

DC Food Policy Council Meeting Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions – by Director Cidlowski

- a. **DCFPC Members in Attendance:** Alex Ashbrook, Chris Bradshaw, Caesar Layton Jeremiah Lowery, Alex Moore, Paula Reichel, Joelle Robinson, Tambra Stevenson
- b. **DCFPC Ex-Officio Members in Attendance:** Jeff Jennings, DGS; Lauren Adkins DSLBD; Kristen Rowe, DCPS; Dan Guilbeault DOEE, Donna Anthony OSSE; Vincent Parker DCRA, Sam Zimbabwe DDOT, Amelia Peterson-Kosecki DOH

II. Background on the Food Policy Council, Legislative Updates Director Cidlowski

- a. General Announcements
- b. The Food Tank Summit Washington DC is all day tomorrow, scholarships are available, as well as a live steam on <https://foodtank.com/>.
- c. DC Food Policy Council members will be presenting in a session at Rooting DC on February 18th. You can register online for this event for free all day gardening event at <http://rootingdc.org/page-2/>.
- d. The USDA is holding a listening session on Thursday March 2nd for Long-term Visioning of U. S. Agriculture Systems for Sustainable Production. They want to hear from local people working in and on urban agriculture, it's a great opportunity to get involved at the federal level, you can sign up online to attend or provide oral comments.
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/24/2017-01506/visioning-of-united-states-us-agricultural-systems-for-sustainable-production-stakeholder-listening>
- e. The Comprehensive Plan process has moved through some of its first set of public meetings. Find out more (<http://plandc.dc.gov/>). There will be an open call for amendments in March 2017. Copies of handouts provided explain what the Comprehensive Plan is and highlights all the elements of the plan that relate to food issues now.
- f. Local Legislative Updates
- g. Councilmember Cheh introduced a bill this morning entitled the Save Good Food Amendment Act of 2017 (<http://lims.dccouncil.us/Download/37273/B22-0072-Introduction.pdf>). This bill includes several strategies for decreasing wasted food in the District, including: 1) Providing a tax credit for grocery stores, restaurants, and urban farms that donate healthy foods to charitable organizations; 2) Expanding liability protections for food donors that donate directly to individuals, and for non-profit organizations that charge a small fee to cover the handling and preparation of food donations; 3) Requiring DOH to only require date labels on food products where there is an increased safety risk related to when the date passes; and 4) Requiring DOH and the Office of Waste Diversion (in DPW) to develop a food donation guide, including safety regulations, best practices, and a list of organizations that accept donated food. DOH will also have to train health inspectors on the information in the guide. The bill was referred to the Health Committee and the Finance Committee. If you want to voice support for the bill or make suggestions for amendments, I suggest that you reach out to the staff that work on those Committees.

- h. Councilmember Trayon White introduced the “Inclusive Entrepreneurship Act of 2017” this week (<http://lims.dccouncil.us/Legislation/B22-0082?FromSearchResults=true>). The Act will establish business incubators program within the Department of Small and Local Business Development to promote economic development in underserved communities East of the Anacostia River. The act would provide grants for physical workspaces, to establish partnerships with institutions to provide incubation and other related business services east of the river. The bill was referred to the Committee on Business and Economic Development. If you want to voice support for the bill or make suggestions for amendments, I suggest that you reach out to the staff that work on those Committees.

III. Keynote Speaker Presentation from Presentation from The Food Chain Worker’s Alliance, Christina Spach, National Good Food Purchasing Campaign Coordinator

- a. The Food Chain Workers Alliance is a coalition of worker-based organizations whose members plant, harvest, process, pack, transport, prepare, serve, and sell food, organizing to improve wages and working conditions for all workers along the food chain.
- b. The presentation covered the aim of the Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) to redefine food procurement. While the food system is the largest employment sector in the US economy, workers earn the lowest hourly median wage of \$10. The GFPP centers around five core values; nutrition; environmental sustainability; valued workforce; local economies; and animal welfare. These principles are used to establish a set of standards for food purchasing at the institutional level, such as for a school system or hospital system. The program grew out of the Los Angeles city food policy council and is now being used in many cities around the country.
- c. The Food Chain Workers Alliance is working with the Center for Good Food Purchasing to build coalitions in different cities around the US that want to adopt this policy. They work to build and mobilize support, develop a local strategy, identify potential champions locally, and have found this coalition to be critical to getting the policy adopted in other places. The Los Angeles coalition included more than thirty groups from the health sector, environmental groups, local agriculture organizations, and labor groups as well.
- d. In Los Angeles, they focused on school district as they felt they could have the biggest impact, it was an area where they had some leverage and the kids being fed were one of the highest priorities of need for their community.
- e. The GFPP conducts a baseline assessment of metrics for each of the five value areas, and assigns start ratings based on the number of points achieved by a city’s food procurement practices. The rating is expected to go up continuously over time as a location’s practices improve.
- f. Now several years out from implementation in Los Angeles and Oakland, some of the impacts of the GFPP can be measured. For the LA school district, they’ve spent \$12 million locally on food that would otherwise be spent outside the region; created 150 new local jobs in supply chain processing and manufacturing, changed their bread to

remove high-fructose corn syrup, and reduced overall consumption of meat while purchasing higher quality chicken.

