# ABFPC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## POLICIES

All policies and procedures will be kept on file with notations on their status in Google Drive. Hard copies will also be maintained in "the blue book," which the Coordinator will bring to regularly scheduled GC meetings. All policies must be marked with date of consent.

### Communications and Outreach Policy

The ABFPC Coordinator will establish and review annually for GC consent a Communications and Media Strategy designed to accomplish the following, stored with other policies and procedures:

- Contribute to raising the ABFPC profile among local and regional agencies, officials and citizens to establish the Council's relevance as a policy source for Asheville/Buncombe's Food System.
- Establish the ABFPC as a strong and consistent voice on Food Systems Issues in the media.
- Establish clear and concise guidelines on the collection and dissemination of ABFPC related news, opinions and internal communication.
- Attempt to foresee a variety of possible circumstances and scenarios as related to information collection and dissemination for the purposes of creating a transparent and effective media strategy.
- Timeline for communications plan by end of March (yearly)
- Need a designated spokesperson for communications

### Confidentiality Policy

In an effort to demonstrate our value of transparency, the monthly GC meetings are open to the public. To ensure accuracy, minutes of these GC meetings are distributed for edits and approval before publishing on the ABFPC website.

Due to the sensitive nature of discussions, the GC may choose at times to have closed sessions. Discussions during such sessions are confidential and may not be communicated to others outside the GC either verbally or in written form. The GC will

decide as a group what information from the closed session will be shared with Clusters or the public.

To facilitate the free flow of creative exchange online, internal discussions undertaken by email, Google Docs, etc. are confidential unless otherwise agreed upon.

## Conflict of Interest Policy

Whenever an Active Cluster member has personal interest or the potential for financial gain in any matter coming before the group, the affected person shall a) fully disclose the nature of the interest and b) withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and consenting on the matter. Any transaction or decision involving a potential conflict of interest shall be approved only when at least 70% of remaining (disinterested) GC members determines that it is in the best interest of the Cluster, the GC, and/or the ABFPC to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such decisions are made shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.

# PROCEDURES

## Conflict Resolution Procedure

A priority for GC meetings is progressing in a safe way that honors our commitment to the scheduled agenda. Tensions will naturally arise and will be supported by a process in which all parties are respected, and their input is valued. This might include hiring a professional facilitator trained in conflict resolution, or training a member of the group that is empowered to lead the process in a way that respects the variety of cultures involved in group meetings. A GC member involved in a personal conflict with another member or the group as a whole is encouraged  to explore that outside the GC meeting. It is recognized that the goal of resolving conflict is to restore relationships within the GC.

## Emergency Meeting Procedure

To call or cancel a GC meeting on an emergency basis, the GC will utilize a calling relay ("phone tree"). All GC members are required to keep a copy of the relay list and to participate in its initiation to the best of their abilities. Emergencies requiring meeting cancellation are defined as issues such as unavailable meeting space, weather events, circumstances affecting a majority of member ability to attend, etc. Emergencies requiring a call to meet at other than regularly scheduled times include a critical need to

make a decision for presentation outside the GC, time sensitive issues such as a public interface that has created or could create a misunderstanding in the community, etc.

Emergency meeting protocols at the Cluster level will be decided upon by each Cluster.

## Food Master Plan Update Procedure

Part I – Updating the Food Master Plan Annually

1. The Food Master Plan will be updated once per year during January.
2. Any changes desired before/after this annual formal review shall be tracked on an online document in Google Docs.  All Reps will have editing privileges to this document.  All active members of Clusters will be able to view it.
3. This new online document will be made available to everyone no later than July 31st of each year.
4. An initial draft document will be created by an assigned individual or Ad Hoc Focus Group and presented to the General Council for feedback at the June GC meeting, then for approval at the July  meeting of each year.
5. Each year, during the two General Council meetings preceding the formal review of the Master Plan (October/November/possibly December), the Facilitator will review the document with GC to ask for any additions/revisions and then add each item to the agenda for the formal review session at the  January review session.
6. Each year, after the formal review session in January, the Facilitator will ensure that someone volunteers to update the Food Master Plan with any changes and that the final version is distributed to all Reps electronically in time for the February GC meeting for review and consent.

