

Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting Notes

MEETING SUMMARY	<p>Date: April 17, 2020</p> <p>Time: 9:00 – 11:05 a.m.</p> <p>Location: Skype</p>
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Jen Moss, Tanika Thompson, Paul Sherman, Laura Flores Cantrell, Barbara Baquero, Christina Wong, Paul Sherman, Rebecca Finkel, Dila Perera, Adrián López Romero
MEMBERS ABSENT:	<p><i>Seat 1 – Vacant since February 2020 (Food Access)</i></p> <p><i>Seat 4 – Vacant since May 2019 (Community Representative)</i></p>
GUESTS:	<p>Office of Sustainability & Environment: Alyssa Patrick, Suzy Knutson, Sharon Lerman</p> <p>Human Services Department: Seán Walsh</p> <p>Department of Education and Early Learning: Cameron Clark</p> <p>City Budget Office: Akshay Iyengar</p> <p>Members of the public: Frank Miranda, Solid Ground</p>

DECISIONS MADE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Put together a sub-committee to begin drafting criteria/protocol CAB uses when developing recommendations for emergency measures. CAB members will follow up with community partners directly to share updates on SBT revenues and plans for 2021 recommendations.
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FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS			
#	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	TARGET DATE
1	Start developing criteria/protocol for CAB recommendations on emergency efforts funded with SBT – set up subcommittee for this	A. Patrick (set up sub-committee)	4/24
2	Divvy up community engagement partners for CAB members to communicate with regarding SBT changes and next steps	A. Patrick (divvy up list and send for CAB review)	4/24
3	CBO to provide additional information to the CAB about revenue projections, federal stimulus funds, plans for 2020 funds, and other questions asked by the CAB.	A. Iyengar	As information becomes available
4	CAB members connect with departments for cross-collaboration of response needs and resources.	C. Wong and D. Perera connect w/S. Lerman for follow up	ASAP

Meeting Notes

Tanika Thompson and Jen Moss, Co-Chairs, facilitated the meeting

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, PUBLIC COMMENT

- CAB members introduced themselves.

- City staff and guests from the public introduced themselves.
- CAB reviewed and approved agenda.

Public Comment

Frank Miranda expressed general concern about resources going towards supporting those most in need. He encouraged the CAB to keep food bank operations in mind, as well as accountability of SBT funds to make sure they are going where they are supposed to go. He wants to see support getting back to those who most need it. He also provided this written comment:

- “On the food bank front, City level coordination has been wanting. Not to minimize the resources that have been made available to them... The high-level coordination, in particular, is what I refer to. Recently, this has changed. I think in order to confront the continued fallout of an "economic shutdown," the need for high-level coordination will continue, especially as the relate and interact with other emergency food support”.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Facilitate by Co-Chair Tanika Thompson

SBT Revenue Update

Presented by Akshay Iyengar, City Budget Office (CBO) analyst

Key Points

- In March, CBO anticipated a 21% shortfall in 2020 revenues. Expecting 2021 revenues to be a few million less than originally projected.
- CBO is evaluating all revenue streams and does not yet have a new update for the CAB. The Budget Director will present to City Council on Wednesday, at which point a new revenue update may be available. A. Iyengar will keep the CAB apprised as more information becomes available.
- This is a challenging time. The city is in a hiring freeze and has put a pause on all non-essential contracts. We also have to be looking for cuts in current budgets – but are prioritizing keeping employees, COVID response needs, and food security. CBO is working closely with departments to ensure food and childcare needs are being met.
- For 2021 budget recommendations, CBO is looking to CAB for guidance on how to provide resources equitably from SBT funds.

Q&A

- **When will an update on the federal stimulus funds be available?** Would be helpful to understand this better by the CAB’s May meeting.
 - A. Iyengar shared:
 - Direct city funds from the most recent stimulus package (CARES Act) are limited. CBO and the city are still working to understand and access what they can.
 - Food and hygiene items are reimbursable through FEMA – OSE, HSD and CBO/Mayor’s Office are working on how this aid could be used to support food banks. We will keep the CAB updated as we learn more.
 - C. Wong shared: WSDA is looking at federal reimbursement with the state. Food banks may be eligible for direct reimbursement – will know more in May if Congress passes a fourth relief package. There is conversation about additional state and local government support being included in that package.

- **What sources of information are being used to identify levels of need?**
 - C. Wong shared that a state food coordination team is working on a gap analysis at the county level – measuring need against available resources to identify the gap that remains. Need is determined by reports of people using food banks, meal distribution, seniors in poverty, unemployment enrollment, etc.
- **By next month will the forecast include how sales tax revenue is going down in general? Other impacts of the crisis on consumer behavior in general?**
 - A. Iyengar will follow up with the CAB when more information about this is available.
- **When the state is looking for match on programs like SNAP - are those decisions made by departments or a city budget office?**
 - A. Iyengar will follow up with the CAB on this.

