soups, vegetables, tuna fish, cereal, juice, etc.); baby formula; and frozen meats** from wholesalers (Sweet Life, Universal) and, on occasion, supermarkets (when they have large overstocks of unsalable items, or when sale prices warrant bulk purchasing) to enhance the nutritional value of foods available through the other previously listed sources.

One might ask, "Why purchase foods at wholesale prices when cash resources can be used to purchase much larger volumes of Food Bank and salvaged food?" The answer is that the foods available through the Food Bank are limited both in quantity and nutritional value (often heavy in carbohydrates and fat). Foods available through salvage (produce, bread, and occasionally, dairy) complement Food Bank and USDA items, but do not, without supplementation with wholesale purchases, enable pantries to provide a nutritionally balanced grocery bag to clients. Recognizing this gap, the Food Bank is developing the capability to make bulk purchases on behalf of member pantries and meal programs, which should somewhat reduce the cost of such supplementation by individual pantries, like CEOC.

Part 4: Estimating the Cost of Food Distributed by Pantries

Food pantries must keep some record of their distribution practices in order to qualify for Project Bread grants. The level of record-keeping varies from pantry to pantry.

Gerry Bergman reports that in the fiscal year beginning October, 1991, CEOC served upwards of 900 households per month, or approximately 10,800 households per year. (This is, of course, not an unduplicated count of households, which number approximately 2,000 since May, 1990.) Rebecca Swartz of CEOC estimates that in the coming fiscal year, CEOC will serve approximately 12,000 households, including up to 1,300 per month during the Fall holiday season.

Gerry Bergman estimates that, on average, the other pantries (some of which maintain regular hours, some of which provide assistance on a referral basis only) served a combined total of 600 households each month, probably including some of the households served by CEOC. (Most pantries limit households to one visit per month; the Committee of Elders allows seniors to pick up a small bag of staples once a week.)

CEOC has the most extensive facility of all the City's pantries - the greatest amount of storage, refrigeration, freezer capacity, and staff/volunteer support -- and is therefore able to stock the greatest variety of foods. Gerry Bergman estimates that, with the kind of supplementation that the City's grant allowed, each CEOC client household received groceries costing CEOC approximately \$8-10.

The food reserves at the City's smallest pantries tend to consist primarily of donated foods (cans, jars, and boxes with a long shelf life) and similar items purchased for 12 cents/pound at the Food Bank, so that the cost to these smallest pantries of distributed food is probably significantly less than \$8-10 per household.

Medium-size pantries stock a limited variety of salvaged produce and bread, occasionally dairy, and, this summer, with the help of the City grant, a limited selection of the items purchased from wholesalers by CEOC. The cost to these medium-size pantries of distributed food is probably somewhat less than \$8-10 per household.

The concept of "cost to a pantry" is key here. Since some groceries come free (e.g., USDA surplus commodities and donated foods), some cost 12 cents a pound (e.g., Food Bank food, salvaged food from Food for Free and Fair Foods), and some groceries are purchased at wholesale price, it is very difficult to attach a meaning to the \$8-10 estimate.

The same can of tuna might cost a pantry nothing (donated) one week, 12 cents (purchased from the Food Bank) another week, and 59 cents (purchased wholesale) a third week.

In those weeks when a pantry has large stores of donated food or USDA commodities, the cost to the pantry of groceries distributed is less, even though the value of food distributed may be quite high.

The approximate cost to CEOC of distributing food during the period October 1991 to September 1992 can be determined by totaling revenue sources

- \$30,375 (75% of the \$40,500 Cambridge City grant¹²)
- \$10,400 (80% of \$13,000 Project Bread annual grant)
- \$2,000 Project Bread emergency grant
- \$3,785 FEMA grant
- \$10,698 from donations and fundraising (including \$1,500 of \$2,000 raised at the River festival)

and dividing by the number of (duplicated) households served
(900/month * 12 months = 10,800).

