



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Food Policy Council 2010-2011 Report and Membership Update

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| Date: | April 19, 2011 |
| To: | Board of Health |
| From: | Medical Officer of Health |
| Wards: | All |
| Reason for Confidential Information: | This report deals with personal information about identifiable people. |
| Reference Number: | |

SUMMARY

This report outlines Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) activities during 2010 and early 2011, with special attention to TFPC activities supporting Toronto's Food Strategy.

This report also updates the Board of Health on the activities of the TFPC in fulfilling its Terms of Reference, which are set by the Board of Health. Members of the Toronto Food Policy Council and staff from Toronto Public Health (TPH) have revised the Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) to reflect a new committee and executive structure, as well as a proposed governance structure that situates the Toronto Food Policy Council as the community reference group for the Food Strategy. Most current members of the Toronto Food Policy Council were appointed by the Board of Health in 2007 for three-year terms. The terms for all members have now expired, and new members need to be appointed by the Board of Health (Attachment 2).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. the Toronto Food Policy Council's updated Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) be adopted by the Board of Health; and
2. the individuals named in confidential Attachment 2 be appointed to the Toronto Food Policy Council for the terms indicated or until successors are appointed.

3. the Board of Health approve the public release of the confidential information contained within Confidential Attachment 2 of the report (April 19, 2011) from the Medical Officer of Health.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The current Terms of Reference for the Toronto Food Policy Council were adopted by the Toronto Board of Health in 2008. The Terms of Reference specify the Toronto Food Policy Council's mandate to assist the City in moving toward implementation of the Toronto Food Charter, adopted unanimously by City Council in 2001. In May 2010, the Board of Health endorsed the Toronto Food Strategy. The proposed revised Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) reflect the Toronto Food Policy Council's expanded mandate to act as the community reference group for the Toronto Food Strategy.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In 1991, in the absence of federal and provincial leadership on food security, the Toronto Food Policy Council was created as a subcommittee of the Board of Health. The TFPC's current Terms of Reference, adopted by the Toronto Board of Health in 2008, outline three broad roles for the Council.

1. Advise and support Toronto Public Health in the development of inclusive and comprehensive food security policies and programs expressing internationally-recognized principles of healthy public policy, social determinants of health, and the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion;
2. Advocate for innovative community food security programs that address City-wide commitments of the Toronto Food Charter and Toronto Environmental Plan;
3. Foster dialogue with Toronto Public Health, community groups, social agencies, educational institutions and businesses in the research, promotion, design, implementation and evaluation of emerging ideas in the field of community food security.

Toronto Food Policy Council members are appointed by Board of Health. Council members include two City Councillors, one citizen member from the Board of Health and up to 27 citizen members from diverse sectors of the food system. Toronto Public Health provides staff support to the Council. Staff supporting the TFPC report to the Manager of the Toronto Food Strategy to ensure effective coordination. The Council meets monthly to carry out activities to forward the TFPC's aims and objectives.

COMMENTS

The Toronto Food Policy Council is celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year. Over the past two decades the TFPC has contributed significantly to the Toronto Food Strategy, Toronto Environmental Plan, Toronto Food Charter, the Official Plan, the Toronto Food and Hunger Action Plan, and facilitated City engagement with the Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Committee. Attachment 3 provides an overview of TFPC activities in 2010-11. This work has shed light on food as an important social determinant of health. The TFPC's cross-sectoral and diverse participation enhances Toronto Public Health's capacity to implement its Strategic Plan

and the objectives of the Ontario Public Health Standards to reduce health inequalities, and to provide advice and support for the implementation of the Toronto Food Strategy.

In the last year, considerable attention was devoted to the development of the Food Strategy. The TFPC sponsored public education, partnership-building and networking activities. This work has facilitated dialogue and collaboration among farmers, processors, retailers, environmental and public health advocates, charitable foundations and policy-makers on subjects related to a local and sustainable food system that can support a health focused food strategy. The Toronto Youth Food Policy Council's activities were supported by staff of Toronto Public Health, regularly engaging youth in events, discussion and policy-making.

In 2008, the Toronto Board of Health approved the Toronto Food Policy Council's current Terms of Reference. The new proposed Terms of Reference have been expanded and revised to better reflect the TFPC's role as community reference group for the Toronto Food Strategy and to diversify and expand membership. The proposed changes are a result of deliberations by the Diversity, Outreach and Membership Committee, with input from TPH staff, and were approved by the Council members and the Co-Chairs.

