



VANCOUVER FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 24, 2022

A meeting of the Vancouver Food Policy Council was held on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at 6:05pm, by electronic means. The meeting was open to members of the public.

PRESENT:

- Evan Bowness
- Leona Brown
- Sarah Common
- Jyotika Dangwal
- Sharon Dong
- Ivy Leong*
- Ben Liegey
- Joey Liu
- Rasoul Narimani
- Michelle Reining
- Aditi Rudra
- Marc Schutzbank
- Carol White

ABSENT:

- Miluska Bravo
- Emily Burkholder
- Katherine Cooper
- Clare Cullen
- Emily Burkholder
- Maggie Mills
- Anthony Sullivan
- Kae Yee Tsai

ALSO PRESENT:

- Councillor Christine Boyle, City of Vancouver*
- Caitlin Dorward, Social Planner, Social Policy and Projects, Staff Liaison
- Caitlyn Harrison, Planner, Vancouver Park Board
- Trustee Estrellita Gonzales, Vancouver School Board
- Councillor Michael Wiebe, City of Vancouver

RECORDER: Vicky Baker

*denotes partial attendance

WELCOME

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order. Two guests were present.

The difficulty of the multiple and concurrent crisis, and the impact of extractive legacies of colonial violence was recognized. Members acknowledge this complexity while discussing hopes, visions, goals and dreams, and reflect on what it means to work alongside these communities. New members Aditi Rudra and Maggie Mills were welcomed.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting is hosted on the stolen lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsilhqot'in Nations, and the Council will be working throughout the term to build commitment to this land, to listen to the leadership of the Host Nations, and to the voices of Urban Indigenous peoples, and to think always about who we are in this work together.

When we acknowledge the land in this way we work to acknowledge the colonial structure which continues to do violence to Indigenous peoples in our city and beyond, disconnecting people from land and food, community and culture.

As Ta7taliya Nahanee, Skwxwú7mesh decolonial facilitator offers: "A territorial acknowledgement is a personal commitment to, and appreciation for, the land you are in relationship with. It is a way to respect the Ancestors who cared for the land that is now caring for you. It can connect you to the medicine of the land."

3. Online meeting reminders

Staff explained that members of the public are muted by default, but can use chat. Council members were reminded that voting must be done verbally and that items in the chat are not recorded in the minutes.

4. Motion of approval of meeting minutes

MOVED by Sarah Common
SECONDED by Marc Schutzbank

THAT the Vancouver Food Policy Council approve the Minutes from the meeting of January 13, 2022 as circulated.

Carried unanimously. (Aditi Rudra abstained)

5. Building Inclusive Committee Structures Motion

Work on this motion began as a conversation about access and how members come together and communicate, and a discussion with the Clerk's office about accessibility. A draft letter was circulated, and after meetings with the Building Food Equity working group and the Clerk's office, and other advisory councils, the motion was drafted.

MOVED by Sarah Common
SECONDED by Marc Schutzbank

Draft motion was read and reviewed.

Discussion

- This will help support the Clerk's office while engaging in this work, in an effort to have participation from more diverse voices, while recognizing the amount of work that is involved.
- City Council appreciates hearing from advisory committee members on how to make them more accessible.
- The Nominations Committee wants to ensure this work is well-supported.
- In addition to extending the length of recruitment, it was suggested that language support could be provided, at or outside of meetings. Staff explained that recruitment is done in different languages, and targeted outreach is done to local organizations (e.g. MOSAIC)
- The application process needs to be easily accessible and widely promoted. As an example, this motion will be shared with chairs from other advisory committees.
- In order to do public participation in a meaningful way, it needs to be resourced.

Motion was adapted to consider the points above.

