



Executive Session

Wednesday, July 06, 2016

3:00pm – 5:00pm

I. Welcome and Introductions

Present: Patricia Blakely, Amy Laura Cahn, Hannah Chatterjee, Alice Dolbin, Sharline Heller, Erik Federman, Jill Fink, Liz Fitzgerald, Janet Fleetwood, Vania Freire, Jasper Jones, Linda Knapp, Shivon Love, George Matysik, Tommy McCann, Bob Pierson, Katherine Rapin, Ash Richards, Madeline Smith-Gibbs

II. Framing the Conversation on FPAC Inclusion and Diversity

Like many of its peer food policy councils, FPAC has struggled to ensure that its membership reflects the city it represents. When it was first seated in 2011, FPAC's membership was skewed towards a white, professional class demographic and towards the issues of urban agriculture and local food. In 2012, the Governance & Membership Subcommittee led an effort to develop a set of shared values. The values, which have been adopted as part of FPAC's bylaws, include transparency, inclusion, and diversity.

FPAC also instituted an annual survey to review the demographics of its membership. The annual survey's questions address diversity on a number of levels, including respondent's' race, income, and role within the food system.

Data from the 2016 Annual Survey, which were presented at FPAC's June general meeting, showed that 79% of respondents identified as white. The survey was open to all FPAC participants, so these results may not represent the racial makeup of FPAC's membership, but the survey nonetheless gave FPAC a clear mandate to broaden its reach.

Meeting times and locations were brought up at the June general meeting as a potential barrier to participation, but meeting scheduling is only part of the solution. The co-chairs thus wanted to bring the issue before the executive session to get a better sense of how to frame the issue when it is brought back to FPAC members at the August general meeting.

In the following conversation, participants debated whether it was in line with FPAC's values to be a "council of gatekeepers": to be comprised of people who represent diverse communities through their profession or volunteer work, but who may not be from those communities. Some in the room felt that, for example, someone who works directly with homeless people is able to bring that population's particular needs and considerations to the table and, by virtue of working with many different homeless individuals, has a valuable bird's eye view of homelessness as it relates to food access. The people taking this view pointed out that the vulnerable populations that FPAC is

interested in engaging – such as homeless people or immigrants – have many demands on their time and may not be interested in or able to attend meetings. FPAC expects a considerable time commitment from its members and participants, which is much more feasible for people whose job allows them to contribute to the Council while on the clock. The people in this camp felt that being a council of gatekeepers was ok, as long as FPAC continues to hold itself accountable.

Others in the room felt uncomfortable with such indirect representation. Some felt that there is no substitute for firsthand experience, and that gatekeepers inevitably bring their own biases and privilege to the table. Everyone agreed that even among gatekeepers, FPAC is not diverse enough and can do a better job of outreach to gatekeepers who are more embedded in their communities, such as people running food pantries or social workers.

Meeting attendees also brainstormed a list of barriers to participation and a list of potential solutions:

Barriers	Solutions
Time and place of meetings	The subcommittees, which are issue-specific, have more latitude to play with meeting time
Lack of computer access	Use textizen or calls Develop printed materials, such as a brochure or a postcard with information on one side and a survey on the other
Perception that FPAC is a white space and prioritizes a certain type of expertise	Host anti-oppression training to help all participants see race and power dynamics they may not have been aware of Add to our values: people are experts in their own lives
Leaders talk quickly and use inaccessible language at times	Slow down, provide more context, give people multiple options for learning
Lack of childcare	Recruit volunteers or use childcare services
Vulnerable populations aren't interested in or able to participate in meetings	Go into the communities being we want input from rather than expecting them to come to us Host focused-topic discussion, such as on disability and agriculture Host a discussion over a meal
Meeting locations ask for ID, are affiliated with the City, or are otherwise intimidating	Find alternative meeting locations
Incomplete outreach	Send FPAC staff contact information for people to reach out to or brainstorm people to bring to the table at the

	general meeting
	Map out or networks and identify strengths and gaps
	Work with City offices that are serving targeted groups
The agenda is already set by the time we invite people to the table	Involve diverse groups in agenda-setting, rather than asking for their input later
	Host a year of conversations to inform FPAC's agenda

The discussion also reaffirmed the need for FPAC to be accountable for making progress on this issue, to develop a plan and be transparent about its goals and actions.

III. Debrief on Shared Metrics

The Shared Metrics project was introduced at the June general meeting. This project came out of a conversation among food-related nonprofits organizations and funders about developing a way to measure the health of our food system.

At the follow up meeting on June 30th, attendees reviewed the history of the project and identified goals for the steering committee and goals for the meeting. The group's chairs had planned to use a working group structure for the project, in which targeted outreach is done for a series of topic-specific meetings. After discussing models from other shared metrics projects, the group decided that this project is even bigger than they had realized. Since the project would identify problems and opportunities in the food system and inform funding accordingly, the process of developing shared metrics is in effect setting the agenda for food systems work. With the project reframed as agenda setting, many of those present felt that there was a mandate to open up the table and involve a broader community.

Suggestions from the executive session discussion included:

- Choose one bucket (for example, hunger) to start with, then move forward bucket by bucket.
- Work with data experts to understand existing data.
- Map mortality, or partner with someone who is already doing this.
- Partner with CHOP.

IV. Open Session

FPAC member Patricia Blakely announced that food funders, FPAC member Glenn Bergman and alumna Steveanna Wynn, and herself were travelling to Pittsburg to coordinate with food funders there.

Jasper Jones shared research on the link between high-fructose foods and liver disease.

The Food & Health Subcommittee will report on its water access work at the next general meeting.

Bob Pierson announced that he met with Nic Esposito for the first FPAC alumni group meeting. They determined two issues they'd like to work on: developing relations with the mayor's office and mapping out policies that FPAC has recommended to see what has been implemented.

Patricia Blakely urged FPAC to invite the new mayor to general meetings.

The soda tax passed in June. Many FPAC members were deeply involved in testifying, and FPAC hosted over a dozen conversations on the issue.

Hannah Chatterjee announced that Madeline Smith-Gibbs has extended her term of service with AmeriCorps VISTA, and will continue her work with FPAC until July 2017.

Submitted by Madeline Smith-Gibbs