

# Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Community Advisory Board

## MINUTES TO BE APPROVED

### Regular Meeting

October 11, 2021 ■ 6:30pm-8:30pm

**Zoom Teleconference**

## AGENDA

### 1. Welcome and Call to Order

Members Present: Aikens, Breines, Obad, Hammock, Watkins.

### 2. Open Forum

### 3. Adoption of Prior Meeting Minutes: September 13, 2021

Due to a concern about whether the minutes were posted in the packet, the approval was postponed to next month.

### 4. Update from the City Administrator's Office on the Measure HH Revenue Status

Joe DeVries reviewed the revenue update included in the packet. The collection thus far this fiscal year of \$1.376 million puts the fund on track to hit its projection of \$8.1 million for the fiscal year.

### 5. Presentation of the SABA Grocers Initiative

Lena Ghanem with Saba Grocers gave an extensive PowerPoint Presentation about the gift card program they developed during the pandemic, first with Cares Act dollars and then supplemented with SSB funding. Their focus is on 120 small corner stores in Oakland,

#### Public Comment:

The SSB Advisory Board welcomes you to its meetings and your interest is appreciated.

· If you wish to speak before the Board, please fill out a speaker card and hand it to the staff supporting the Board.

· If you wish to speak on a matter not on the agenda, please sign up for Open Forum and wait for your name to be called.

· If you wish to speak on a matter on the agenda, please approach the Committee when called, give your name, and your comments.

Please be brief and limit your comments to the specific subject under discussion. Only matters within the SSB Board's jurisdiction may be addressed. Time limitations shall be at the discretion of the Chair.

*In compliance with Oakland's policy for people with chemical allergies, please refrain from wearing strongly scented products to meetings. In compliance with the American Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in the meetings for the Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Community Advisory Board, please contact the Human Services Department at 510-238-3088. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City of Oakland to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility. If you have questions regarding this agenda or related materials, please contact our office at the number above.*

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helping them transition to offering more produce and healthy foods. They have established a collective purchasing agreement for 12 stores that had no produce before. They have distributed 38,000 pounds of produce since the program began.

The banking tool is a Visa card they have distributed to residents most in need in Oakland. This was a COVID response and totaled \$500,000. They distributed \$250K to 1000 households and partnered with several organizations to distribute the cards. She went on to explain the different buckets of funds going toward these types of programs to clear up any confusion (that arose last month).

Next she noted that the most recent \$500K from the City that has been set aside would equate to \$0400K going directly to families with gift cards with \$100K going to the program administration, technology fees, and card fees the organization has to pay. She is hoping these cards can be distributed by the holidays.

Member Aikens asked about ethnicity of ownership of the stores and how are all stores being asked to participate. Lina explained there are only three Black store owners in Oakland and two are part of the program, the third only opens his store occasionally and did not want to participate. She went on to explain there are only 67 other corner stores and it has been a challenge for Saba to reach those owners to participate. Many are part of the Asian community and to get involved in the program requires providing personal data and there has been reluctance to participate since they don't have a prior relationship.

Member Breines asked about resident participation and how they are chosen. Lina explained the focus was on those most impacted by COVID, especially families with young children, unsheltered persons, people that have no access to other government programs like SNAP or EBT.

Member Watkins had a question about the overhead and fees and about how to ensure the cards are used properly. She noted that the technology doesn't allow them to restrict the card purchases to only produce but Saba sends decoys into stores to ensure they are not allowing people to use them for alcohol, or tobacco. As for the admin costs, those are based on the cost of the fees, distribution, and administration and is the average percent breakdown of what the program has cost thus far.

Member Obad asked about whether the cards could be used at restaurants, noting that Oakland has many minority-owned small restaurants across Oakland. He also asked about the ethnicity of those receiving the cards stating that at his store, he sees many Arabic-Americans using the cards but no other backgrounds at his store. Lina emphasized that almost all cards were distributed through partner organizations such as East Oakland Collective, Trybe, Homies Empowerment Network, Parks and Rec. Department, and head

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Start. and she feels strongly the diversity of those who received them reflected those in most need in Oakland.

Member Obad asked about lists of recipients and it was clarified that this would be a privacy violation of those persons. However, Chair Watkins noted that there may be good demographic data in the packet that apparently, some did not receive this month (It will be resent to the group). Member Aikens wanted to emphasize the importance of communities of color benefiting from all the programs funded by the Sugar Sweetened beverage tax. He really wants to have the data and to promote it to the community to help those communities understand the connection.

The Board continued the discussion around who is receiving the benefit of the programming and wants to see more data on this as part of the ongoing evaluation process. Additionally, a desire to see increased outreach to connect these programs to the community was articulated.

Lina noted that when the program was funded, it had 1,000 cards to give out and within one week they had a list of 5,000 names of people in need who wanted them.

There was a public speaker on the item: Molly DeVinney spoke about reaching out to the many organizations that were sent out to get demographic data. She recalls last fall how many people said the card program was one of the most humane things the City did to help people in great need. She went on to thank the board for these questions and asked that they be asked of Parks and Rec for their SSB funded programs as well.

## 6. Board Updates

- **Communications Committee**

Member Breines reported out that he had met with the City's Communications Director and Staff from Economic Workforce Development about the marketing material developed by Collectivo and prepared for launch. He noted the billboards that already went up and the educational editorial that printed in the East Bay Times.

Now the focus is on posters, postcards that are in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese which will be produced and distributed to partners including Saba Grocers, at City facilities, such as Libraries, Recreation centers, Senior Centers, and Head Star Facilities, etc. To raise awareness around the campaign. There will also be content expansion on the webpage and in the next RFP round of funding a requirement will be built in to have those grantees assist in posting and distributing the material. Member Obad volunteered to help distribute the material in East Oakland.

- **Ad Hoc RFP Committee**

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Chair Watkins reported out that the committee has met a few times and framed the priorities in the new RFP with an emphasis on food distribution. Joe DeVries chimed in that there were four categories in the last RFP but a couple of those were focused on policy change and education. The shift is away from policy and education to invest more in direct service provision. It will be a two-year RFP with \$3 million to allocate over that two-year period.

- **Strategic partnerships**

Member Aikens noted the group has not met and recommended a meeting with the Chair to determine who those partners should be now that the focus is beyond the City Council budget process. Chair Watkins asked about the collaboration with City Departments and Member Aikens noted the partnerships need to extend to all the funded groups, not just City departments. Member Obad supported this sentiment.

Joe DeVries noted that since the Board has been without a staff member for over a year, some of those smaller connections to service providers (for example) or with other departments that a staff member would coordinate has not been possible to achieve.

A spirited discussion took place about the funding allocations and several concerns were raised about the resources available for these programs and for well-supported OPRYD programs.

## **7. Administrative Update**

Joe DeVries announced that the recruitment for the vacant position is open and he hopes to have a staff member on board by the end of the year.

## **8. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting**

RFP Update  
Revenue Updates  
Collectivo Update  
OPRYD Update (requested)

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.