$\$57,258 / 10,800 = \5.30 per household per month

The cost of food distribution was lower during the first part of year when donated food was more plentiful, and higher during the second part of the year when donated food was scarce and City funds were used to supplement Food Bank and salvage purchases.

¹²Documentation relating the source of funding (residual pantry revenues vs. the City grant) to specific purchases of food, combined with documentation of transfers of food from CEOC to other pantries, shelters, and meal programs was inadequate to derive an exact percentage. CEOC estimates that 75% of the food purchased with City dollars was distributed to CEOC clients.

Part 5: Decisions to be Made About Program Funding?

- (1) What are the tradeoffs involved in appropriating less than the Pantry Network has said is needed?
 - (a) If pantries had to manage on tighter budgets, would they have to close their doors, establish tighter eligibility guidelines, or change the policy allowing monthly access? To what extent would pantries be forced to skimp on the food they distribute?
 - (b) Are there ways that pantries/meals programs can use their food purchasing power more effectively, thereby reducing the need for City supplementation?
- (2) If the City is going to provide supplemental funding for the pantry/meals network, upon what should the level of funding be based?
 - on historic patterns of utilization?
 - on historic levels of food donation and fundraising?
 - Should the City appropriate the amount that CEOC estimates the Network will need and see what happens?
 - With the availability of federal grant-funded nutritionist consulting, should City funding be related to the recommendations of the nutritionists?
- (3) Should the City condition program access to grant funds upon
 - program participation in other funding programs (FEMA and Project Bread)
 - program utilization of free and low cost food resources (e.g., weekly USDA commodities, Food Bank salvage, Food Bank bulk buying when it's available, Food for Free and Fair Foods salvage, etc.)
 - the sharing of program data with the City, for the purpose of better understanding the flow of resources through the pantry system
- (4) Are there ways that the City can assist pantries in conducting more aggressive fundraising?
- (5) Should the City defer additional assistance until it can be incorporated into the normal budgetary process? Should it provide only the assistance needed to carry programs through the end of the City's fiscal year (June 30th)?

Section E: City-Funded Food Stamp Outreach

Part 1: Overview of Program and Progress Made

At the same time that the City appropriated the \$40,500 to fund the purchase and distribution of food by food pantries and meal programs, it also appropriated \$2,500 which has funded a multilingual (English, Spanish, and Haitian Kreyol) outreach effort that has, to date, helped over 275 City residents obtain

Food Stamps since mid-June.¹³

City funding has paid for approximately 300 hours of outreach and **hands-on assistance in completing the eight-page Food Stamp application** at six regularly scheduled food pantries and selected USDA bulk commodity distribution sites, shelters, and meal programs. Information about the availability of City-funded assistance in applying for Food Stamps has been distributed (in three languages) to roughly two thousand residents. (The effects of double-counting are impossible to quantify, making this a very "soft" estimate.) Signs advertising the availability of help appear in the Food Stamp office.

Thanks to the cooperation of the City's Haitian Services Office and CEOC, **interested City residents can make telephone appointments in all three outreach languages.**

In addition to providing enrollment assistance, outreach workers also do **trouble shooting**:

- assisting clients who have had problems working with the Welfare Department's Food Stamp Office staff
- assisting applicants who have left the Food Stamp Office without an adequate understanding of the applications process and/or additional steps they are required to take:
 - > Are they likely to receive Food Stamps?
 - > Do they need to bring in additional documentation?
 - > Do they need to wait and re-apply?
 - > If they were denied, why aren't they eligible?

Outreach workers encourage would-be beneficiaries who have had bad experiences with a Food Stamp intake worker -- and who are often reluctant to revisit the Welfare office -- to go back and try again. As a last resort, outreach workers accompany their clients to the Office.