- g. Other cities working on GFPP now include New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Cincinnati and Austin. In Los Angeles, they first issued a public resolution from the city and then the school district adopted GFPP.
- h. *How might we navigate the full landscape of DC kids here?* DCPS makes up only 40% of all DC kids in charters, early childhood care centers etc.
- i. *How would this interface with the Healthy Schools Act? What about wage and immigration issues for labor? What's the specific labor standard included in here?* The standard has a baseline for labor that includes a minimum that food service companies and suppliers are following the law, and progresses up from there to three different levels. *[Additional follow-up from email]* GFPP can be a tool in moving institutional procurement toward supporting food vendors and suppliers that participate in such worker-led programs as the Fair Food Program and Agricultural Justice Project as well as those that are unionized and/or follow cooperative models--or encouraging vendors/suppliers to do so in order to gain contracts with said institutions. It can also help identify and develop the infrastructure needed to have a thriving local food system. An important role of the Local Coalition is to ensure that GFPP is being adapted to the local context. Although GFPP pushes institutions not to purchase from food suppliers that exploit workers, it does not single-handedly change the ongoing workplace threats our food workers (including those that are undocumented) face. FCWA, our members, and partners are organizing separately with regard to the threat of mass deportations, the need to increase worker protections, raising wages, etc.
- j. *Are other cities doing this that contract out all their food service, or only self-operating ones?* In other cities, some that contract out are doing it, and a couple has the same food service providers as you have here, Sodexo and Revolution Foods.
- k. *Has there been any interaction directly with food service providers? Does the GFPP encourage them to change their behavior or just reward those that are already operating well?* We haven't yet worked as directly with producers, but it is encouraged to move the needle on both sides of the equation for both supply and demand. For example, they were able to get local wheat in their wholegrain bread by pointing the policy when working with the supplier.
- l. *How do you interact with food policy councils or workforce investment councils?*
- m. *Have the number of total dollars spent on food gone up, or just been redirected to the local economy?* It's been redirected to the local economy, but cities haven't reported specifically spending more once the policy has gone into place. *[Additional follow-up from email]* There could also be a long-term opportunity to advocate for incentives, such as funding supports, for school districts and other public institutions who are implementing programs like GFPP.

IV. Food Policy Council Members Present on Working Group:

- a. *Local Food Business & Labor Working Group:* The group met to talk about Cottage Food Act implementation, regulations, and how to best spread the word about the potential business opportunity for food entrepreneurs. Brandy Brooks from Dreaming Out Loud presented on the act. The group also plotted out an action strategy for the coming year for the working group.
- b. *Food Equity, Access, and Health and Nutrition Education Working Group:* The group met and reviewed the potential areas of change for the FEED-DC supermarket tax incentive act. This was a very active working meeting with a big crowd and a lot of institutional knowledge and went step by step through each part of the legislation. They may focus on getting funding to smaller grocers that have greater need for it, providing grants for cooperatives, and repurposing the funding to allow for renovations on existing stores. The group also plotted out an action strategy for the coming year for the working group.
- c. *Sustainable and Local Food Procurement Working Group:* The last meeting focused on the Good Food Purchasing Program. The group addressed what the standard is, how it could apply here, and what parts of the standard may or may not be a good fit for DC. There were concerns from the group about the specifics of the standard, if it would work in a contracted out food service setting, and what have the outcomes been for other cities? The group also plotted out an action strategy for the coming year for the working group.
- d. *Urban Agriculture Working Group:* The focus from the last meeting was on local resources for those in urban agriculture. Staff from the USDA presented on the programs, grants, and resources available to us locally and also who the right people at USDA are to contact for each program. The group also discussed how to best implement the Urban Farming and Food Security Amendment Act of 2015, and well as how to address potential amendments to the Act. The group also plotted out an action strategy for the coming year for the working group.

V. Strategic Plan Review – Potential Vote

- a. Director Cidlowski presented on the draft strategic plan. Input came from members of the FPC and community members to add language about racial equity, to reorganize some introductory information, to ensure more active language in the urban agriculture section, and to equity. The plan will get final revisions, and be voted on over email for final approval by the DCFPC.

VI. Announcements & Next Steps

- a. Next DCFPC Public Meeting – April 5th (*Food System Assessment topic*)
- b. Working Group Meetings – March dates now live
 - i. Sustainable Food Procurement – March 1st
 - ii. Local Food Business & Labor Development – March 6th
 - iii. Food Equity, Access, and Health & Nutrition Education – March 8th
 - iv. Urban Agriculture & Food System Education – March 14th