Final motion:

Motion to Increase Equity of Participation on CoV Advisory Councils

Whereas:

1. Municipalities, locally and internationally, are increasingly recognizing the need to provide equity-denied populations, especially those experiencing poverty and other systemic barriers to access, with services and infrastructure for community development.
2. This includes acknowledging the complexity of doing work in the areas of justice, equity, diversity, decolonisation, inclusion and liberation on the stolen lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. Beyond acknowledgement, this work includes taking actions to decolonize our daily practices as well as our institutions and governing bodies.
3. Strategies are actively being developed by the City of Vancouver and its City Council, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and Advisory Bodies to strengthen respectful engagement and increase access to participation for Indigenous members of the community, BIPOC, and others who may experience systemic barriers to access in civic processes.
4. In particular, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation has demonstrated more accessible, supportive and respectful processes around community engagement throughout their recent updates to the Local Food Systems Action Plan's Community Advisory Committee. For example, honoraria for elders and participants as well as food and transport supports, which were readily available and offered with clarity to those who participated in outreach and meetings.
5. Building a strong social safety net, that ensures that all Canadians have access to housing, food, transportation, internet, and other utilities, is the best way to help all people participate in advisory committees. In lieu of that provincial and federal support, municipalities who choose to engage with community members have a responsibility to acknowledge the burdens and barriers that exist in order to provide feedback as an advisory council.
6. Participating on Advisory Councils can be overwhelming, retraumatizing and inaccessible, especially for those who are stepping into systems that have historically

and in ongoing ways caused them harm.

And Whereas The Vancouver Food Policy Council:

1. Has been exploring and practicing ways to increase accessibility with respect to membership of those equity denied groups who may experience multiple barriers to full civic participation.
2. Is committed to developing and advancing protocols of respect and reciprocity; building our decolonizing practices; embodying our values and establishing systems to address systemic barriers to access in Advisory Council meetings and related activities.
3. Through the Administration Team/Chair, has utilized the following strategies:
 - a. Supporting the voices of those who are equity denied in coming into the room either through community engaged processes, or through presentations and community engaged components of our meetings.
 - b. Advocating for increased clarity around processes, expectations, and supports available for members in Advisory Councils (i.e. process around access to childcare, food, and transportation supports/stipends)
 - c. Slowing down Land Acknowledgements and making space for group introductions, cultural welcomes, speaking circles and gifts in our processes.
 - d. Providing information and documents in alternative formats (e.g., PDF and email, verbal/oral feedback options).
 - e. Setting up lateral mentorship relationships with members that have access needs not being met by the existing structures.
 - f. Providing additional training/tools to navigate technology platforms, communication tools and procedures regarding motions and voting.
 - g. Building a [resource list](#) to share with membership for self-guided learning.
 - h. Building a [protocol around gifting](#) recognising honoraria is a gift, an acknowledgement of time, given with dignity, transparency, respect; where made possible by funding, special occasion or other.
 - i. Building [community agreements](#) together, including shared terms and common definitions.
 - j. Building our [agendas](#) to share resources that support each item.

Therefore, the Vancouver Food Policy Council calls on the City of Vancouver to:

1. Support the following mechanisms to deepen accessibility on Advisory Councils:
 - a. Clearly outline all financial support and processes for accessing support, for members and prospective members, (especially regarding food/meal, transportation, and dependent supports). As part of this, direct staff to:
 - i. Further work to make the process of reimbursements more accessible, user-friendly, and timely, reducing barriers around the collection of SIN number and other personal information;
 - ii. Increase allowance for food in budgets to support healthier and more culturally appropriate choices;

- iii. Provide financial support for transportation and food for all formats of meetings - online/hybrid/in-person;
 - iv. Consider structures for providing a discretionary budget to each Advisory Committee which may be applied to awareness, outreach, celebration, honoring and other resourcing of members;
 - v. Further explore supports for language accessibility to ensure that non-English speakers can participate in meaningful ways.
- b. Extend the length, and expand and diversify the reach of recruitment and build in overlap between terms.
 - c. Prioritise succession planning between terms and communication within terms. As part of this, direct staff to:
 - i. Make a file sharing and communication platform available to all Advisory Bodies and provide support such as training to ensure the platform is accessible to all members. Considering privacy concerns, accessibility, and usability of platform;
 - ii. During recruitment and membership, make clear the resources available to committees, ie. financial supports, and explore providing options for testimonials from previous committee members;
 - iii. Make accessible automated Closed Captioning of all meetings.
 - d. Support more welcoming, inclusive and interconnected committee structures:
 - i. Reduce formality of motions being the prevailing pathway that Council hears from committees; offer and support alternative options of letters and consensus based decision sharing;
 - ii. Support committees in prioritising room in meetings for introductions/check-ins for all voices in the room to share;
 - iii. Support inter-advisory committee collaboration i.e. facilitate bi-annual collaborative space for all chairs of committees to gather.

