



COLUMBIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia Community Development Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, 2nd floor, Columbia, SC 29201. The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, Chair called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Tina N. Herbert	Chair	Present
Howard E. Duvall	Member	Present
Will Brennan	Member	Present

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Update on the Food Insecurity Solutions Initiative - Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities

Councilor Herbert said this is a brand new committee and today's discussion started in the Economic and Community Development Committee. City Council allocated \$300,000 of our American Rescue Plan Act funds towards food insecurity and the Food Policy Committee has been working on this since the end of 2018.

Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities presented an update on the Food Insecurity Solutions Initiative. OBO has been working alongside the Procurement and Contracts Department to determine the best procurement method for the initiative. The request for proposals (RFP) method was selected. The goal is to identify an organization whose mission is to provide healthy, affordable food directly in neighborhoods with limited food access. Possible solutions include mobile markets or the use of food stores. The targeted zip codes are 29203 and 29204. Applicants may not sell alcohol or tobacco products. This project is for new initiatives specifically. Existing businesses must provide plans for expansion in order to participate.

Councilor Herbert stated that the food store solution originated with the late Honorable Joe Taylor. For clarification, if you already have a unique food store and you apply for these funds you must plan to do something totally different from what you currently offer.

Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities said yes. For example, if they decide to do a mobile market as an extension of their food store, then they would be eligible. We will evaluate the technical responses and conduct interviews if necessary. The



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highest ranked, responsive, and responsible proposal will be selected. Then we will enter into the negotiation phase. The proposal is ready to go out within the next few days. The advertisement and pre-proposal meeting is slated for this month and the RFP responses will be due in February.

Councilor Brennan asked about the metrics to deem this successful. Who is going to look at the operation two years down the line, get community feedback, and say this is meeting the needs of the food deserts?

Ms. Ashley Page, Food Policy Committee member said it was proposed that the research and evaluation subcommittee come up with the evaluation framework.

Councilor Herbert said I would like consistency of service and to make sure we are hands on with knowledge and support services.

Councilor Duvall asked if the RFP set minimum experience requirements.

Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities said the proposal asks for one year of experience with examples of success and three to five years in food service.

Councilor Brennan asked about prepared food.

Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities said at a minimum, they would have to provide produce. There may be some Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) requirements to consider.

Councilor Brennan said there is brick and mortar in every neighborhood that do not have access to healthy food and prepared foods. We talked about some sort of revenue stream for them to carve out square footage in their establishment for these healthy food offerings. What did the Food Policy Committee come up with?

Ms. Ashley Page, Food Policy Committee member said we are working on a one pager for priority solutions. We have heard a lot about merging entrepreneurship with food access. Maybe this is one time funding or maybe we can secure funding for this on an annual basis. We talked about a tax incentive. How can we get more of that urban agriculture into the city? Last week, we discussed policy recommendations that we hope to bring to you.

Councilor Herbert said we discussed the Greenville Rebate Program and staff is looking into the pros and cons.



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Councilor Brennan asked Chairwoman Herbert to talk about the goals of this new committee. I would like to talk about topics like Town & Gown. It is the ongoing relationships between local governments and higher education institutions and how all of our wonderful universities fit into the fabric of our quality of life here in the city. The ultimate goal is to keep the talent that comes through our education outlets. We want them to stay in Columbia.

Councilor Herbert said I agree. We have discussed doing a housing inventory. We wanted to develop a five year plan that covers properties that are commercial and residential. Maybe we can develop a plan on infill as something to help with our affordable housing crisis.

Councilor Duvall said this will be a good opportunity for all the community development programs. Maybe we can hear some of the required reports rather than the full Council.

Councilor Herbert said I agree with that. I would like for us to use this opportunity to make sure that we're working hand in hand and spending the funds in the direction that Council would like for it to go.

Councilor Brennan asked if Community Development is the contact for neighborhood associations. Growing and engaging neighborhood associations would be a fantastic path forward.

Councilor Herbert suggested scheduling an organizational overview of the Community Development Department at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk