



DC Food Policy Council Meeting Notes 10/10/18

Members in Attendance: Ona Balkus, Val Dolcini (new member!), Eric Kessler, Alex Moore, Paula Reichel, Philip Sambol, Beverley Wheeler (new member!)

Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: Anthony DeLorenzo (DGS), Lindsey Palmer (OSSE), Djinge Lindsey (DC Health), Marie Whittaker (DMPED)

Introductions:

- a. Director Ona Balkus introduced herself and her background in working with food policy councils throughout the country.
- b. We have two new FPC members -- Beverley Wheeler (Executive Director of DC Hunger Solutions) and Val Dolcini (President and CEO of the Pollinator Partnership).
- c. Paula Reichel will be moving out of the District and therefore must resign as an FPC member. We are so thankful for her leadership in the Food Access & Equity Working Group over the past two years, and we are sad to see her go.
- d. Rachel Clark is the new Legislative Counsel in Councilmember Mary Cheh's office working on nutrition, food, and the environment issues for the DC Council.
- e. DC Food Policy Council wants your feedback on our website (www.DCfoodpolicy.org). Please share your thoughts on our website and how the website can be a better resource for you ([link here to the feedback form](#)).

Policy & Legislative Updates:

- a. **Working Group report outs and big ideas: Working groups were asked to brainstorm 2019 policy ideas related to their working group topic.**
 - a. **Food Access & Equity –**
 - i. The working group focused their discussion on the opportunity to support smaller footprint grocery stores East of the River; support should include 1) training for store owners on nutrition and operations and 2) ensuring the price point offered at those stores is affordable.
 - b. **Sustainable Food Procurement –**
 - i. The working group highlighted that DCPS is participating in the Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) and the GFPP staff is currently reviewing DCPS' data on procurement. Discussed the opportunity through the Healthy Students Amendment Act (currently before the Council) to study and build a central kitchen facility and greater investment in food infrastructure. Focused on establishing a baseline assessment for general procurement in the District and increasing reimbursement rates for local food purchases in institutional meals.
 - c. **Health, Nutrition Education & Food System Education –**
 - i. The working group discussed barriers preventing nutrition education from happening with different populations including time, lack of accountability, and matching classes to population needs and interest. Wanted to create a more

connected system between nutrition educators to foster referrals, better support, and shared funding/resources.

d. Labor and Workforce –

- i. The working group focused on how to lower barriers for entrepreneurs like business fees, affordability of commercial space, and ineffective cottage food laws. Discussed amending the DC cottage food law to make it easier for small producers to participate. Discussed supporting more education on starting commercial space, using certification programs through UDC, etc. Also discussed aftermath of Prop 77 – we should consider how to educate consumers on the status of tipped minimum wage and ways they can support the tipped workforce.

e. Urban agriculture –

- i. The working group discussed the two new Request for Proposals (RFPs) for the DGS' Urban Land Lease Program (see below for more info) which leases public land to commercial farmers for 5 years. Also highlighted DGS' plan to have more conversations with local ANCs and other agencies to gain more support and land for the program.

b. Urban agriculture tax incentives and leasing government land – Anthony DeLorenzo

- a. DGS' Urban Land Lease Program just released two new available parcels for commercial farmers ([link to RFP and announcement](#)). The Urban Land Lease Program leases unused public land to commercial farmers for 5-year free leases (with the opportunity to renew) and provides 90% tax abatement to private landowners who lease their land to commercial farmers.
- b. The new available parcels located in Ward 6 near Kingman Park and in Ward 4 near Brightwood. Both parcels are approximately 10,000 square feet. The deadline to submit applications for the two parcels is November 21st. Site visits for both sites will be held on Wednesday, October 24th. DGS is also forming new partnerships with DC Department of Transportation, National Parks Service, and others to increase the land available under the program.
- c. Update on the tax abatement incentive – 90% tax abatement to private landowners on the percentage of the property used for the program; \$20,000 per site, up to \$300,000 total for the program – very close to finalizing the tax incentive in the next few weeks.

c. New project: DC food workforce development strategy (supported by Kaiser Permanente)

- a. The grant was previously submitted by Laine Cidlowksi (former FPC Director) and FPC members. The project came out of hearing from business owners with an unmet need for skilled workers and at the same time high rates of unemployment in some parts of the city. The goal is to better understand the unmet need of workforce development, food related businesses, and unemployed populations and create a strategy on how to best fit that need. If you are interested in learning more or participating in the project, please reach out to FPC Director Ona Balkus (ona.balkus@dc.gov)