The proposed Terms of Reference provide for a maximum of 30 members, which would allow TFPC to include members from a wider range of Toronto's diverse communities and food sectors. The proposed Council members for 2011-2014 are identified and described in Appendix 2. The current Terms of Reference outline a membership structure whereby the Board of Health appoints one citizen member from the Board of Health, two members of Toronto City Council, three members of farm and rural communities close to the Greater Toronto Area, and up to 24 Toronto residents representing diverse perspectives and sectors across the food system. The proposed changes add two Toronto Youth Food Policy Council representatives to the membership structure. Also proposed is an Executive Committee structure consisting of the Chairs, a Vice-Chair and the Chairs of each of the TFPC's three working groups.

In order to select potential new members for the Toronto Food Policy Council, the TFPC Diversity, Outreach and Membership committee reviewed TFPC membership in relation to sectoral and geographic representation and cultural diversity. Gaps in membership were identified and outreach to fill these gaps was undertaken. The proposed membership (Attachment 2) reflects Toronto's neighbourhood and cultural diversity, as well as sectoral representation across the food system. If appointed, the renewed Council would serve as a reference group to the Toronto Food Strategy, identifying emerging issues, facilitating linkages with the community and advising the food strategy team on their implementation process.

TFPC Priorities Moving Forward

In celebration of the Toronto Food Policy Council's 20th Anniversary in October 2011 a conference on how food shapes cities is being planned. The conference will feature a panel of the founding members of the TFPC, a digital story of the TFPC's history and accomplishments, workshops and guest speakers, including Carolyn Steele, author of *Hungry City: How Food Shapes our Lives*. The TFPC is planning this event with several community partners and will share the details of this event with the Board of Health as they become available.

The Toronto Food Policy Council held a one day strategic planning session in May 2010. A more active and engaged council was envisioned, with increased youth and diverse participation. Three working groups were formed and continue to be active: Outreach, Diversity and

Membership; Emerging Issues and Communication; Education. Terms of Reference for each of the committees are being developed, as well as a realistic work plan. Every Council member is active on at least one committee.

The TFPC is extremely supportive of the proposed membership renewal and the nine new nominees (see Attachment 2). An orientation session is scheduled for May and a process for identifying priority issues will be developed. The TFPC will continue to strive towards increased Council diversity and sectoral representation. TFPC meetings, open to the public, will continue to be engaging and relevant, and will include tours of Scarborough community food initiatives and GTA farms.

The TFPC has identified the following broad priorities for the year ahead in consultation with the Toronto Food Strategy.

Strengthen linkages and partnerships

- Support the implementation of the Toronto Food Strategy.
- Develop stronger linkages with TPH staff across a number of Directorates, as well as City staff in other Divisions.
- Continue existing partnerships (Global Food Equity Initiative and Food for Talk) and develop new partnerships with more diverse communities.
- Support the activities of the Toronto Youth Food Policy Council.
- Contribute to provincial and federal food policy initiatives to promote health focused food policies.

Improve communications

- Redesign the TFPC web pages on the TPH website (this is underway).
- Develop new communications materials for the TFPC (i.e. brochure).
- Streamline current TFPC listservs into one, develop a content strategy and e-newsletter template.
- Support TFPC members to develop a “TFPC News” blog and social media strategy.

Identify research and policy priorities

- Develop a process to identify research and policy priorities with Council members.
- Identify sustainable food systems indicators and benchmarks for Toronto using the “Food Counts” tool.
- Produce a Municipal Food Policy Tool Kit that reviews and disseminates evidence based research related to community food initiatives (i.e. farmers markets, community gardens, school food programs) to assist municipal decision-makers.

In conclusion, the revised Toronto Food Policy Council Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) and renewed membership proposed (Attachment 2) will ensure that the TFPC is able to act upon and implement the above priorities, inform the Food Strategy, and continue to provide leadership on food systems issues.

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SIGNATURE

Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Proposed Terms of Reference for the Toronto Food Policy Council
Attachment 2: Overview of Toronto Food Policy Accomplishments
Attachment 3: Toronto Food Policy Council Membership Proposal (Confidential)