

DATE: October 7, 2021

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Walter Babicz, City Manager

SUBJECT: Food Policy Council Structure Consultation

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. July 12, 2021 Staff Report to Council titled “Prince George Food Policy Council”
2. Notes from the September 23, 2021 Consultation Session

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council **RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION** the report dated October 7, 2021 from the City Manager titled “Food Policy Council Structure Consultation”.

PURPOSE:

At the July 12, 2021 regular meeting of Council, Administration was directed to consult with the Everyone at the Table (EAT) collective and report back regarding feedback received. This direction followed Council’s approval of a food policy council structure that was independently led, and action-oriented. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the feedback received.

BACKGROUND:

On September 23, 2021 a consultation session, attended by representatives of the Local Food PG Society and the EAT collective, was facilitated by City staff. In the Spring of 2021, the Local Food PG Society received a myPG grant in the amount of \$3,100.00 from the City of Prince George to complete a public engagement process with a “view to illuminate the landscape of activities underway and to inspire collective action to further food security activity”. The funded activities were carried out by a committee, whose members comprise the EAT collective. For that reason, both stakeholder groups were invited to participate in the consultation session.

In advance of the session, a backgrounder and five consultation questions were distributed to ensure those planning to attend had an opportunity to consider their responses. The five consultation questions are noted below.

- Please tell us about the Local Food PG Society and the EAT collective. Are these separate entities? Are there key similarities and/or differences in mandate/vision? What are they?
- Is the establishment of a Food Policy Council a priority for the Local Food PG Society and/or the EAT collective? Why or Why Not?

- If a Food Policy Council, led by a grassroots organization were formed, what would you envision the motive to be (i.e. maintaining the viability of local farms, addressing barriers to food access, etc.)?
- If a Food Policy Council, led by a grassroots organization were formed, should a local government representative (City or RDFFG) be appointed to the Council? Why or why not?
- If a Food Policy Council, led by a grassroots organization were formed, would it need the support of local government (City or RDFFG)? If so, what would this support look like?

The feedback received in response to the questions, as evident in the attached meeting notes, highlighted a diversity of opinions. It was also clear that for those interested in advancing the formation and work of a Food Policy Council, additional community consultation, greater regional representation, and the completion of a Food Charter would likely be necessary. To that end, the EAT collective hosted a Food Policy 101 workshop (utilizing Zoom) in late September to educate and gather additional feedback. A City staff representative participated in the workshop. In addition, EAT representatives have been advised that information gathered through public engagement efforts to inventory existing activities and ignite consideration of collective action on a shared agenda, could be presented to Council utilizing delegation and/or correspondence options.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The Select Committee on Poverty Reduction prepared 19 recommendations that were approved by Council during its May 31, 2021 regular meeting. One of the recommendations noted for “later” action (initiated within 1-3 years) was the development of a Food Policy Council (and Food Charter) that supports issues around community food security.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

At the July 12, 2021 regular meeting of Council, Administration was directed to consult with the Everyone at the Table Collective (EAT). On September 23, 2021 a consultation session, attended by representatives of the Local Food PG Society and the EAT collective, was facilitated by City staff. The feedback received in response to the questions highlighted a diversity of opinions. It was also clear that for those interested in advancing the formation and work of a Food Policy Council, additional community consultation, greater regional representation, and the completion of a Food Charter would likely be necessary.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Chris Bone, Senior Manager of Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2021/10/18