Legislation updates

- a. Recently passed
 - a. B22-0681 Healthy Parks Amendment Act ([link here](#))
Requires DPR to serve afterschool meals to children during afterschool programs at sites in low-income areas; increased outreach for Summer Meals program.
 - b. B22-0072 Save Good Food Act ([link here](#))
Incentivizes food donation in several different ways.
- b. Pending legislation (Hearing happened; Next step is Committee vote)
 - a. B22-0666 WIC Expansion Act ([link here](#))
Removes WIC restrictions on square footage, # of cashiers, organics; requires Mayor to report on WIC spending on challenges for small stores to meet WIC requirements; requires DC Health to conduct targeted outreach; and requires DC Health to convene WIC Outreach Advisory Board.
 - b. B22-0313 Healthy Students Amendment Act ([link here](#))
Updates the Healthy Student Act of 2010 to improve nutrition requirements, expand breakfast after the bell and alternative models for serving breakfast, encourage schools to adopt the Good Food Purchasing Program's core values, researches best practices for developing a central kitchen, and expands physical education requirements at schools.
- c. Recently introduced (No hearing yet)
 - a. B22-0903 Self-Operated School Food Service Act ([link here](#))
Introduced on July 10, would require the Mayor to operate a self-operated school food service pilot program in ten District of Columbia public schools during the 2020 to 2022 school years.
 - b. B22-0955 Healthy Beverages for Kids Meals Act ([link here](#))
Introduced on September 18, would require restaurants with kids meals to offer as the default beverage: water, sparkling water, flavored water, nonfat or 1% milk or non-dairy milk alternatives, or 100% fruit juice. Parents could still order soda for children off the menu.
- d. See the status and full text of the bills at: lims.dccouncil.us
- e. DC Food Policy Council is launching a new Food Policy tracker on our website soon! The tracker will provide updates on the status of legislation, upcoming events, and relevant links.

Recaps & Updates:

- a. **Community Food Advocates Update (Winnie Huston)**
DC Greens' Community Food Advocates group has spent the summer working on building skills (writing, advocacy, public speaking, etc.). They are exploring opportunities to better engage with the School Food Advisory Board, Good Food Markets, and the DC Food Policy Council. They are also organizing meet and greets for the upcoming elections. Two Community Advocates were accepted in the Fair Budget Coalition's training advocacy program! If you are interested in learning more about the Community Advocate program, please talk to Winnie Huston (Winnie@dcbgreens.org). There are five active members in the program and many alumni.

b. **Chesapeake Food Summit Takeaways (Eric Kessler & others)**

The summit, held in late September, focused on the larger Chesapeake food system. Originating in conversations in the Washington Regional Food Funders group, the summit aimed to connect the philanthropic community, who represent just a small group of resources for the food system, to other players within the regional food system with resources, insight, and initiatives. They identified a need to connect stakeholders -- foundations, community org, government, private businesses, farmers, etc. -- and engage on strategy issues related to nutrition, sustainability, and equity. 500 people registered for the summit. There were several exciting announcements made at the summit, including DC Greens launching Produce Rx at the Ward 8 Giant in partnership with AmeriHealth Caritas, Giant, and DC Health. Lindsay Smith from the MWCOG Agricultural Working Group announced the release of their “What Our Region Grows” report and thought the summit really addressed the challenge of getting a new generation of farmers onto land.

Announcements

Grant Opportunities:

OSSE and DC Health both presented on current or upcoming grant opportunities related to school food, nutrition education, and obesity prevention. The links below include Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) which is used to preview a grant application and Request for Proposals (RFP) which is used to announce a grant application and detailed application requirements.

a. **OSSE**

a. **Cafeteria Staff Training Grant ([link to RFP here](#))**

- i. The purpose of this grant is to provide school foodservice/nutrition employees with knowledge, training, and tools they need to plan, prepare, and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals. To achieve this, the focus of the grant is to fund training sessions for school foodservice/nutrition employees at schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Healthy Schools Act (HSA).
- ii. **Eligibility:** Independent school districts, nonprofit organizations and Local Educational Agencies
- iii. **Funding Amount:** \$200,000 available; awards from \$2,500 to \$200,000
- iv. **Application Deadline:** Thursday, Oct. 25, 2018 at 3 p.m.

b. **FY 19 Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Grant ([link to NOFA here](#))**

