

Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting Notes

MEETING SUMMARY	Date: September 18, 2020
	Time: 9:00 AM – 10:45 AM
	Location: Virtual Meeting
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Christina Wong, Jen Moss, Paul Sherman, Tanika Thompson, Rebecca Finkel, Dila Perera, Laura Flores Cantrell
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Barbara Baquero, Adrian Lopez-Romero <i>Seat 1 – Vacant (Food Access Representative, Council appointment)</i> <i>Seat 4 – Vacant (Community Representative, Mayor appointment)</i>
GUESTS:	Office of Sustainability & Environment: Bridget Igoe, Suzy Knutson Human Services Department: Seán Walsh & Amaury Avalos City Budget Office: Akshay Iyengar Farm to Table: Leika Suzumura, Kelly Okumura, Austin Becker, Adam Reichenberger, Tanya Fink

FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS			
#	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	TARGET DATE
1	Review draft chapters of annual report	CAB	10/2

Meeting Notes

Jen Moss and Tanika Thompson, CAB co-chairs, facilitated the meeting

Welcome and Introductions

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

Public Comment

None

Updates and Announcements

- A reminder that the Mayor is presenting the 2021 Proposed Budget to City Council at the end of September. The CAB’s job is to review the proposed budget and draft a response directed at City Council. The next CAB meeting will be Oct.2, earlier in the month, so the CAB can review and respond to the proposed budget ASAP.
- C. Wong, representing Northwest Harvest, provided an update on advocacy to urge Congress to pass a robust COVID relief package. Hunger and housing insecurity are major issues requiring government relief. Congress has only one “must-pass” bill to vote on in September – a resolution on the federal spending package. They are not interested in exploring a COVID package due to the partisan divide. Congress will adjourn until after the November election so at this time there will be no new COVID relief until possibly early next year. Meanwhile, 14% of WA

households are currently falling behind on rent and 1 in 3 Washingtonians will be struggling with food insecurity before the end of year. Call on Congress and Senators asking them not to adjourn until they pass a 15% boost to SNAP, increase for housing assistance, reauthorization on lapsed unemployment benefits, etc. At minimum, they need to agree to extend Pandemic-EBT. Link to Northwest Harvest advocacy alert: <https://www.northwestharvest.org/news-insights/advocacy-update-call-today-to-urge-comprehensive-covid-19-relief/>

Farm to Table (F2T)

Presented by Leika Suzumura, Nourishian for Life; Kelly Okumura, Farmstand Local Foods; Tanya Fink; Tilth Alliance; and Adam Reichenberger, Solid Ground

See [F2T presentation](#) for details.

L. Suzumura provided an overview of this program that provides locally grown foods to childcare centers and before and after school programs. The Farm to Table program team supports the work with nutrition and gardening education through collaborating organizations, including City of Seattle, Tilth Alliance, and Solid Ground.

Three program elements:

1. Food procurement – Kelly at Farmstand Local Foods. Sites can order food from local farmers (fruit, vegetables, dairy, meat, grain, etc.). Sites get stipends supported by SBT, can order year-round, and get their orders delivered.
2. Education – provide cooking classes with the kids and family nights.
3. Staff training – Technical assistance for the teachers as well as the cooks at participating programs.

The program started in 2010 with a federal grant and began with 8 pilot sites and a patchwork of private and public funds. In 2018 funding shifted to SBT.

K. Okumura gave an overview of the participating 64 childcare programs, 41 preschools and 24 before and after school programs. They are reaching over 3,400 children. The program generates \$100,000 for local farms. 100% of food comes from WA State producers. They work with over 16 small scale farms: 14 POC-run farms and 26 women-led farms.

To demonstrate that the program is serving priority populations, K. Okumura presented maps of Seattle showing percentage of people living in poverty and percentage of people of colors relative to where program sites are located.

T. Fink gave an overview of the program benefits. F2T supports local farmers and the local food economy, it supports better wages for those associated; it supports BIPOC farmers; and educates children about the food system through nutrition, gardening, and cooking lessons based in STEM learning outcomes.

F2T aligns with CAB priorities including improved food quality and access to local nutritious foods in childcare. The program brings together food access and early education priorities. With the impact of COVID-19, the program was able to provide increased frequency of meetings and a response to site needs. Meals and snacks were provided on site pre-COVID but now they are delivering directly to

families and providing virtual training as well as delivering planting and instruction kits to families and teachers.

The program balances intervention and prevention for a more equitable and just food system.

In Phase 1 of redesign feedback from participants, participants identified the following benefits: opportunities to try new foods, share food cultures, improved child behavior, and connecting to local farmers so that they know where their food comes from. They teach life skills that impact long-term habits that improve diet related health outcomes. The program also develops more sustainable and economically viable food systems that contribute to an improved environment.

