

Partnership Council Meeting - Minutes

Date: October 18th, 2011

Time: 10:00am to 12:30 pm

Attendees: Neelu Nagi (Toronto Employment & Social Services), Artan Spahiu (Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services), Vivien Chung (ACSA), Connie Leung (Centre for Information & Services), Helenna Huang (Acces Employment), Gary Gomez (Toronto Police Services), Karen Evans (TDSB-Highbrook Learning Ctr.), Kitt Hunter-Wolff (VPI Inc.), Mahalakshmi S.(Resident), Curtis Morken (CIC), Hanna Cabaj (TCDSB), Christine Hewitt (Daily Bread Food Bank), Helen Yang (YMCA – Newcomer Information Ctr.), Sabrina Wong (Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services), Ning Zang (Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services), Frank Chu (TCDSB – Mary Ward Adult Learning Ctr.), Seemi Khan (The Scarborough Hospital), Sarah Graham (Scarborough Housing Help Ctr.), Forough Bikmohammadi (Catholic Crosscultural), Hanifa Kassam (ACSA), Lee Soda (ACSA), Seodhna Keoun (Toronto Food Strategy), Barbara Emanuel (Toronto Food Strategy), Mani Mahadeva (NWS LIP), Rezwan Karim (NWS LIP), Shaista Ahmaddi (ACSA Student), Michelle Davis (NWS LIP)

Welcoming & Introduction

Project Update

- LIP current membership – 35 organizations and 6 resource organizations
- Review of welcome package is complete and will be finalized by incorporating input from other Scarborough LIP's currently working on similar ideas. The NWS LIP is also looking into the possibilities of developing a welcome guide
- Study on effective outreach methods – second round of study was completed and as a next step a focus group discussion will be held
- Four LIP's working in Scarborough established a coalition in July. Currently all four are working together on engaging the employment sector with the LIP process.
- One of the LIP's conducted a learning session in August on – Organizational Capacity Development
- NWS LIP Community Launch was held in September
 - New website was officially launched
 - 14 agencies participated in providing information booths
 - Over 130 residents and other stakeholders attended the event

The LIP is currently working on:

Employer engagement:

- Two employer interviews were conducted (Information will be compiled and shared with the Employment Working Committee)

Centre Guideline for service providers:

- There are a few organizations that have written documents on service delivery. The LIP's aim is to have a general guideline that can be adopted by all partner organizations to match with their organizational mandates and policies. The KP-EE LIP is also working on the same ideas that the NWS LIP will collaborate to improve our centre guideline.

The LIP staff are also engaged in collecting and updating its various inventories:

- Scams and fraud – mainly targeting newcomers
 - Developing a guideline that's inclusive of all types of scam and fraud
 - It will be made available online and information sessions will be provided on request
- Health services needs for immigrants will be analyzed
- Training/information session on health services
 - Working with other LIPs
- Mid-term evaluation
 - Partners are to expect an e-mail from Michelle Dagnino, the consultant, with a link for the evaluation survey. Partners are requested to provide their honest feedback.

KEY UPCOMING EVENTS

- NWS LIP Employment Round table
 - Discuss with colleges and universities on how to improve the job readiness of newcomers
 - Identify areas where education institutes and service providers can work together to provide better services to newcomers
- Three of the LIP member organizations jointly organizing the Community Health Fair held on October 20th 2011
- Halloween Open House – PICS, 3660-A Midland Ave on October 31st from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm
- Community Launch Feedback
 - Feedback provided by 72 participants
 - 64% learned through the animators
 - Impact of using direct mailer and newspaper is very low
 - What did you like most?
 - Performance 35%, Project Presentation 33%, Information Booth – 32%, Website Information – 25%
 - What did you like least?
 - Sound, lack of food
 - Usefulness of the presentation & activates:
 - 89% said the website presentation was informative
 - 85% said the project update was useful
 - 75% stated that information booths were useful and some mentioned that time allocated for information booths were too short.

Identify Priority Areas for Year 2012-2013 – Group Discussion

- NWS LIP focuses on three major areas:
 - Improving welcoming and information gathering process
 - Enable the community to play a valuable role in settlement
 - Making service delivery and support more effective
- **Group Work**
 - LIP Council members worked in groups to identify priority tasks for the year 2012-2013 based on the need and priority of their individual organization and northwest Scarborough community