Carried unanimously.

6. Indigenous Food Sovereignty Motion

The draft motion was read in full at the last meeting. Changes made since then were include reference to work on the LFSAP and specific reference to work being done in the community. The motion aims to amplify the voices of indigenous people and build on work of this council and within the community.

MOVED by Sarah Common

SECONDED by Marc Schutzbank

Discussion

- Part of the role of the motion is to engage with how to participate in the process.
- Simply providing remuneration is not the end goal. One piece of systems change work is to implement UNDRIP. This is slow, relationship-based systems work with nations and urban communities. Some support is honoraria and there also needs to be broader supports. Remuneration is not straightforward with existing tax laws.
- This motion looks at how to decolonize engagement and recognize indigenous expertise.

Final motion:

Motion for Solidarity with Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement

Whereas

1. The City of Vancouver declared itself a City of Reconciliation in July 2014 and updated this declaration in 2021 to include a commitment to adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
2. In order to put Reconciliation into action we must slow down and listen deeply to Indigenous voices, and dismantle barriers to accessibility, decolonising our practices. How we do the work matters.
3. Indigenous people are the best stewards of their lands and “recognizing the role of Indigenous lands and leadership in biodiversity conservation and facilitating partnerships to ensure the conservation of habitats on Indigenous lands can provide crucial opportunities for countries like Canada to meet their international commitments.”
4. There is opportunity and need to apply the lens of Indigenous Food Sovereignty to City of Vancouver directions and plans: to resource and create networks of Indigenous Food Gardens led by Indigenous peoples and organisations, that rewild our city, foster biodiversity through forage and habitat including pollinators, fungi, birds and fish, increasing our resilience as inter-species community. Examples where this lens may be applied:
 - a. The City of Vancouver passed an amendment to Urban Forest Strategy to use natural management for boulevards, in December 2021;
 - b. The City of Vancouver has directed staff to consider quick start actions to support complete communities, including reallocation of 11% of neighbourhood streets for public uses such as parks space and community food gardens, on October 6th 2020.
5. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation recently passed an update to the Local Food Systems Action Plan (LFSAP) which clearly identifies the priority and need to support Indigenous Led community gardens, food systems, and spaces:
 - a. 1.7 “Increase annual resources (funding, staff time, program space and materials) for Indigenous-related food initiatives led by Indigenous partners. Initiatives this funding may support include Indigenous educational toolkits, feasts, celebrations, fieldhouse residencies, youth land-based food programs, intergenerational food knowledge sharing, and the services of Indigenous cultural practitioners.”
 - b. 1.6 “Increase annual resources (land, funding, staff time, program space, and materials) allocated to cultural learning garden development and maintenance and seek partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations to create these gardens based on park locations identified by xʷməθkʷəy̓ə̑m, Skwxw̓ ú7mesh, and səliłwətał First Nations and Urban Indigenous peoples as key sites.”
6. There is leadership from Indigenous Host Nations and Urban Indigenous leaders, and Community Organisations, offering connection and belonging through access to land and food, which includes access to culture, health, healing and connection.

Examples of this leadership includes:

- a. Exploring Food Sovereignty in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside: Kanatii Gabirel. This work is being demonstrated and deepened at Astoria Urban Farm alongside and in collaboration with many community organisations- the Executive Summary is on

display for public engagement at RayCam Community Centre and was presented to Vancouver Food Policy Council January 13th 2022.