A. Reichenberger continued the presentation by discussing the community redesign process.

- Phase 1 – Partnered with UW Nutrition MPH students to collect feedback from participants
- Phase 2 – Partnered with a consultant to expand engagement through stakeholder focus groups, interviews, and surveys. Phase 2 will wrap up in December 2020.

Looking ahead, F2T is looking to connect with complementary programs like F2T for adults through the Cooking Matters program and the Fresh Bucks to Go program. They will kick off the first F2T Harvest Festival in Fall of 2021 (delay due to pandemic) – it will be an outdoor celebration where all can meet and share the work and learning. They plan to increase staff capacity for F2T educators and recruit BIPOC educators.

CAB Q&A:

- *How has being in the home affected engagement or other programming outcomes?* Response: The communication challenges for families that are part of the F2T program and getting the larger family involved was a challenge as well as a great opportunity. They are providing classes for students at home as well as open limited capacity childcare site. Various models are provided, including in-person yet outside while socially distanced and masked; packaged kits for each child with their own station while they are all on screen. Childcare sites have pivoted in so many ways and it has been impressive. Additionally, there has been greater engagement with site directors since COVID.
- *Can you speak to cutting ties with AmeriCorps volunteer program?* Response: F2T had internal conversations and decided that the program isn't ideal due to annual turnover as well as the fact that the high cost of living in Seattle and low stipend produced a target hiring population that wasn't reflective of the community they want to do outreach to. F2T is looking to hire Spring 2021 for a better paying position w/benefits and find someone from within the community.

Regarding phase 2 of the redesign feedback – this is important phase so F2T can hear from community. They are working with The Vida Agency on phase 2 and will be reaching out to the CAB in Oct/Nov for outreach and feedback. They will be able to reach more sites, parents, OSE, HSD, and other stakeholders to realign with all voices that are impacted.

City of Seattle COVID-19 Emergency Feeding Response
Presented by Seán Walsh, Human Services Department

See [presentation](#) for details.

S. Walsh provided an overview of City's COVID-19 Emergency Feeding Task Force, overall city budget picture related to emergency food, and planning underway to prepare for continued COVID response in 2021.

- When COVID-19 first hit, one of the City's highest priorities was to provide access to food for our community and support community partners in the critical work they do to provide access to food for the community
- The Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) and Human Services Department (HSD) jointly established an emergency feeding task force to coordinate the City's response across the departments.

2020 Budget Context:

- Economic impacts of COVID has significantly reduced revenue – City Budget Office anticipates a budget shortfall of \$381M
- To meet this shortfall the City has looked to multiple strategies including supplementing the budget with Federal COVID relief funding, examining budget reductions, and reducing one-time funding spending
- City had to make difficult decisions to rebalance the 2020 budget and did so based on race and social justice principles

Rebalancing the 2020 Budget:

- The City has had both a general fund revenue shortfall of nearly \$213 million and has had approximately \$233m of total COVID expenditures
- \$65 million in General Fund has been reprioritized for COVID response
- 2020 rebalancing strategy:
 - one-time resources (\$61 million)
 - budget reductions (\$86 million)
 - Coronavirus Relief Fund (\$131 million)
 - Non-General Fund City sources reprioritized for COVID (\$32 million)
 - CARES Act (\$21 million)
 - Commerce Grant (\$13 million)
 - FEMA reimbursements (\$36 million)
 - next is budget reductions, the Coronavirus relief fund or CRF, non-general fund City sources reprioritized or think SBT, the CARES Act grants, the State department of Commerce grant, and FEMA reimbursements.

2020 Revised Food Budget

- The original 2020 budget allocated \$25.5M to food investments in HSD and OSE, including general fund, SBT, and grants.
- The City dedicated about \$20 million in additional funding – which has come from federal emergency fund sources (Coronavirus Relief Fund, FEMA, various federal grants) along with an increase of \$4 million SBT dedicated to emergency food response, and \$2 million in philanthropic dollars that supported emergency grocery vouchers.

Phase 1 – Immediate Response

- Focused on addressing basic needs of communities and providers.

- Secured over \$400K worth of sanitation supplies and PPE and distributed to food banks, meal providers, and shelters
- Developed an emergency grocery voucher program to rapidly deploy critical basic needs support to over 6,200 people
- Convened the Emergency Feeding Task Force
- Tracked and leveraged state and federal funding and efforts to ensure our work is not duplicative
- Worked with the City, State, and County to secure National Guard placements in food and meal programs.

Phase 2 Response – Invest in community partners

- Continued providing PPE, sanitation supplies
- With the CARES Act passed by congress in late March, deployed targeted investments into shelter, permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless, and senior meals, emergency food stream, and grocery vouchers.
- Funded lots of meals in permanent supportive housing, for older adults
- Funded emergency food boxes to deliver emergency food to homes, complement other supplies of weekend groceries for Seattle Public Schools students, and provide to locations in BIPOC communities.
- Provide emergency grocery vouchers to an additional 2,000 people.

