City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Memorandum

Office of Councilmember Steven Neal
Councilmember, 9th District

Date: April 19, 2011

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Steven Neal, Ninth District
              Councilmember Robert Garcia, First District
              Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal, Second District
              Councilmember Dee Andrews, Sixth District

Subject: Healthy Food and Vending Policy

Recommendation:

Respectfully request the City Manager to work with the City Attorney to create a Long Beach healthy food policy that promotes good nutrition and healthy environments within City facilities and at city sponsored meetings/events (special events excluded). This policy should include standards that hold to the following:

- 100% of snacks and beverages sold in vending machines on City property where City programs operate shall meet specified nutrition standards.

- 100% of beverages and snack foods served at meetings/events led or coordinated by City staff or programs shall meet specified nutrition standards.

- Specified nutrition standards should be based on nationally recognized and accepted guidelines, similar to those used for foods and beverages sold in California schools (SB12 and SB 965).

- The standards should include limits on sugar, fat, sodium and calories for snack foods, as well as the elimination of sugar-sweetened beverages, and limits on artificially sweetened beverages.

Background:

In Long Beach, almost one-third of the adult population and nearly a quarter of children are obese. Obesity is a major risk factor for most chronic diseases, and is economically costly. In Los Angeles County, the cost associated with overweight and obesity is almost $6 billion dollars per year.

The high rate of obesity in our community is the result of numerous and complex factors. While individual factors such as knowledge of health risks and behavior are important in the prevention of obesity, recent studies have linked the epidemic to environmental conditions including, but not limited to, the easy availability of high calorie, low-nutrient foods and limited access to healthier foods.

Current best practices for population-based obesity prevention are focused on improving the food environment, and making the healthy choice the easy choice. As a sector that has wide-reaching impact and is a large employer, government is a key area of focus for obesity prevention interventions. The Institute of Medicine, in its report entitled Local Government Action to Prevent Childhood Obesity (2009), and the Center's for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that publicly-run entities such as parks and local government worksites implement policies and practices to promote healthy food and beverages and reduce or eliminate the availability of calorie-dense, nutrient poor foods. Michelle Obama's Let's Move Campaign encourages local governments to adopt policies that aim to reduce childhood obesity. Specifically, it recommends healthier vending machine policies and passing food policies that require food and beverages purchased with government funds to meet certain nutrition standards.

In addition to increasing access to healthy food options among city residents and employees, local government can take a leadership role and set an example for other organizations to follow in the promotion of good health. In addition, the City can support the policies of other agencies such as the school district and the YMCA that already implement healthy food standards, creating a continuum of health across sectors. As a City that takes a strong stand on obesity prevention and health promotion (through Bike-friendly campaigns, participation in the Let's Move Campaign, etc.), the adoption of a food policy is consistent with the health focus of the City of Long Beach.

Several cities and counties throughout the country have adopted healthy food policies. Some examples include: Los Angeles County, Monterey County, Baldwin Park, Chula Vista and South El Monte all have adopted 100% healthy vending at county/city sites. New York City has adopted healthy standards for all foods and beverages served by city agencies and city funded programs.

In Long Beach, the Long Beach Alliance for Food and Fitness and the Long Beach YMCA Pioneering Healthier Communities Leadership Team, along with the Health Department, support the goal of developing a healthy food and beverage policy for the City. These groups see a City level healthy food and beverage policy as an important step in addressing obesity and creating a healthy food environment. Funding to support the development of these policies and their implementation was awarded to the City via the LA County Department of Public Health as part of a Countywide American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funded initiative.

Implementation of a healthy food policy would align with the City's current efforts as part of the "Let's Move Campaign", which was approved by the City Council in October 2010. It would also serve as an important strategy in obesity prevention, improving staff and community wellness and by demonstrating the City's strong position and leadership towards promoting good health.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact.

City of Long Beach Memorandum
Working Together to Serve

REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

Date: April 19, 2011

To: Larry Herrera, City Clerk

From: Councilmember Steven Neal, Ninth District

Subject: Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of *April 19, 2011*

Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.03.070 [B], the City Councilmembers signing below request that the attached agenda item (due in the City Clerk Department by Friday, 12:00 Noon) be placed on the City Council agenda under New Business via the supplemental agenda.

The agenda title/recommendation for this item reads as follows:

Healthy Food and Vending Policy

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
9	Steven Neal	SN
1	Robert Garcia	
2	Susa Lowenthal	
6	D. Andrews	Tonya Meritt

Attachment: Transmittal page dated April 19, 2011