- b. Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty (WGIFS) and Wild Salmon Caravan: “Indigenous hunting, fishing and gathering strategies are some of the most sustainable adaptation strategies of humanity. While many of the practices and protocols have persisted into the 21st century, the traditional social structures and interdependent relationship to the land, water, plants and animals have been fragmented by the techno-bureaucratic framework instituted within colonial institutions.” *Quote from Dawn Morrison August 2015*
 - c. Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty (WGIFS) - “Heal the people, heal the land.” May 19, 2021 *Transformative Justice Press Release* regarding de-encampment of Strathcona Park “Camp Hope” which names need for defunding law enforcement and re-allocating those resources to fund cultural programming that is doing the work of de-escalating violence and building healing in front line community action. And *Call To Action regarding critical need for support for Strathcona Fieldhouse, Feb 23, 2022:* regarding which we must centre that “Indigenous food systems cannot be restored in isolation of the broader scale.” *Dawn Morrison, Founder and Director.*
 - d. Local projects embodying the work or reciprocity with the land, connecting culture, food, land relations in gardens and more, led by T’uy’t’anat - Cease Wyss:
 - i. Constellation of Remediation
 - ii. 221a Semi-Public 半公開 at 271 Union Street,
 - iii. EarthHand Gleaners Artist in Residence 2021 with Jolene Andrew
 - iv. VPL Indigenous Storyteller in Residence 2018
7. Especially in this pandemic time, and this time of extreme climate change, isolation is detrimental to the health and well being of us all, and disconnection from land and food is devastating. When we discuss Just Recovery, Climate Justice and Reconciliation, we must think about access to land, and apply the lenses of Decolonising, Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Accessibility and Inclusion.

And, Whereas the Vancouver Food Policy Council officially supports and stands in solidarity with the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement, as evidenced by the following motions:

1. Budget 2022 Motion, November 2021: “Prioritise and centre Indigenous Leadership, listening deeply to voices of lived and living experience, to those who have stewarded the lands, soils and waterways of this place since time immemorial.
2. Local Food Systems Action Plan Motion, October 2021: “ increasing Indigenous food sovereignty, equitable food access, food system resiliency as part of climate action, and the preservation and support of food assets.”
3. Letter re: Support for DTES Indigenous Food Sovereignty Cooperative, February 2021: to “meet emergency food needs while transforming the local food system”

Therefore be it resolved that the Vancouver Food Policy Council:

1. Seeks to deepen understanding of and uphold solidarity with the urban Indigenous food sovereignty movement (comprised as we understand it, of many individuals and groups working towards Justice, Inclusion, Equity, Diversity and Decolonisation through connection with land, food and culture); supporting connection to local organisations, networks and individuals working in the movement; creating space within the City of

- Vancouver Advisory Committee structure for conversation and shared learning; deeply listening to local Host Nations and to Urban Indigenous leadership.
2. Reaffirms the critical importance of Indigenous voices and ways of being and knowing in supporting the long term stewardship of place, so that all future generations can be blessed with the bounty of these shared lands and waters.
 3. Calls upon the City of Vancouver to clarify existing Action Planning to support Indigenous Food Sovereignty, with process of listening deeply to Indigenous peoples; and to approach implementation by directing staff to:
 - a. Bring forward implementation and resourcing strategies for plans including Vancouver Plan, Broadway Plan, Capital Plan, and Vancouver Social Infrastructure Strategy that prioritise actions that support Indigenous food sovereignty, community leadership.
 - b. Direct staff to apply an Indigenous Food Lens in moving forward on:
 - i. the October 2021 direction to reallocate Neighbourhood Streets for public uses such as parks space and community food gardens,
 - ii. the December 2021 direction to amend the Urban Forest Strategy and Engineering Management Practices of boulevards and greenways.
 - c. Provide consultation fees, speaker's honoraria, and program funding to fully resource Indigenous led organisations and projects to have meaningful and supported input on, and supportive and inclusive opportunity through these initiatives. This includes resourcing the capital, technical, and human resource components of all work.
 4. Calls upon the City of Vancouver to direct staff to prioritise commitments made in 2021 to scoping a Colonial Audit of the City of Vancouver's own governance structures, including Advisory Committees; and to bring forward the "full review of colonial influences on which the City was founded."
 5. Calls upon the City of Vancouver to direct staff to connect with Cultural Services staff to explore how programming and policy may be extended to gardens and food-cultivation spaces, which are cultural spaces where intergenerational and cross-cultural education, ceremony, arts, food production, connection, healing and habitat enhancement, all happen.
 6. Calls upon the City of Vancouver to ask Transformational questions of itself - so we all may be held accountable, in shared community for this work.

Carried unanimously.

7. Liaison Updates

- City Council - Councillor Wiebe
 - Grants will be presented to council this week, some are food-related. Members are asked to contact Councillor Wiebe if they have time to review.
 - There is conversation on the waiver of the BC assessment cost for properties and food assets on vacant properties, including potential criteria for community gardens.
 - Councillor Boyle has been working on a motion around cultural food assets and intangible cultural heritage. She has offered to connect with members of the VFPC if interested; the item will be on council agenda March 29.
- School Board - Trustee Gonzalez
 - VSB is in the budgeting process; there are opportunities for engagement.
 - The Education Plan will soon go to staff.
 - Anti-racism and Non-discrimination Plan is being worked on.

