



District of Columbia Food Policy Council
February 6, 2019 6:00-7:30 pm
Meeting Notes

FPC Members in Attendance: Ona Balkus, Chris Bradshaw, Caesar Layton, Alex Moore, Joelle Robinson, Philip Sambol, Tamba Stevenson, Beverley Wheeler

Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: Dan Guilbeault (DOEE), Marie Whittaker (DMPED)

1. Introductions

- a. Director Ona Balkus (ona.balkus@dc.gov; 202-442-8970)
- b. Food Policy Council Members
- c. Ex-Officio DC Agency Members

2. Working Group Updates

- a. Find more information on the working group meetings on the website [here](#).
- b. Find more information on the 2019 DC Food Policy Priorities on the website [here](#).
- c. **Urban Ag**
 - i. Working group updates
 - 1. Working group met before the FPC meeting for the first time in 2019 today.
 - 2. Moving forward the group will meet before the FPC meeting and also in alternate months.
 - 3. Working group members have been notified to be formal members.
 - ii. Priorities
 - 1. Implementation of urban ag legislation
 - 2. Infrastructure for people practicing urban ag
 - 3. Working with UDC and identifying their research and technical support
 - iii. Discussed also the possibility of creating a Community Land Trust to support agricultural spaces in the city and putting dollars in the budget for infrastructure.
 - iv. The Urban Land Lease Program selected two awardees for government land: Apogee Farms (Ward 6) and Compost Cab (Ward 4). Learn more about the Urban Land Lease Program [here](#).
- d. **Sustainable Procurement**
 - i. Working group updates
 - 1. Met today before the FPC meeting for the first time in 2019.
 - 2. Working group members have been notified to be formal members.
 - ii. Priorities
 - 1. Connecting to other groups working on sustainable procurement within the region – specifically the food recovery working group
 - a. Save the Good Food Act – assist in the process of implementing and leveraging experience from others.
 - 2. Looking at research needs for a central kitchen study – it will be an ongoing process but starting to figure out what the list of needs are.
- e. **Food Equity & Access/ Business & Labor**
 - i. Working group updates
 - 1. Working group met today before the FPC meeting for the first time in 2019.



2. Next meeting will be March 6th at DC Hunger Solutions.
3. Working group members have not yet been chosen to be formal members.

ii. Priorities

1. Investment fund for healthy food retailer – broaden retailer instead of big footprint grocery store
2. Food as medicine
3. Establish online grocery delivery pilot

iii. Group will focus first on the investment fund for healthy food retail.

f. **Nutrition & Food System Education**

i. Working group meetings

1. Met on January 24th at the Anacostia Library and Made in DC presented on the program and highlighted the Grown in DC grant opportunity.
2. Will meet the first Wednesday of every month; will meet before the FPC meetings and also at a public library or government building in the alternate months.
3. Meetings will have presentations, action items, and research to report.
4. Working group members have not yet been chosen to be formal members.

ii. Priorities

1. Promoting nutrition education for all
2. Promoting local food businesses including women and owners of color

3. Policy & Legislative Updates:

a. Updated 2018 Leg Tracker

- i. Our Food Policy Leg Tracker is updated through 2018; you can see what legislation has passed and what has yet to be funded.
- ii. Find the tracker on our website [here](#).

b. Policy Updates

- i. Mayor Bowser committed \$2M to help with SNAP during federal government shutdown but then the shutdown ended; it isn't clear yet if the funds will be absorbed in the budget or set aside specifically for SNAP.

c. Performance Oversight and Budget Process:

i. Process overview

1. There are several opportunities to engage on the oversight and budget process.
2. Oversight season can be the most important time of year to make your voice heard on issues you care about; it allows you to look back on how the District did last year, and look forward for what you want to see investment in the next year.

3. Budget process

- a. Mayor will propose the budget – to help elevate things you'd like to see in the budget, you can attend to the mayor budget engagement forums; information on those forums are [here](#).

b. Simultaneously, DC Council will host oversight hearings for the agencies

- i. It is a time to give feedback and also an opportunity to be positive; even if you think everything is going well with a program, we encourage you to testify to show your support.