- i. The purpose of the grant is to build the capacity of schools to provide quality nutrition education and physical activity programming and services. The NEPA grant intends to achieve this goal by: **1)** Providing funding, technical assistance, and training to grantees in order for them to support schools in building, developing, and sustaining quality nutrition education and physical activity programming and services; and **2)** Increasing the delivery of training and professional development to educators in schools to consequently increase the delivery of nutrition education and physical activity programming and services to students.
- ii. **Eligibility:** OSSE will accept applications from non-profit entities in the District of Columbia having a 501(c)(3) status
- iii. **Funding Amount:** \$300,000 available; up to five awards; awards up to \$30,000 per organization per topic (of the two highlighted in the description)

- iv. **Application Deadline:** Date not announced; RFP to be released on Oct. 15
- a. **DC Health**
 - c. **Multi Component Obesity Prevention in Targeted Settings ([link to NOFA here](#))**
 - i. Funding under this RFA will support place-based multicomponent obesity prevention efforts through implementation of programs, organizational policies, and guidelines in three intervention areas: a) increase access to healthy food and beverages b) increase physical activity access and outreach c) increase referrals and access to evidence-based lifestyle change programs. Projects should focus on District adults aged 18 and older who are overweight and/or at risk for diabetes or heart disease.
 - ii. **Eligibility:** Public or private institutions of higher education, Nonprofit organizations, Small Businesses, State Government Agencies Public Housing Authorities, Healthcare Organizations
 - iii. **Funding Amount:** \$320,000 available; anticipated 3-4 awards from \$50,000 to \$100,000
 - iv. **Application Deadline:** Full RFA to be released on October 26 (revised); pre-application meeting: November 1, 1:30-3:00 pm; application deadline: November 29, 2018
 - d. **SNAP-Ed**
 - i. Federally funded, evidence-based nutrition education and obesity prevention grant program targeting individuals using or eligible for SNAP. SNAP-Ed provides opportunities for limited resource District residents to learn strategies to make healthy food choices on a limited budget.
 - ii. **Funding:** two grants at \$125,000 each
 - iii. **Grant Release Date:** Late spring/ early summer 2019
- c. More information on current DC agency grants can be found at Office of Partnerships and Grants ([link here](#)).

Upcoming Events

- a. Regional School Garden Summit: October 13 (<https://www.dcgreens.org/summit/>)
The event is the 2nd annual regional school garden summit. The purpose of the summit is to support those interested building capacity around school gardens. The summit will include a DC school garden tour, a work day at the Farm at Kelly Miller, and a farm field trip. There are still spots available for interested participants!
- b. DC Food Recovery Week: October 13-20 (<https://dcfoodrecovery.wordpress.com/>)
The event is the 3rd annual Food Recovery Week. This year they are partnering with Manna Food center in Montgomery County. There are events in every Ward, and events include cooking with recovered food, compost training to be eligible for the home composting rebate program, and Rescue Dish DC with a walking tour of restaurants highlighting unused food.
- c. DMV Black Restaurant Week: November 4-11 (<https://www.dmvbrw.com/>)
The event is the first DMV Black Restaurant Week. They are still looking for Black restaurants to participate, organizations to sponsor the event, and entrepreneurs to highlight their work and

provide samples. The planning group has been meeting at Unconventional Diner on Wednesdays from 6-9 pm. Visit their [website](#) to sign up to be a volunteer as a Brand Ambassador, join their listserv, or find out more information.

- d. Rooting DC Presentation Applications Due Soon: November 20th ([application form here](#))
Rooting DC is an annual free one-day conference on gardening and food justice. Learn more about the event at their website (<https://www.rootingdc.org/>)
- d. Second Annual Kelly Miller Fall Festival: October 25 from 4-7 pm
The 2nd annual Kelly Miller Fall Festival will be a day of community fun at the Farm at Kelly Miller and will include a ribbon cutting of the farm! The day will include family friendly activities, food tastings, face paintings, and cooking demos. [RSVP here](#).
- e. National School Lunch Week: October 15-19
The annual National School Lunch Week is next week!
- f. A Fresh Taste: October 26 (<https://labx.org/2018/09/labx-dx-a-fresh-taste-oct-26/>)
National Academy of Science's LabX, held in Takoma Park, MD will be an interactive discussion on social equity, sustainable diets, food waste, and GMOs.
- g. Northeast Sustainable Ag Working Group –It Takes a Region Conference in Philadelphia, PA: Oct 25/26 (<http://nesawg.org/conference>)
Regional conference on sustainable agriculture and food justice
- h. **Next FPC Public Meeting: December 12th, 5:30-8pm (location TBD)**