Emergency Food Efforts and OSE, HSD Department Updates

Presented by Sharon Lerman, OSE, and Seán Walsh, HSD

Emergency Food Response – Key Points

- Early in the emergency, the City established an Emergency Feeding Task Force, co-led by HSD and OSE, with work streams around meal delivery, grocery vouchers, and food banks. The key programs and support that the city manages in these areas are below, including key audiences served by each.
 - **Food banks (HSD):** Provide service to families and individuals
 - **School and childcare nutrition (HSD-YFE):** Providing food to young people and their families
 - **Meal programs for seniors (HSD-ADS):** Providing food to seniors, primarily through delivery now
 - **Grocery vouchers (OSE):** The goal with next waves of vouchers is to focus on people newly needing these services and those who may not be able or willing to access the other resources. This group includes displaced workers, those unable to access federal aid, immigrants and refugees, among others.
- Food insecurity exacerbated by COVID-19 is likely to persist well beyond the period of the stay at home order. This is likely to increase the needs on all food access services, at a time when budgets are strained.
- Emergency food response is coming from many other areas beyond SBT – GF, federal reimbursement. SBT is just one area of funding.
 - The City is pursuing FEMA reimbursement for COVID-19 related food bank and meal expansion, and is also pursuing other federal funds, where available. The city is also utilizing the flexibility provided by USDA Child Nutrition Programs to pursue reimbursement through OSPI for student meals at potential city-sponsored sites that would fill gaps in Seattle Public Schools meal sites.
- The City is putting special focus on communities at particular risk, such as seniors, homebound individuals, people living unsheltered, people experiencing economic disruptions due to COVID.
- **Update on second enrollment of grocery vouchers**
 - The City recently received \$1.45 million in funds from the NHL Seattle and Oak View Group that will serve 1800 more residents. These vouchers – which will be distributed in

May and June – are focused on serving displaced workers and those facing barriers to other types of assistance.

- Identified the individuals by working with 12 CBOs who have relationships with relevant communities.
- We know there is still more need, so we are actively working on fundraising.
- **Food banks and meal program updates**
 - Food banks and meal programs have had to adjust their operations from an in-person, choice model to pre-packed bags and to-go meals and have added home delivery. Agencies have seen declines in staff and volunteers, as many are in high-risk groups. Agencies have to limit personnel on-site to meet social distancing guidelines.
 - The City has been supporting food banks and meal providers to make these shifts by:
 - Purchasing hygiene and sanitation supplies to increase safety in provider spaces
 - Ordering and distributing grocery bags, to-go boxes and other items to help programs pivot to home delivery and pick up
 - Matching providers with volunteer resources and facilitating connection to National Guard
 - Convening weekly provider calls to identify challenges and solutions related to food supply, transportation, shift in model, funding gaps, coordination, staff capacity, and more
 - The City is providing information about available supports widely, including on the City's COVID resource page and through a map, updated daily.
- **Food in schools/childcare**
 - The City started coordinating early on with SPS to minimize any disruption to school meals.
 - SPS is providing to-go meals M-F at 26 sites. Summer Food Service program – evaluating potential new sites and the school district has been a great partner and wants to serve as many meals as they can. Interested in finding new places too.
 - Weekend backpacks/food bags are available at all sites.
 - The City made the first round of Emergency Grocery Vouchers available to families participating in City-supported childcare programs in recognition of this significant meal loss.

HSD: COVID-19 Impacts on SBT-Funded Programs/Projects – Key Points

- Every program funded through SBT is pivoting in some way. The food banks data cohort and RFP on geographic specific services are on hold for now. Costs are increasing without funding to match. We're in ongoing conversations around contingency planning as we see how everything plays out.
- Additional child meal sites are coming out in the next few days with SPS.

OSE: COVID-19 Impacts on SBT-Funded Programs/Projects – Key Points

- **Fresh Bucks** is mostly operating the same.
 - The 2019 cohort received both April and May vouchers in April to allow for more flexibility.
 - The 2020 expansion is on track. CBOs enrolled over 4,000 people and clinics around 1200. The public lottery will bring in 1900 of the 8,500 who submitted an application.
 - We used the Fresh Bucks framework to set up the emergency grocery program.