Part 2: Thoughts About the Future:

A Proposal to Conduct Earned Income Credit Outreach in Conjunction With Continued Food Stamp Outreach (Funded, in Part, by the Federal Grant)

Utilization -- and therefore the volume of outreach contacts -- at pantries varies substantially. At the smaller pantries, sometimes only a half dozen people will come during a given hour; at CEOC, there are often dozens of people lined up outside the door before pantry hours begin. In addition to covering numerous USDA distribution sites, outreach workers provide almost daily coverage at CEOC and 1-2 days of assistance at the smaller pantries with regularly scheduled hours -- at Margaret Fuller House, St. James Church, Cambridgeport Baptist Church, the

¹³Outreach workers have been recruited by the DHSP, trained by Project Bread (and the Cambridge WIC office), and supervised by DHSP staff. Outreach workers are paid a \$6.50/hour stipend through a contract with CEOC. Outreach materials used have been developed by Project Bread and the DHSP.

Committee of Elders, and the Haitian American Cultural Center -- and at the Salvation Army, Shelter Inc., and the Albany St. Shelter. Additional placement of outreach workers will depend on funding availability and potential benefit.

The Department of Human Services Programs is working with the WIC office to develop the necessary protocols to enable outreach workers to provide follow-up assistance to "no-show" WIC applicants. As noted earlier, all outreach workers have been trained in WIC eligibility and enrollment procedures, although, to date, few interested eligible-but-unenrolled residents have been identified in the course of outreach.

Federal grant funding -- which must be supplemented with other fundraised moneys -- will help pay for these continued outreach efforts through September, 1993. However, the Department anticipates that the productivity of outreach workers, that is, the number of new applications completed per hour of outreach, will begin to level off or dip sometime during the coming year as the population of interested unenrolled-but-eligible residents shrinks.

The Department of Human Services Programs is also planning to implement a complementary outreach initiative to provide hands-on assistance for families with young children in applying for up to several thousand dollars in (retroactive, as well as prospective) federal tax refunds through the Earned Income Credit Program. The City has participated in poster campaigns (advertising the existence of the Earned Income Credit option) in past years, but actual hands-on assistance has been more or less unavailable, resulting in very low program participation -- particularly among non-English-speaking residents. (Telephone assistance is, of course, available from the IRS....)

Undertaking such a program would complement other efforts to enhance access to adequate food and nutrition, and could bring thousands of new federal dollars into the Cambridge economy:

- It could help put cash in the pockets of low income families, enabling them to buy the food they need.
- It could help low income working families whose incomes exceed 130% of poverty, and who are, therefore, ineligible for Food Stamp assistance.
- It could supplement the resources of Food Stamp recipients, who, as the previously cited Project Bread study found, are hungry even with the added support of Food Stamps.

Experience with Food Stamp outreach since June suggests that that model could be successful in assisting other benefits enrollment. An Earned Income Credit outreach effort seems like a very logical next step, particularly in the context of the larger benefits and nutrition education outreach efforts which will be funded, in part, by the federal grant.

22.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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TEL 349-4300
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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

October 5, 1992

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Attached is an order requesting the appropriation of \$60,750 to the General Fund Human Services Other Ordinary Maintenance Account. The funds will be supported from Free Cash.

Attached is a report on efforts to address hunger in Cambridge. The report includes a description of how the Food Pantry Network operates and describes the impact of the \$43,000 grant made by the City to the Network last march.

Based on an analysis of the experience of the six month period of March through August, at which time the grant ran out, an average of \$6,750 per month was expended to maintain a nutritionally balanced supply of food through the pantry and meals programs. In order to maintain the current effort from September through the end of the FY93, an appropriation of CEOC, the lead agency in the Food Pantry Network, in the amount of \$60,750 is needed. An analysis and evaluation of the program will be made over the next several months in order to determine the level of support that is required on an annual basis to support the effort.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
attachments

Agenda # 22

F-424

Appropriation of \$60,750 in the
Human Services Dept.

In City Council,

October 5, 1992

Order adopted
8-0-1.