



Perry County Food Bank
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"Just because something doesn't do what you planned it to do doesn't mean it's useless." ~ Thomas Edison

Hopefully everyone has been able to keep cool during this heat wave that we have been “enjoying” here for the last few weeks. There are some of you who want the heat and humidity but others would prefer temperatures at 80 and below with low humidity.

Two years ago Linda and John had a vision. We were overcrowded in our waiting room and we were looking for a space that we would be able offer a number of services to our clients. At first we were looking for an area to offer cooking and nutrition classes. We estimated that it might cost \$150,000 to \$200,000. As we shared our idea with others, suggestions were offered about other services – job fairs, health screenings, mental health counseling, a community meeting area as well as others.

We contacted an architect and asked that a feasibility study be done. We wanted to know if we had the space on site for an addition; what the addition would look like; and what we could expect for costs. The cost jumped to \$300,000 and as the study continued we looked at two different scenarios. One looked at funding it privately and the cost might be around \$300,000 and the other where the county would be involved and the cost would be \$450,000. We discovered that the county would have funding invested as they owned the ground so we would be looking at the more expensive price tag.

In addition, as we talked about how much capital we would need in a capital campaign, the cost continued to climb to \$500,000 and then to \$600,000 and it might not stop there. Once the project begins there would be additional costs as different things come up. At the same time, during the last year the economy has improved enough that some of our clients have been able to get good paying jobs and they no longer need the food bank so our numbers have been dropping. It is a good thing when people are able to work and provide for themselves so that they no longer need the food bank but it makes it difficult to justify asking for huge sums of money for an expansion when your client base is shrinking rather than expanding.

We met with our board in July and explained the situation and discussed options and finally concluded that the project had ballooned way beyond what we had originally estimated the cost to be. Regrettably, it was decided to end the project before we put more money into it and then, possibly, would have to end it anyhow. We appreciate that some of you believed in the project and gave us money specifically for it. If you or your organization would like those funds returned to you now that we are no longer moving forward, please contact us and let us know and we will see that those funds are returned to you. We are sorry for any inconvenience that this may have caused you.

On a brighter note, we applied for a grant for funds to install a generator at the Food Bank in New Bloomfield that would keep the electricity flowing to our facility during power outages. We have been very concerned as our power outages seem to be increasing and with all of the refrigerated and frozen food in stock there was the possibility of large losses if an outage was prolonged. The Stabler Foundation has given us \$35,000 toward a new generator installation that was originally estimated to be around \$45,000. Currently the project is out for bids and once that phase is completed we hope to have the installation done by the end of the summer.

In June, our numbers were 984 households with 29 considered new and 2,294 individuals with 76 being new. In July we served 996 households with 788 of them being new and 2,356 individuals with 1,896 being new. In July we purge all of our files and everyone is counted as new until the end of the month when some may have been in twice.

As always, we sincerely thank you for your care, concern and support.

John Kiner & Mary Ann Brownawell