Phase 3 – Sustained Response

- Looked to fill additional gaps in services and supplies
- Through the federal funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, invested in food banks via grants administer by Solid Ground.
- Developed and launched the Community Food Fund, a rapid-response grant opportunity designed for BIPOC and Immigrant/refugee community-based organizations providing immediate, culturally-responsive food response. HSD partnered with United Way to manage this grant process.
- Task Force is focusing on ensuring that students are fed and they are looking at Seattle Public School response of 26 sites and bus routes that were set up in the spring for meal distribution for free and reduced lunch + additional foods for other family. They have now scaled up to 40 sites and more bus routes are on standby for additional routes/pop-up locations, if the need is there.
- Fresh Bucks To Go is shifting sites per demand and for more frequent distribution.

Phase 4 – Planning for 2021

- Preparing for scenarios. The Task Force will do a series of surveys and focus group outreach to understand what the needs are for 2021.
- Requested federal funding extensions and additional resources (although there is not a federal package in sight at this time). A revenue shortfall is expected in 2021 as well.

CAB Q&A

- *Do we have any idea what Jan/Feb will look like?* Response: It is tough to answer in our “new normal”. Meal programs are trying to figure out how to get folks inside in a safe way but working with stretched resources. SBT supports dozens of feeding programs and they were all making hard changes, losing their volunteer base, and cancelling fundraisers. There is noticeable

fatigue coming from community programming – the city needs to lean in and prepare to provide support.

- *City contracts have suspended requirements for deliverables through the end of this year and it has been very helpful. Will this happen for 2021 as well?* Not heard yet but will bring that message back to the team.
- *Could City consider extending renewal period for fiscal year?* This is already happening.

Geo-specific Food Bank RFP

Presented by Seán Walsh and Amaudy, Human Services Department

S. Walsh gave an overview of the 2019 funding process for food banks and meal programs. After the 2019 RFP and awards, HSD did a gap analysis that showed some communities that were left out of the process – specifically Georgetown, South Park, and Delridge neighborhoods were not well served.

Originally, HSD wanted to fund and serve those communities with the next funding cycle that was scheduled for Spring/Summer 2020. Due to the pandemic, they are trying again for 2021. This “geo-specific” food bank RFP should happen in Q1 2021. The total funding opportunity is \$111,000 for 6-month contracts that will roll into full year contracts for 2022.

CAB members are invited to participate in the rating process. The time commitment for folks would be throughout April (10-15 hours total) to rate and review applications and join an orientation and debrief (this will lead to one or more awards). HSD is looking for 1-2 CAB members.

If interested, folks should reach out to Seán or Bridget.

If a CAB member is unable to participate, can we recommend someone else from our organizations?

Response: Yes. HSD is open to that for folks with subject matter expertise and who are rooted in community, and assuming there are no conflicts of interest.

SBT 2019 Annual Report

Presented by Bridget Igoe, Office of Sustainability & Environment

B. Igoe briefed the CAB on the process and timeline for producing the 2019 annual report, which is a requirement in the SBT legislation. Normally, this report would be published by now, but it has been pushed back due to COVID and staff being redirected to work on other priorities.

There is no funding to support graphic design for the 2019 report. Given that it is almost the end of 2020, B. Igoe recommending concise and focused content. She is working to compile departmental information.

Annual report outline:

Section/Chapter	Content Lead(s)
Letter from the CAB co-chairs	CAB
1. About the SBT	CAB

2. About the CAB	CAB
3. 2019 Tax Collections	City – Dept of Financial and Administrative Services
4. 2019 Investments	City – City Budget Office
5. Healthy Food Access Investments	City – Human Services Department, Office of Sustainability & Environment
6. Early Learning & Child Development Investments	City – Department of Education and Early Learning
7. SBT Evaluation	County – Public Health – Seattle & King County

Other topics led by the CAB are also open for discussion and input.

Process and timeline:

9/18	B. Igoe will send CAB a draft of its two chapters for review (edits due 9/28)
9/28	Departments will send a draft of City chapters to City Budget Office and Mayor’s Office for final review (edits due 10/9)
10/12	Bridget will incorporate edits and updates
10/15	Report will be announced via email and posted on CAB webpage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chairs to circulate emails to stakeholders in the community • Bridget to circulate emails to City staff

What did Council staff find helpful in 2018 report? Response: It seemed the summary of the SBT investments was useful.

Can you include a simple visualization to describe an increase in community investment? Response: Yes, will think about how to do that and encourages CAB to send suggestions.

-END-