- c. Then there is another round of hearings held to discuss the budget of each agency – this is an important time to advocate for funding.
 - d. Throughout the budget process, it can be an important time of year for coalition building – you can build partnerships with organizations that you trust and share values with.
4. Ona Balkus (FPC), Beverley Wheeler (DC Hunger Solutions), and Asha Carter (DC Greens) will be hosting a “Demystifying the DC Budget Process for Advocates” workshop at Rooting DC at 12:30 pm; more details about Rooting DC are in the Announcement section of these notes
- ii. Upcoming Hearings
 - 1. 2/15, 11am: Food Policy Council oversight hearing;
 - 2. 2/15, 11am: Food Policy Director confirmation hearing;
 - 3. 2/8, 10am: Department of Health oversight hearing;
 - 4. 2/12, 10am: Department of Parks and Recreation oversight hearing;
 - 5. 2/13, 10am: Department of Small and Local Business Development oversight hearing;
 - 6. 2/26, 12pm: DC Public Schools oversight hearing;
 - 7. And many more! Find more agencies and sign up to testify on the DC Council calendar: <http://dccouncil.us/events/>
 - iii. Unfunded bills:
 - 1. We also highlighted on our website all of the unfunded bills on food policy; find these bills [here](#).

4. Food Policy Council Updates

- a. Federal Government Shutdown Food Assistance Resources
 - i. During the government shutdown, we created a resource guide (find it on our website [here](#)) highlighting the great resources provided by the District and community organizations for furloughed workers.
 - ii. We are interested in learning what other food policy resources could be valuable for you and your organization; please email us if you have a great idea (dcfoodpolicy@dc.gov).
- b. DC Food Workforce Development Convening 2/5/19
 - i. The FPC hosted a convening for food workforce development providers, food businesses, District agencies working on food workforce issues, and organizations supporting workers, entrepreneurs, and healthy food access.
 - ii. The event was really well attended – we discussed what are the gaps, unmet need for businesses for skilled workers and placement in food, and how food workforce can be better strengthened to be a place of career of opportunities.
 - iii. The convening will inform the District’s first DC Food Workforce Development Strategy, with support from Kaiser Permanente; the facilitators will be synthesizing the themes from the convening, and we will share more information on our website.
- c. Rooting DC Presentation and Info Table
 - i. In addition to the workshop presentation on the budget process, the FPC will be at Rooting DC with an info (stop by and get some swag!)



5. Local Spotlight Presentations

- a. DSLBD – Grown in DC Grant Opportunity
 - i. Find the Grown in DC Grant NOFA and RFA [here](#).
 - ii. DSLBD helps small and local businesses navigate resources and connect small businesses with different services and resources.
 - iii. Grown in DC Grant
 1. Funding through FEED Act of 2010 – Healthy Food Retail Program
 2. The grant is for expanding healthy food access in specific areas of the city – funding is up to \$120,000; will select 2-5 grants from \$20,000 to \$60,000
 - a. Applicants can submit different budgets at different levels
 - b. You can look up eligible areas within the RFP.
 3. Grant is very broad and very open; you can collaborate and partner with organizations even if you aren't within those eligible communities.
 4. Info sessions are available to learn more about the grant and application process:
 - a. [Wednesday, Feb 13](#)
 - b. [Wednesday, Feb 27](#)
 - c. [Wednesday, March 3](#)
 5. Grant closes at March 15 at 2 pm
 - a. If you would like DSLBD to check for your eligibility for the grant and make sure you have documents you need, you can submit your application by March 4.
 - b. Grants will be selected by March 31, 2019.
 6. DSLBD can only answer questions via email or in the info sessions
 7. Organizations that received Grown in DC grants in the past can apply again.
 - iv. Institute for Justice – Cottage Food Laws
 - i. Access the powerpoint presentation [here](#) for more information.
 - ii. Reforming the 2013 Cottage Food Act is one of the 2019 DC Food Policy Priorities.
 - iii. Cottage food producer: someone who makes non-hazardous food in their home and sells it.
 - iv. DC Cottage Food Act of 2013
 1. While the law passed in 2013, regulations were put in place in Dec 2017.
 2. The full registry was put online in July 2018.
 - v. Approved list
 1. Shelf stable foods – room temp foods.
 2. If it is not on the list, you need to get a pH test – which is through a separate process.
 - vi. Steps and costs to starting a cottage food business
 1. You must list all of the ingredients in the product within your menu; if you want to change any ingredient, you must resubmit your application and pay the fee again.
 2. Costs to becoming a cottage food business comes out to an average of \$300 to \$500.
 - vii. State by State Comparison (look at slides for a helpful chart)
 1. DC is closest to VA home processing service but is much more regulated.
 - viii. Important barrier – vendors need insurance to sell at farmers market and special events -- \$350-500; need liability insurance; limited at \$25,000 revenue
- b. Winnie Huston – Community Advocates
 - i. Community Advocates are preparing for the budget season



