

DC Food Policy Council Meeting Notes
June 3, 2020

Please see: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#) (no recording of first 15 min) of this meeting

- Welcome
- We tragically lost a member of our DC food community last week. Shana Donahue was a food and nutrition education teacher at Simon Elementary in Ward 7 as part of the FRESHFARM FoodPrints team. Jenn Mampara from FoodPrints shared more about Shana's life.
 - FRESHFARM FoodPrints tribute:
<https://www.freshfarm.org/blog/foodprints/remembering-shana>
 - More information coming soon about Memorial Fund in Shana's memory
- Moment of silence to reflect on the loss of all those killed by police and systemic racism in the U.S. and DC, including:
 - Terrence Sterling (killed by DC police)
 - Marquese Alston (killed by DC police)
 - George Floyd
 - Breonna Taylor
 - Ahmaud Arbery
 - People of color disproportionately affected by COVID-19
 - And many others.
- Ona: Before moving to the rest of the meeting, I'd like to explicitly recognize that food justice is racial justice. In working to improve DC's food system, we must confront racism and resulting racial inequity in all of its forms. The Food Policy Council recommits to centering racial equity in our policy priorities and listening to residents of color, especially those disproportionately affected by racism in the food system. Here are a few **resources** we've compiled to hold ourselves accountable to this commitment.
 - Ashanté M. Reese, Black Food Geographies, Race, Self-Reliance, and Food Access in Washington, D.C. (book):
<https://uncpress.org/book/9781469651507/black-food-geographies/>
 - Food Solutions New England (FSNE) 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge:
<https://foodsolutionsne.org/21-day-racial-equity-habit-building-challenge/>
 - HEAL (Health Environment Agriculture Labor) Alliance:
<https://healfoodalliance.org/>
 - Building the Case for Racial Equity in the Food System, Center for Social Inclusion:
<https://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Building-the-Case-for-Racial-Equity-in-the-Food-System.pdf>
 - Civil Eats, Food and Land Justice for Black Americans:
https://civileats.com/2020/06/02/want-to-see-food-and-land-justice-for-black-americans-support-these-groups/?utm_source=Verified%20CE%20list&utm_campaign=

Planning, have scheduled 37 interviews. Feedback from WG: try to avoid retro-fitting; equipment storage that's flexible; food waste (how can facility be infrastructure tool); what are structural barriers for farmers and producers of color to access the facility

- Improvement to supply chain during COVID-19: How can we capture momentum gained right now; resources; funding; collaboration over-last three months; how to contract equitably; galvanize for new policy and changes.
- Nutrition & Food System Education
 - Discussed issue of food education from largely white food educators and organizations are mainly white. Encouraging career fields for black food educators needs to be addressed. If focus is on people of color we must listen to those communities
 - Potentially create new goal for working group to work with schools to create more programming that entails career opportunities in the food space i.e. Nutritionists; Producer; Farmer; Horticulture; Food Policy; Agriculture etc.
 - Create resource matrix with minority farmers; producers; businesses in DC for potential outreach to encourage a more diverse selection pool in the food space when opportunities arise.
 - The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) has a peer educator model! (We should review)
- Entrepreneurship & Food Jobs
 - DSLBD Dream and Healthy Food grant programs were not funded in Mayor's Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.
 - Affordable Kitchen space matchmaking may not be option to explore right now. PPP loan program is still open through SBA-possible changes will come down to help make easier to apply. LEDC still processing applications
 - DC Green bank loan funds for green infrastructure are available;
 - Some small food businesses have changed their reopen plans due to protest; do not know rate of infections because of this; maybe in holding pattern.
 - Keeping eye on commercial property-small landlords may lose property. How can small businesses purchase property.

1. COVID-19 Response and Recovery:

- a. Pandemic EBT roll out (Michael Ribar, DHS)
 - i. DHS provided update on implementation and how people can get resources (see slides)
 - ii. As of May 20, 14.4 Million households received benefits, this includes SNAP and TANF beneficiaries got benefits placed on existing card
 - iii. New cards issued on Monday
 - iv. Goal to issue all benefits by June 19 this includes all households