- **School food** work is temporarily on hold due to school closures. This includes the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program for elementary schools and expansion of the high school snack program to Rainier Beach High School.
- **Food Action Plan** development is on hold. The people who were working on development of this plan are now engaged in responding to the current crisis. We also will want the plan to reflect what is needed as we move into the recovery phase.
- **One-time funding on hold.** One confirmed change is that the funding originally for evaluation of SBT programs has been redirected to the emergency grocery voucher program.

Emergency Food & HSD/OSE Q&A

- **Has funding been identified for people who enrolled for Fresh Bucks through a CBO after March 22nd?** (March 22 was the cut-off date for the list of Fresh Bucks enrollees that was used to create the first enrollment list for the emergency vouchers)
 - S Lerman shared: OSE is still working on this and will update the CAB when progress is made.
- **How many kids are taking advantage of the school meals program?**
 - S Lerman shared: 3-5,000 students/families participate per day.
 - C Wong shared: According to OSPI, about 30% of families eligible for free and reduced meals are being served. The numbers are about the same in Seattle (S. Lerman confirmed).
- **What barriers are preventing more students/families participating in the school meals?**
 - S Lerman: I am not the expert on this area, but do know of some possible reasons based on conversations with the district and what I'm hearing elsewhere. It seems location could be a big piece. Seattle Public Schools has set up 26 sites and is being flexible – allowing anyone to pick up meals for students. There is still a limitation of who can easily get to those locations, however.
 - SPS has started doing some bus routes to deliver into neighborhoods – looking to expand. Still testing out.
 - C Wong: There are also concerns that the public charge rules are still influencing people and their interest/comfort in participating.
- **Are there conversations about cross collaboration between different service providers and entities?**
 - S. Lerman: A lot of that is happening, but difficult to stay organized in this effort as there are many shifting pieces. More to be done for sure - we want to help build connections in this space with a lot of diverse providers.
 - D Perrera: People who are home visitors and early learning folks are also needing support and could benefit from cross-collaboration. We are working with people who are pregnant and at high risk. We are seeing a gap in their ability to access resources, baby formula and supplies due to difficulty accessing food banks and other options
 - **Follow Up:** S. Lerman is following up with D. Perrera and C. Wong to hear more and facilitate some connections.

Department of Education and Early Learning Update

Presented by Cam Clark, DEEL

Key Points

- Childcare providers and families are under tremendous strain. 60% of providers have temporarily closed and stats show that providers that are closed for more than 2 weeks are likely to stay closed. Pending recession will likely increase needs of those services – how can the city help fill that gap?
- SBT-funded programs in DEEL have been put on pause or pivoted greatly. Emergency childcare for essential personnel has been major focus for DEEL and the city. SBT funds are contributing some to the emergency childcare efforts, but most of that funding is coming from the [Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy](#).
- Here are the updates on SBT-funded programs:
 - **Family Child Care**
 - Paused the Family Child Care Advisory Council since it is difficult to meet, and members of the council are already stretched thin. Ramifications are paused momentum and no member recruitment.
 - Parent Child + : Most of these services have halted or shifted to virtual learning when possible. About half of the 16 programs normally served with this program are temporarily closed. There is concern about long-term impacts on the cohort model and sustainability of the family childcare community.
 - **Child Care Health Consultation Program**
 - The program connects nurses and mental health providers with childcare providers. There are 10-11 people on this team who have been redeployed to increase services to the homeless population.
 - They are doing telehealth and televists when possible.
 - This program is largely relationship based so there is concern about being able to continue building trust.
 - **Developmental Bridge Program:**
 - At the beginning of the crisis, had to cancel a lot of visits. Now have moved to tele-health and are increasing the number of times a provider visits with a family.
 - There is even more demand for this service now because of delays on assessments required to determine if children turning 3 qualify for the federal “Plan B” supports. Developmental Bridge can help fill that gap.
 - There is concern about on-going funding and equity concerns related to telehealth.
 - **Coaching and Training**
 - Coaches were providing training to birth-3 to childcare providers and were about to finish first cohort. Over 50% of programs that participated are temporarily closed. All in-person training was cancelled and coaches have pivoted to COVID work. Concerned they will lose a lot of trained teachers as a result of this crisis.
 - **Childcare Assistance Program**
 - We were looking to add an additional 600 families and this has been paused. CCAP will continue serving current families, but were not sure when expansion can happen. There will be a heightened demand for this subsidy program.
 - **One-time SBT investments**
 - We are moving forward with Westside Baby partnership to distribute diapers, wipes, and other items. Other one-time funds have been paused.