- ii. Community Advocates in attendance: Tony Lawson and Pumpkins Dicks; other Community Advocates are interested in participating in the working groups; might want to consider another night for meetings as Wednesdays can often be bible study nights
- iii. Community advocates will also have a workshop at Rooting DC workshop at 10 am; hear from the advocates and their experiences, challenges, and what allies can do to help the Community Advocates advance food justice in DC.
- iv. They are working with the Ward 8 Giant Nutritionist, Jillian Griffith, to schedule a community event in late March at the Ward 8 Giant
- v. Also working with FPC to plan another Community Meal to build on the Community Dinner held in December: luncheon will be in late April and early May
- vi. To learn more about the Community Advocates program, email Winnie@dcgreens.org
- d. Good Food Market Groundbreaking in Bellevue (Philip Sambol)
 - i. Good Food Markets is opening a new grocery store in Ward 8 – South Capital St. and Atlantic St. SW (Bellevue Neighborhood in Ward 8); will be a full-service grocery store and a café
 - ii. The store will be a community gathering place and will be co-located with affordable housing (40 year affordability; 30-60% AMI; 20 units will be permanently dedicated to folks transitioning out of homelessness)
 - iii. 3,800 square feet – will employ 20 individuals, 15 full time and 5 part-time; will also host workforce training opportunities for folks to advance across the career
- e. Update on effects of government shutdown on SNAP (Beverley Wheeler)
 - i. The shutdown was a very stressful time for folks participating in SNAP. SNAP benefits often run out about 2-3 week of the month, and with the shutdown, there was the worry that people wouldn't be able to get SNAP benefits for February
 - ii. DC Government had to give out February benefits on January 16th; DHS and community groups helped push out the info that the benefits were February and had to prepare people for not getting SNAP benefits until March
 - iii. Because of the timing of these benefits, people will be using extra resources like pantries sooner and longer than usual into the spring.
 - iv. DC government and community organizations are currently trying to figure out how to shorten the gap of March benefits – split the difference so there isn't a longer month for recipients to go without benefits
 - v. What can you do to help? Need to help identify opportunities for people to take advantage of existing resources like school meals, food pantries, etc.
 - vi. DHS is working with USDA to figure out how to move up the timing of March benefits
 - vii. WIC – With WIC benefits, USDA went above to help DC Health make sure WIC had funding until March

6. Announcements:

- a. **Next FPC meeting: Wednesday, April 3rd 6-7:30 pm; location TBA**
- b. Rooting DC – February 23rd at Ron Brown College Preparatory High School
 - i. Find more information on the event [here](#).
 - ii. Check out the conference schedule [here](#).
 - iii. Check out their Instagram: @rootingdc
 - iv. Rooting DC is a FREE, all-day urban gardening forum that provides education about urban agriculture and food systems, cultivates health and protection of the environment, and builds



community. The program includes dozens of interactive workshops, cooking and food preservation demonstrations, and panel discussions. The event hosts 60+ green businesses and non-profits from throughout the region at an Information Fair.

- v. Lots of workshops were highlighted throughout the meeting; others include:
 - 1. WANDA: Remixing Black History into Food Education workshop at 12:30 pm & 3 pm
- c. National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference – February 24-26
 - i. Find more information [here](#).
- d. DSLBD: Living Wage Certification grant
 - i. DSLBD has issued competitive grant up to \$125,000 for an organization to create a living wage certification; applications are due February 15, 2019
 - ii. Find the NOFA and more information about the grant [here](#).
- e. Made in DC is exploring ways to make the program more inclusive and useful for residents
 - i. Share your feedback and take their survey [here](#).
 - ii. Want to highlight a local maker? Tag them using @thisismadeindc
- f. Reinvestment Fund: America’s Healthy Food Financial Initiative (HFFI)
 - i. HFFI Financial Assistance grant applications are due February 14, 2019
 - ii. Find more information about the grant [here](#).
- g. Food Recovery Network (FRN) is hosting their annual holiday party “Love of FRNs”
 - i. February 20, 2019 from 5:30 to 8:30 pm at Sidley Austin LLP
 - ii. FRN will bring together our DMV FRNs to celebrate the amazing work of the movement. Our gathering is also a special opportunity to welcome new connections into the network. **Everyone over 21 is welcome!**
 - iii. You can RSVP for the event [here](#). To learn more and to stay updated on event details, check out their [Facebook Event Page](#).
- h. Latino Economic Development Center Loans for DC Based Restaurants
 - i. The Community Economic Development Program (CED) provided LEDC with a \$700,000 grant to award 0% APR loans to DC based restaurants that are expanding operations or opening a new location.
 - ii. Loan amounts are between \$50K and \$100K.
 - iii. Learn more information with [this flyer](#).