

Food Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Committee Mandate

As a volunteer advisory committee to the Board of Health, the Food Advisory Committee will support and advise on the implementation of Hamilton’s Food Strategy, and the development of inclusive and comprehensive food related policies and programs at the individual, household, and community/population level based on internationally recognized principles of healthy public policy and best practices/available evidence.

More generally, the Food Advisory Committee will:

- Identify and inform, where appropriate, innovative community food security policies and programs that align with the vision and goals of the Hamilton Food Strategy, Hamilton Food Charter, and other City strategies;
- Identify and advise on emerging issues affecting Hamilton’s food system;
- Facilitate connections and share information and resources between members, the Board of Health, City staff, and as appropriate, further disseminate these lessons and resources among community organizations, businesses, citizens, and other groups that have an impact on community food security;
- Support research, monitoring, and evaluation efforts, and identify gaps and opportunities that may inform community food security policies and program modifications; and
- Facilitate the cross-promotion of community food security within existing programs, events, policies, services, and other actions.

Membership

The Food Advisory Committee will be comprised of 13 to 18 voting members, striving for a balance of representation from all the components within the food system as follows:

- Food Production: 2-3 members (e.g., representation from rural and urban agriculture, including large and small scale farmers, gardeners, soil specialists, horticulturalists);
- Processing & Distribution: 2-3 members (representation from large and small scale food production and distribution, including food entrepreneurs, managers/operators of incubators, food banks, food hubs, food box delivery programs, warehousing, storage, etc.);
- Buying & Selling: 2-3 members (e.g., representation from large and small scale food retail, including grocers, restaurateurs, Farmers Markets managers, social enterprise food entrepreneurs, specialty food stores owners, street vendors, etc.);
- Consumption: 2-3 members (e.g., representation from community and neighbourhood based food programs and cultural groups, including food literacy educators, consumers, chefs, food enthusiasts, etc.);
- Food Waste Management: 2-3 members (representation from food waste management, including researchers/consultants, managers, operators of

environmental groups, gleaning programs, experts/experienced individuals in composting/resource management, etc.);

- 3 members at large (citizens at large, local food advocates, etc.); and
- 2 City Councilors (non-voting, one representing urban and one representing rural wards).

Committee members will be selected through the City of Hamilton’s standardized application process for Advisory Committees. New members will be formally appointed by the Board of Health at the beginning of each term of Council, or as needed. Individuals who do not live in Hamilton but work in the City of Hamilton in a food-related business or organization would be eligible for membership on the Food Advisory Committee based on their ability to provide valuable expertise to advise on food policies and programs in the City.

Food Advisory Committee members are appointed based on their individual qualifications in the following areas:

- Their professional or community work reflects the values and principles within the Hamilton Food Strategy, Hamilton Food Charter, Food Advisory Committee, and Public Health Services;
- They bring skills and experience (including lived experience) in at least one aspect of community food security that allows them to contribute to progressive and innovative policy and program development within the Committee;
- They have skills, knowledge, experience, or a genuine interest in at least one area of Hamilton’s food system;
- They represent at least one element of the rich diversity of the Hamilton population’s food security skills, talents, and needs;
- They can help the Food Advisory Committee facilitate dialogue and partnerships with at least one distinct population grouping in Hamilton’s urban, suburban, and rural communities;
- They respect the complexity and sensitivity of the Food Advisory Committee’s work with diverse partners, and appreciate the need for personal and group skills, problem-solving, and “getting to yes;” and
- They are able to attend monthly meetings of the Food Advisory Committee on a regular basis and can participate in occasional working group meetings.

Roles & Responsibilities

Members of the Food Advisory Committee shall endorse the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values of the City of Hamilton Food Charter and make themselves familiar with the committee’s Terms of Reference and mandate. General expectations of members include the following:

- Submit an annual progress report of the Committee’s activities by November of each calendar year to the Board of Health and consider various options to keep Council up to date on the committee’s activities;
- Demonstrate a respect for governance and protocol;

- Active participation and a commitment to attend meetings on a regular basis;
- Be accountable to other members and to citizens;
- Work as a team and follow through with commitments;
- Communicate appropriately and be clear about which interest are represented when speaking;
- Communicate all information occurring at the Food Advisory Committee to contacts within their sector, as appropriate; and
- Bring issues/concerns and represent their sector's interests at the Committee.

Chair/ Co-Chair

Members will, at the beginning of each term, elect from its membership two Co-Chairs, one of which shall be a Citizen member and one a Councillor Liaison member.

In addition to the general roles and responsibilities, Co-Chairs are expected to:

- Build the meeting agendas following the City of Hamilton template;
- Invite guests, in consultation with members and Staff Liaison;
- Preside at meetings;
- Facilitate dialogue among members between meetings;
- Liaise with City Staff Liaison and keep them informed of all Committee issues and actions; and
- Act as spokespeople on behalf of the Food Advisory Committee, as per Standard Operating Procedure #08-001.