- Comments/needs in support for families with young children from D. Perera
 - Childcare closures are disproportionately affecting providers of color and others who have less ability to access relief programs.
 - Really appreciate that the funding for diapers is still happening as that is a massive need – especially since SNAP funds cannot be used for those kinds of supplies.
 - A major need for families with young children to access/acquire essential items/services is transportation. Open Arms (where D. Perera is ED) is looking to purchasing and delivering.
 - S. Lerman indicated she could help make connections for transportation.
 - Re-deploying home visitors to make deliveries to families would be helpful.
 - Small business supports – we do want to think about who is well-positioned to apply for these. We are having discussion about this and figuring out how to help those with ESL needs to access these resources.
- How can we think about opportunities to strengthen small business? Small grocers and small childcare providers will be needing this support. Can we loop them into delivery and distribution services to help them continue to receive income?
 - How can we consolidate efforts and streamline needs – from employment to small business support to delivery needs – so that our response efforts are helping people across sectors and experiences?
 - C. Wong appreciates this conversation on how to work across silos – glad to hear others are thinking about this as well. Lewis County is an example of a place that has a great model right now for working across silos – can share with the group.

CAB PLANNING FOR 2021 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Co-Chairs Jen Moss and Tanika Thompson facilitated the discussion

Prior to the meeting, A. Patrick shared an information packet that included an updated 2020 CAB calendar, recommendation criteria, and updated CAB values, budget principles and meeting agreements.

J. Moss facilitated discussion based on following questions.

- **How do we want to approach the 2021 recommendations? What type of guidance do we want to give the city in this revenue and budget constrained time?**
 - B. Baquero expressed that the CAB should apply the same principles and values discussed at the February retreat to the decisions they need to make now.
 - Continuing to get transparent updates from the city will be important and sharing that information out with community partners as well. The CAB is going to have to make tough decisions relatively quickly so the more information we can have the better.
 - R. Finkle proposed it would be beneficial to develop guidelines for emergency programs that get rolled out. She would like to hear more from people using emergency vouchers to understand what is working and what isn't, so that information can inform CAB guidelines for future emergency efforts.
 - T. Thompson agreed with this idea and said she had been thinking about the same thing. She would like to see a protocol developed around making recommendations for emergency response.

- *****CAB Decision Point***** The CAB decided to put together an ad hoc subcommittee to begin working on development of an emergency protocol for CAB recommendations. A. Patrick will send out a Doodle poll to set up a meeting for this sub-committee and begin drafting a memo before the May meeting.
- **What additional information do we need to develop 2021 recommendations?**
 - T. Thompson would like to review percentages of funding the CAB has previously recommended and compare that to the information we receive from CBO about 2021 revenues.
 - C. Wong would like more information about what will happen to funds for projects/programs which were put on hold. Would any of that money roll over into the next year?
 - A. Iyengar will follow up with this information.
 - R. Finkle would like to make sure the community engagement report is considered as well, in particular when thinking about emergency programs such as the grocery voucher program. The issues raised in the report were identified in 2019 but have not yet been addressed, so imagine they have only been magnified now.
 - How was information about the vouchers communicated? How are transactions occurring in stores?
- **How do we want to approach that continued engagement with community partners if we have fewer resources to provide compensation? *This question is in reference to the partners who collected input for the [2019 phase 2 community engagement report](#).***
 - Several CAB members indicated that following up with community partners is important and they should find a modified way to do so given current restrictions on in-person meetings. Understanding the on-the-ground needs of partners will also be helpful in the CAB's recommendation work.
 - B Baquero suggested CAB reach out and ask partners how they would like to receive information/engage if compensation is not possible. How can we elevate their points of view in this time? We should leverage resources available to hear from community organizations – the more city hears from community groups the better.
 - L. Flores Cantrell: We can share out information as we are learning it. It seems three things would be helpful to share: What we know, what we don't know, and our commitment to be in on-going conversation. When they can expect to hear back more information from us.
 - T. Thompson: Part of information we share can be explaining that the tax is doing what supposed to do, revenue goes down people drinking less soda.
 - Several CAB members indicated that having board members reach out to the community partners may be more impactful.
 - *****CAB Decision Point***** CAB members decide to divvy up the list of community partners to send follow up information with them soon. A. Patrick will initially divvy up the list based on the subject matter expertise of the CAB members and focus of the community groups. A. Patrick will also put together some talking points that can guide the emails or calls CAB members do.

2021 Planning Meeting Tools/Logistics

The discussion about 2021 planning also included requests for facilitation. A. Patrick shared that continuation of the existing facilitation contract with Maketa Wilborn is now confirmed. She can move ahead with that contract.

CAB BUSINESS

The CAB originally planned to vote to approve updated versions of the CAB's budget principles, meeting agreements and core values. There was not enough time remaining in the agenda to vote, so the CAB chose to hold this until their May meeting.