- Food working group continues to meet, will report in June.
- Park Board - Caitlyn Harrison
 - Staff are in transition, there are no updates on who will take on Rebecca's work on the Environment and Sustainability team.
 - Burrardview Park proposal will not go to council for a couple months, to allow for a look at site elements that need more investigating. Caitlyn will provide relevant updates.

9. **Guest Speaker: Sonia Strobel - Community Supported Agriculture, Skipper Otto**

Sonia outlined some of the issues in industrial fishing systems that are designed to extract at the lowest cost with the highest profit through a long supply chain. Without connection to producers, consumers cannot align values. By reconnecting producers and consumers, community comes together and change can happen. The membership process was explained that allows consumers to receive detailed information about their fish. Software allows producers to connect directly with consumers, and to support indigenous food distribution.

Discussion

- The recent interest in kelp should be met with caution to avoid unintended consequences of massive changes. Big corporate players are putting in kelp farms, and jurisdiction is complicated. A big picture plan and data are needed to avoid siphoning off the value of shared resources.
- Blockchain technology has potential but is not used by Skipper Otto. They work with 40 families who personally deliver the fish, and rather than grown, would like to see the model proliferate to make the system more robust.
- They work with about 7600 families and a few restaurants
- Jim Pattison owns Canfisco and associated infrastructure. Skipper Otto pays them for offloading, has not had conflict.
- A growing number of their fisher families are Indigenous. Their objective is to use their model as tool for reconciliation, and has purposefully built relationships.
- There is very low bycatch due to the small scale and traditional methods. When there is, bycatch can be retained and made available to members. Bycatch is heavily regulated in Canada.
- A system was in existence before with indigenous cultures. Ideally this model can reach urban populations, working with communities up north. More input is needed from hereditary chiefs on stewardship, and more advocacy on the impact on waterways and loss of foodlands, to try to bring those systems back. Sonia responded that these principles have advised the Skipper Otto fishery and they are in contact to listen and learn. This is a going back to traditional ways

10. **Short Presentation from VFPC members to showcase the wealth of information from members.**

a. Lorraine Holubowich and Amy Weeks (Strathcona Food Hub)

The Community Centre is connected to school where 160 families are provided food at the food hub. <https://strathconacc.ca/programs/food-programs>

There is a long history of food programming. Before the pandemic breakfast was provided in the centre; have now moved to a grab-and-go model and have seen increased participation. The backpack program began 12 years ago to support vulnerable families. When the pandemic began and the centre closed, staff worked with the 120 families and found new space to be able to continue providing food and support.

b. Joey (South Van Food Hub) – moved to April meeting.

11. **Bread basket (outstanding items)**

Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation has been trying to access space in Burrardview Park, and has met with politicians and the community. Leona shared research on the history of the land, and has reached out to the Tsleil-Waututh Nation to confirm details before possibly engaging media. A letter of support is not needed at this time.

12. **Very very important meeting minute celebration**

VFPC members, staff, and alumni thanked Vicky Baker for her work recording meeting minutes since September 2006. A poem was presented to Vicky to commemorate her outstanding contributions to the committee over so many years:

Poem for Vicky

*Like a seed grows to a tree,
So has grown our VFPC history.
With a library of minutes broad and deep,
Piling up at Vicky's feet!
But every month, through all the years.
She's tackled these with very few fears –
Rather, with approaches calm,
Humble, wise... truly a balm
To weary staff and members,
Often forgetting... what did we discuss in November?!*

*Vicky, you've helped us hold the ropes,
Helped us build and track our vision and hope,
To make good food available for all,
And do it with fun, have a ball.
We are deeply grateful for more than your notes,
You've kept us from wandering like a herd of wild goats!
So tonight we honour you for helping to lead
The VFPC's way of planting deep seeds.*

Going forward, formal minutes will be taken by the Clerk's office. They will continue to be posted to the City's website <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/vancouver-food-policy-council.aspx>.

The Committee adjourned at 8:34pm.

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