Part II – Process for Supporting and Monitoring Clusters' Action Plans

1. Each Cluster will create their Action Plans for moving the Food Master Plan forward and present them to the General Council annually.
2. Cluster Action Planning will occur at the end of the year and will inform the Food Master Plan updating process described above.  As such, Clusters will present Draft Action Plans to General Council during Q4 and no later than the last GC meeting of the year.  Suggested changes to the Food Master Plan will be captured in the document described above.
3. Clusters will receive the final Food Master Plan electronically at the end of February from their Reps.  Each Cluster will be expected to revisit their Action Plan and update it as needed to reflect the final Food Master Plan.  Final Cluster Action Plans will be posted on Google Docs in time for the March GC meeting for final approval by the GC.

4. Clusters will express specific needs for support and all Clusters will seek areas and opportunities for collaboration at the March GC meeting or at a separate internal meeting in March.
5. Clusters will give updates on their progress on their Action Plans at least once per quarter at GC meetings (April – October) and/or at other internal meetings where all Clusters can hear what they have accomplished and what needs for support or collaboration they may have.
6. If a Cluster does not submit an Action Plan for approval by the March GC meeting, they will be considered defunct.  If the Cluster decides to re-form later, they will need to go through the GC approval process for a new Cluster, including renewed commitments from elected Reps.

## Proposals Procedure

Changes made to ABPFC policies and procedures occur by consent of the GC. Proposals may originate with either a Cluster or the GC. Clusters submitting proposals to the GC will use the ***Cluster Proposal to the ABFPC General Council*** form. Cluster Representatives serving on the GC will use the ***Proposal from Cluster Representatives on the ABFPC General Council*** form. Proposal forms are also used to submit ideas for community engagement, advocacy, city policy and so forth.

## Letters of Support Procedure

To ensure that community initiatives seeking support from the ABFPC support the Food Master Plan, the attached ***Letter of Support (LOS)*** form will be posted on the FPC website asking businesses or organizations that request a letter from ABFPC to fill it out and attach it in an email with their draft LOS for the Council to consider.  Two assigned people will handle these requests for the ABFPC.  If the LOS request meets the criteria of:
● being a grant,
● not asking us for much more than a LOS,
● being aligned w/ our mission
then those two assigned people will handle it & have authority to sign it.  If it does not meet the above criteria, it will be brought before General Council.  If it is more of a policy request, it will get funneled to the Policy Mobilization Cluster.

## Circle Forward Consent-based Procedures

### Consent-based Decision Making Process
Steps to reaching consent:

1. Present the idea/concern/proposal
2. Clarifying round
3. Reaction Round
4. Consent Round

The consent principle means that a decision has been made when none of the group members present have any reasoned and paramount objection to it, when there is no stated risk to the integrity of  the ABFPC or Food Master Plan.

If a paramount objection is raised against a proposed decision, the objection must be clarified by reasons. A simple "no" is not sufficient.

Significant changes to a decision that affects members outside the group in discussion will be reviewed for consent by those members as well.

**Consent-Based Election of Leadership Roles**
This selection process is another form of decision-making by consent.  Some of the steps and their order may seem surprising, but experience has shown this process does lead to finding a good fit for the role.

DO NOT:
- Elect for an unlimited term
- Ask for a volunteer
- Inquire who is interested or who is not
- Have dialog during a round
- Seek the perfect candidate: recall that each candidate has strengths and weaknesses

STEPS:

1. Review Role & Term

- Describe responsibilities, qualifications, and how long the person will serve (term), as they have been consented to.

2. Submit Nominations

- Write on a piece of paper, "I, ___*[your name]*___ nominate ___*[name of candidate]*___" and submit to facilitator.
- You can nominate yourself or another person (in the room or not); or, write, "abstain" if you do not wish to nominate anyone.

3. Round 1: Share reasons

- Facilitator collects the slips of paper and reads the first one on the stack. For example, "Susie nominates George."

- The facilitator then asks the nominator (in this case, Susie) to identify <u>the reasons</u> that they believe the person they have nominated is the best person to fill the role.  No crosstalk or dialogue.

*Before the next round begins, the facilitator can ask the persons nominated if there are any objections to serving in the role or relevant information they have to share.*

4. Round 2: Invite Changes

- Each person has the opportunity to change their initial nomination based on the reasoning they have heard.  If they change the nomination, they give the reasons.
- Very occasionally, an open discussion might be helpful, too.

5. Consent Round

- Facilitator proposes the candidate with the strongest arguments and asks for the candidate's consent last. If there are objections outside the range of tolerance, have each objector state their reasons without discussion until the round is completed.
- If necessary, amend the proposal and repeat the consent round.