Barbara Emanuel, Toronto Food Strategy Manager, *Toronto Public Health*

- Develop a framework for providing the city with food resources
 - Food literacy, making good food choices, strong communities is linked to food and employment
 - Excitement about food is growing. Toronto has a food policy council, food infrastructure (access to whole sale foods), community organization providing food
 - Surplus in food but people are still going hungry – 147% food calories are available but 10% of households live with food insecurity
 - Farm viability is decreasing, little support provided
 - Knowledge about food literacy is decreasing
 - Hurdles to overcome:
 1. Cities should be leaders
 2. Production, distribution, processing is a federal provincial policy role
 3. Cities have little impact but they can help through community gardens and knowledge raising
 - The key jobs City is responsible for: food safety, food inspection and waste collection
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- **6 Areas of Action**
 - Support food friendly neighbourhoods
 - Make food a centerpiece of Toronto's green economy
 - Eliminate hunger in Toronto
 - Connect city and countryside through food
 - Empowering residents with food skills and information
 - Urge federal & provincial governments to establish health-focused food policies
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- **Newcomers**
 - Must adapt to Canadian food system

- Parents under pressure to serve “Canadian food”, concern about what their children are eating outside the home

- **LIP reports**
 - Most newcomers adapt to fast food culture fast
 - Due to time constraints , parents can’t prepare healthy meals
 - Poor knowledge of existing food related supports

- **Upcoming projects to facilitate fresh foods will focus on:**
 - Better space for cooking and eating with others
 - Access to land for food gardens
 - Waving permit fees(payable to City Parks and Recreation) for community gardens and food markets
 - Increase mobile food efforts

- **Key Activates**
 - Food access mapping
 - World crop learning gardens
 - Food skills & employability
 - Mobile produce vending
 - Community food toolkits
 - Enabling policies around food
 - Community food mapping projects led of lots of ideas and solutions
 - Advocate for space- land, food gardens
 - Community food skills and employability pilot- collaboration
 - Food sector jobs require certification, those with a certificate have a better chance of employment
 - Food Handler training improves employability, goal to make program very specific to what is needed to be employed in the food sector
 - Advocating for continual funding of the program – Toronto Food Strategy

- **Areas Toronto Public Health interested in getting local support:**
 - Increase community gardening
 - Increase mobile vending
 - Increase community based health trainers
 - Promote world crop gardens
 - Food handler training and certification

- **Contact Barbara Emanuel at bemanuel@toronto.ca, phone: 416-392-7464**

Q& A

- 1.) Provide more information on Bendale project- world crop learning gardens
 - a. Facilitator works with the students and teachers to grow the gardens. They sell some of the produce, take it home or use it for the school program. Students are getting credits for their work. Involving the community has ensured no theft or damage to the garden.
 - 2.) ACSA partner with city to provide services
 - 3.) What kind of demands (needs) is the community asking?
 - a. More community gardens. Getting a permit is hard. In addition obtaining the food individuals want to know how to prepare healthy meals and what a healthy life style is. Provide skills transferring programs such as cooking classes.
 - 4.) Provide more information on the Food Handler program
 - a. Toronto Public Health offers training for a cost of \$79, \$30 to do the exam. Not a cost shared program, aim is to make the program cost free. Goal is to get community based training, a program is underway for community members to become trainers of food handling. Thus, the program will cost less and more people will have access to it.
- Daily Bread Food Bank
 - Has a community trainer program, and it has been a success with good employability of individuals after the program.

Christine Hewitt, Program Coordinator, *Daily Bread Food Bank*

- Geographic boundaries do exist- those living in the area can access the food bank
 - Food banks are not the answer but they can provide basic needs
- Main goal is to get food to those who need it, only 20-25% are being served
 - But information referral and information gathering are also tasks they participate in.
- Assessment of clients occur but only to determine what are the needs of the client, which services to link them too
- Goal is to work with community agencies and try to meet the ethnic food needs of the community, providing the skills they need
- Barrier:
 - Ethnic food not provided in the food bank
 - Not knowing how to use the food that is given to them (from the food bank)
 - Transportation
 - Stigma
- Mobile unite only one, few meal programs
- Support with member of the Daily food bank:
 - Area meetings, talk about the needs of the community
 - Partnership with organizations, connecting better
- Creating Health project

- Ensuring that Drop in programs have healthy food available
- Provide training programs, no cost to daily food bank members (ex. ACSA)

Non-members

- Would like to connect with organization to learn from each other

Membership

- There is a fee, but many benefits, training program, access to services

Changes

- Number of people accessing services has increased overall
- High rate of newcomers coming (how to address their needs- need partners to help)
- Political environment- policy changes, worked on policy reports:
 - Community based research- finding their needs > social assistance panel was present to hear the needs
 - Policy change
 - Advocacy
- Sharing agency services

Q & A

- 1.) Grocery stores throw out a large amount of food because they are past the expiry date.
 - a.) Yes, a large amount of food is being wasted, even though the food is still edible. It is hard to access the food but efforts are being made.
- 2.) How do you want to connect with the other organizations?
 - Hear about what food programs are happening in the organization
 - Connect with the food programs, find the needs
 - Sharing of services and information

Wrap Up

Next Partnership Council meeting is scheduled for December 6th 2011, 10am-12pm (location-TBA)