

**Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB)
Meeting Notes**

MEETING SUMMARY	<p>Date: October 1, 2021</p> <p>Time: 9am – 11am</p> <p>Location: WebEx</p>
MEMBERS PRESENT:	<p>Barbara Baquero Laura Flores Cantrell Rebecca Finkle Munira Mohamed Jen Moss Tanika Thompson Dan Torres Christina Wong</p>
MEMBERS ABSENT:	<p>Jaimée Marsh Paul Sherman</p>
GUESTS:	<p>Office of Sustainability & Environment: Alyssa Patrick, Bridget Igoe, and Suzy Knutson City Budget Office: Akshay Iyengar, Ben Noble, & Saroja Reddy Department of Education and Early Learning: Tiffany Lee Department of Neighborhoods: Cameron Clark Human Services Department: Seán Walsh Penny Lipsou, American Heart Association</p>

DECISIONS MADE	<p>The CAB’s October 29 meeting will only be held if there are pertinent budget issues to discuss. If not, it will be cancelled and CAB will still have regularly-scheduled November meeting.</p>
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FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS			
#	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	TARGET DATE
1	Send draft letters to Mayor and Council to CAB members to review, comment on and edit.	Co-Chairs and SBT staff liaison	10/8
2	Review and edit draft letters	CAB members	10/13
3	Submit letters to Mayor and Council	SBT staff liaison, on behalf of CAB	In October

Meeting Notes

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

Welcome and Introductions

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

2022 Proposed Budget

City Budget Office Director Ben Noble and Analyst Akshay Iyengar

Director Noble shared a high-level overview of the City's economic outlook and overall budget, as well as SBT forecast. He also thanked the CAB for their recommendations, which the Mayor reviewed and took into close consideration when working on the budget. Here are key points that he shared:

- The local economy is recovering but not fully recovered.
- The City is building back reserves and restoring other funds dipped into during the height of the economic impacts of the pandemic.
- Around \$116 million in federal COVID-19 response funds are coming into the 2022 budget and will help maintain relief funds and make some longer-term investments in areas like affordable housing.
- The 2022 SBT forecast as economic activity picks up is around \$22 million, which is good news – it allows us to maintain core programming for healthy food access and childcare. We are also able to fully fund the Food Equity Fund by adding \$1.5 million (and make it ongoing), and continuing funding for the Birth-to-Three Grant Program at DEEL on an ongoing basis.
- We are also sunsetting worker retraining fund and evaluation funding as recommended by the CAB. The Mayor's staff spoke with labor stakeholders about sunsetting the worker retraining fund to confirm that they have not seen labor impacts due to the tax. They had not seen those impacts and were comfortable with the funds being released.
- \$2 million will continue to be set aside for a reserve fund. This is especially important for programs that are mostly funded by SBT, since it is a source that is vulnerable to economic changes.
- There is one extra planning reserve set side (Small Planning reserve) for annual wage increases for city of Seattle employees.

CAB Response to 2022 Proposed Budget

Facilitated by Alyssa Patrick, SBT staff liaison

Co-Chair T. Thompson gave background on the CAB's process for responding to the proposed budget. The CAB will write two letters – one in response to the Mayor and one to Council indicating the CAB's recommendations about the proposed budget. Council's budget deliberations start in October, and end in November with adoption of a final budget. Since the Mayor's budget was so aligned with the CAB's recommendations, the letter to Council will be supporting full adoption of the SBT investments outlined in the Mayor's budget.

SBT staff liaison A. Patrick facilitated the rest of the session so the co-chairs could participate in conversation about what messages to include in the letters to the Mayor and Council.

Some key messages the CAB wanted to make in the letters include:

- In letter to Council, include strong language about the CAB's preference that SBT funds not go towards P-Patches. While the CAB appreciates the role community gardens may have on hands-on learning opportunities, social interaction, food bank donations, and the preservation and stewardship of open green spaces, we are skeptical of the real impact that P-Patches—which focus on garden plots for individual gardeners—have on food security and increasing access to healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant food for BIPOC, immigrant, and refugee

communities. The Food Equity Fund seems better suited to meet the needs of these communities, which are the focus communities of SBT investments.

- We want to share appreciation to the Mayor for talking to labor stakeholders and deciding to release the worker retraining set-aside since labor impacts have not been felt as a result of this tax.
- Want to highlight and reiterate why community driven food access is so important during COVID. In the Equitable Community Initiatives Taskforce, we discussed the importance of BIPOC-led, culturally appropriate, linguistically accessible food distribution to communities that have faced the most significant barriers. Nationally we've seen that hunger rates as a whole did not change significantly, but did grow for Black and Latinx households. It's important that there are investments to address this gap.
- Funding the childcare assistance program is really important, especially increasing support for infant care, which is more expensive generally and there are not many resources currently available for care at that age.
- Important to advocate that these community investments should remain ongoing, permanent.
- The CAB over the years have been learning from community engagement and working with the City, the types of investments that need to be prioritized. The community grants in DON and DEEL are priorities because of from lessons learned. Community and CAB advocacy have laid the groundwork for these funds to be possible, and making them ongoing programs will provide more opportunities to build upon those investments to create lasting impact. Having the funding available every year reduces the risk of programs receiving only one-time investments, allowing for the possibility to focus on more long-term goals.
- Let's add a sentence about how programs measure impact, and accountability still being important to the CAB, even though we recommended sunseting the SBT impact evaluation funds. We are still interested in evaluation of programs, monitoring of grants, and other efforts that help with accountability of how funds are spent.

CAB updates

- The Mayor's office approved two new CAB members who will join at the next meeting – Bilan Adan African Community Housing and Development and Barbara Rockey with Treehouse and a PTSA former president.
- We will coordinate virtual thank you cards for Dila, Adrian and Paul who have or will be leaving the board this year. We are grateful for their service!
- We are still recruiting for one public health seat that is Council-appointed. We'll keep [the application](#) open through mid-October.
- The Food Equity Fund is opening today! Learn more and share information from [this website](#).
- The Prenatal-to-Three grant closes next week. We know at least 15 organizations are working with technical assistance providers set up by DEEL to support their applications. Anticipating many great organizations will apply!
- Topics for the CAB's upcoming meetings will include the Food Action Plan and planning for 2022.
- The CAB discussed whether to keep both of their upcoming meetings, or cancel one.

****DECISION POINT****

Through Fist-to-Five voting, the CAB decided to keep the November 19 meeting on the calendar and the October 29th as tentative. They will only hold the Oct 29 meeting if there are budget issues that need to be discussed. The decision was unanimous.