- v. Call center staff increased by 10-15 people a week
 - vi. Calls at 300% more; lots of issue with data from schools
- b. Produce Plus
- i. Sara Beckwith from DC Health provided updates on new model (see slides)
 - ii. Produce Plus Direct
 - iii. Farmers market must be in Ward where more than 10% receive SNAP: 1,4, 5,7,8 and Chinatown
 - iv. No checks this season
 - v. When customers number; email; name; address; do they participate in programs? This will not be a barrier though
 - vi. Produce box size are by amount \$10, \$20, \$25
 - vii. When customer arrives at the market they will provide their name and receive box
 - viii. DC Greens will coordinate new messaging and register customers through hot-line; reach out to organizations and enlist support in reaching District Resident; Senior Centers; Faith; WIC; Library; Undocumented populations etc.
 - ix. Program will go from July 14 - September 30
- c. ReOpen DC
- i. Not a law but a guidance document. As we saw, the Mayor followed many of the recommendations for phase 1. Use it like Sustainable DC– an indicator of the city’s values and priorities.
 - ii. ReOpen DC Plan recommendations related to food are all documents on this [spreadsheet](#)
 - iii. Now in Phase 1 of ReOpening- biggest change for the food sector is restaurants can have outdoor seating. This will disproportionately affect restaurant workers, who will be at the front lines as restaurants figure out social distancing and new systems.
- d. Candace Cunningham from ROC-DC presented on the concerns of restaurant workers and their demands for reopening safely.
- i. ROC-DC- Restaurant Opportunities Centers (ROC) United is a nonprofit organization fighting to improve wages and working conditions for the nation’s restaurant workforce.
 - ii. Restaurant workers are concerned about their safety returning to work during Phase 1 of reopening. Would like to see requirements for restaurants to enforce hygiene and social distancing requirements. Would also like to be compensated and have the option to stay home if they feel unsafe.
 - iii. ROC’s Restaurant Worker ReOpen DC Demands: <https://rocunited.org/dc/workers-demands/>
 - iv. Listen to restaurant workers on this 5/27 Restaurant Worker Town Hall: <https://www.facebook.com/ROCdc/videos/vb.229551522324/29481007>

[8350402/?type=2&theater](https://www.rocunited.org/dc/8350402/?type=2&theater)

- v. Learn more about how ROC is supporting restaurant workers:
<https://rocunited.org/dc/>
- vi. If you have any questions please reach out to Candace at
candace@rocunited.org.

e. FY21 Budget

- i. Due to the economic downturn, the District is projecting an \$800 million shortfall across the budget. This means hard choices for each agency. We have seen some food programs be spared, while others were affected.
- ii. In the slides, there is a table with what was funded and what wasn't
- iii. How you can get involved this year:
 - 1. **Read** DC Fiscal Policy Institute, A Resident's Guide to the DC Budget:
<https://www.dcfpi.org/all/a-residents-guide-to-the-dc-budget/>
 - 2. **Watch** at a budget hearing: <https://dccouncil.us/events/>
 - a. Thursday 6/4, 3pm: OSSE budget hearing
 - b. Friday 6/5, 9am: DC Health budget hearing
 - 3. **Testify**. This year, you must be invited to testify, or submit written testimony. You can help restore this funding by SUBMITTING TESTIMONY! Find instructions, talking points, and a social media toolkit here:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HvHzUHW1f9wYqYDfuxX7EtMddm9v16TsvxAfZedoy0/edit?usp=sharing>
 - 4. or voicemail testimony to the [Committee](#).
 - 5. **Contact** District government staff and your elected officials
 - 6. **Follow the lead** of trusted organizations

2. Upcoming federal funding opportunities

- a. [USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant](#) due **July 6, 2020**
- b. [USDA Cooperative Agreements for Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction](#) due **June 26, 2020**
- c. FEMA Reimbursement for Emergency Food Assistance.
<https://hsema.dc.gov/node/1480396>
- d. The Downtown BID has a page about how Phase 1 businesses can get PPE care packages (while supplies last):
https://www.downtowndc.org/ppesupplies/?utm_source=DowntownDC+Subscriptions&utm_campaign=6283457214-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_23_01_16_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8875061cc1-6283457214-216677933&mc_cid=6283457214&mc_eid=41e96950c3
- e. Group purchasing options for PPE with the DC Community Purchasing Alliance:
<https://bit.ly/coop4ppe>
- f. MA-FRAC rolling grant applications, up to \$15,000 for organizations distributing local food: <http://tinyurl.com/mafrac-grant>

3. Announcements:

a. **Friday June 12th on [WebEx](#)**

- i. Meeting number (access code): 160 390 5424
- ii. Meeting password: 6McqMAYgB82
- iii. Or join by phone: 1-650-479-3208

b. **Next FPC meeting will be Wednesday, August 5th - TBD when/where**

- c. Sign on to a letter urging Congress and the White House to immediately boost SNAP/EBT benefits and make investments in other critical nutrition programs with proven health and economic impacts.

<https://frac.salsalabs.org/heroes-snap-sign-on-may2020/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=6a42aa04-e189-4a2f-bc0c-a73c073bce4e&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=adba698b-eed1-460b-b325-cee79a34945c>

4. Additional Resources

a. **Q&A**

- i. Do you have a sense of about how many children/families have enrolled in P-EBT through a FARM app or SNAP since DHS/OSSE's first data pull (of automatic enrollment)?
 1. Answer: 68,000
- ii. Who is the DC Dept of Urban Ag rep?
 1. Answer: Kate Lee-kate.lee@dc.gov

Contact us at dcfoodpolicy@dc.gov if you have any questions