Secretary

Members will, at the beginning of each term, elect from its membership a Secretary, which shall be a Citizen member.

In addition to the general roles and responsibilities, the Secretary is expected to:

- Provide relevant information, ideas, and opinions as a participant in the meeting;
- Record without note or comment all resolutions, decisions, and other proceedings at the meeting (as per the Municipal Act, 2001);
- Keep an accurate set of minutes of each meeting;
- Keep an up-to-date membership/contact list;
- Distribute minutes to members and notifying them of upcoming meetings;
- Keep a list of all advisory committees and members;
- Help the Chair with preparing the agenda, advise on meeting procedure, and reference materials and information retrieved from the records; and
- Make meeting and physical set-up arrangements (Note: room bookings with City Facilities will be coordinated through the Advisory Committee's Staff Liaison).

City Staff Liaisons

City of Hamilton staff will be assigned to this committee as non-voting members to provide technical and content expertise and support, including:

- Public Health Services: 1 - 2 with expertise in nutrition, food systems, policy, and health protection;
- Emergency and Community Services: 1 - 2 with expertise in social policy and community programs;
- Planning and Economic Development: 1 – 2 with expertise in land use planning, licensing, and economic development related to agriculture and food; and
- Public Works Department: 1 – 2 with expertise in urban agriculture and food waste management.

Staff Liaison Role

The role of the Staff Liaison is to function as system experts. The City of Hamilton Public Health Services will appoint personnel with knowledge of nutrition policy, community food systems, and food security to provide support and coordination to the Food Advisory Committee.

The duties of the staff liaison include

- Coordinate, develop, and deliver the Orientation Session for the Advisory Committee;
- Liaise with Food Advisory Committee members, providing technical advice from Public Health Services for the preparation of reports, correspondence, etc.;
- Assist with the preparation of reports to the Board of Health, including an annual progress report of the Committee's activities by November of each calendar year;
- Assist with agenda preparation, review minutes, and ensure approved minutes are submitted to the Board of Health; and
- Provide background information, advice, and context for implementation of priorities.

City of Hamilton may assign staff to work on specific projects for a specific period of time.

Councillor Liaisons

Two (2) members of City Council will be appointed as representatives to the Food Advisory Committee with a requirement for each Councillor to attend a minimum of (but not limited to) one (1) meeting per year. Council members who are appointed as liaisons would not count toward the committee's quorum and do not have voting privileges.

Staff Clerk/ Other Staff Support(s)

The duties of the staff clerk include providing procedural process advice to the Staff Liaison and Co-Chairs as needed.

Term of Membership

Food Advisory Committee members are appointed for four (4) year terms with the possibility of renewal. Effort will be made to stagger appointments to ensure continuity.

- Members who miss three (3) consecutive meetings without Committee approval shall be considered as resigning from the committee;
- Any member who is absent for more than fifty percent (50%) of the meetings during their term shall not be eligible for reappointment; and
- Upon appointment to the Food Advisory Committee, members are required to sign an Acknowledgement (Declaration) Form and return it to the Office of the City Clerk prior to attending the first meeting of this committee.

Meeting Frequency

Meetings will occur monthly, with the exception of the months of July, August, and December (minimum of five and maximum of nine times per year). At the call of the Co-Chairs, additional meetings can occur on an 'as-needed' basis.

Should the Food Advisory Committee not meet a minimum of three times during a Council term, the Committee will be automatically disbanded at the end of the Council Term.

Decision Making

Food Advisory Committee members value and will make every effort to reach consensus in decision making, including a full discussion of the issue, review of all relevant information, discussion of possible solutions or actions, and the formulation of a statement of general agreement/consensus, or develop a motion and vote on it. The Committee requires consensus to make formal decisions and must follow the procedural processes outlined in the Advisory Committee Procedural Handbook, May 2015.

City of Hamilton staff are non-voting members.

Quorum

Quorum consists of half the voting members plus one. In order to ensure a broad range of perspectives are included in discussions and decision making, this minimum threshold must include a representative from each of the food system components, plus a minimum of one member at large.

Code of Conduct/Conflicts of Interest

All members shall adhere to all City of Hamilton policies, including those respecting code of conduct and conflict of interest. At a minimum, it is expected that members are to

- Maintain an atmosphere of respectful discussion and professionalism;
- Respect the confidentiality of all matters before the Food Advisory Committee;

- Actively contribute their expertise, resources, and individual experiences to further the mandate of the Committee; and
- Declare a conflict of interest when it arises so it may be recorded in the minutes.

Reports to

- Board of Health

Review of Terms of Reference

- To be reviewed on an annual basis, at a minimum.

Approved on:

- May 2016