



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA

Food Services Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes

Date: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 – 2:00pm
Location: DV3129
Attendees: UTM Andrea D., Vicky J., Lee B., Megan E., Mark O., Sabrina C., Deborah B.,
Angela D.
UTMSU Maëlis B., Reagan R.
Residence Jaiditya D.
UTMAGS Thanh P.
Regrets Andrea C., Monika H., Jennifer S.

1. **BUSINESS ARISING**

A. **Updates on Food Service Initiatives**

- Oscar
 - Andrea D. confirmed that the Oscar unit in the Davis Building will be up and running as soon as the current Firewall issues are resolved with IT
 - Andrea D. also added that the 2 locations where the other Oscar units will be set up are Deerfield Hall and the Student Centre
 - <https://intuitiveai.ca/oscar-sort>
- Freight Farm
 - Andrea D. confirmed that the first harvest from the Freight Farm netted 5kg of lettuce and herbs and that the Farm is ready to ramp up its production after its soft launch
 - Andrea D. also added that, once the Freight Farm moves to its permanent location, solar panels will be added to remove some of its reliance on electrical power
 - Andrea D. reminded the Committee that the Freight Farm is part of sustainability tours on campus
- PizzaForno
 - Andrea D. reiterated that the H&AS plans to add a PizzaForno kiosk outside of the townhouse residences next year and will include a unit inside the new residence when it is built in 2026
 - Vicky J. added that PizzaForno holds on average 32 pizzas and cooks a full pizza in 2 minutes
 - <https://pizzaforno.com/licensing>
- Autonomous Store

- Andrea D. confirmed that an Autonomous Store instead of the Robotic Delivery service is planned for the F2 building in 2026
- Andrea D. committed to incorporating in the new Commerce Management System contract the requirement for the integration of the meal plan with the Autonomous Store technology
- <https://vimeo.com/447807137>
- Lee B. asked if the Autonomous Store will be profitable
 - Andrea D. responded that the investment in the Autonomous Store will be expensive but will provide 24/7 service to the Community in a labour efficient way, which adds value in other ways than profitability
- Commerce Management RFP
 - Andrea D. reminded the Committee that the current contract for the Commerce Management System expires in 2024
 - Andrea D. stated that the main objectives for the new contract would be better programming for tax-exempt products, improved network/data security protocols particularly with integrations, and future services and integrations including mobile credentials, apps, self-service cash stations for meal plan holders, off-campus partnerships with food and grocery delivery, autonomous store meal plan integration
 - The UTMSU asked about examples of food and grocery delivery services
 - Andrea D. mentioned that Phood – a service that allows the use of meal plan funds to pay for food delivery through Door Dash – was approached in the past, but they are immature in their data and network security protocols and are US-based, which causes heightened security risks around storing Canadian data out-of-country

B. Hospitality Budget

- Budget Considerations
 - Andrea D. outlined the main considerations impacting this year’s forecast and next year’s budget
 - A 3% food price increase was approved last year, but that was before Omicron and the war in Ukraine put significant upward pressures on food prices (up to 12% food inflation this year)
 - Up to 10% food inflation could be felt next year
 - Hospitality has significant planned capital investments in its Commerce Management System, in the renovation of Spigel Kitchen, and in brand refreshes
 - Andrea D. showed the forecast for this year to be just above break-even (as compared to the budgeted shortfall) and the budget for next year to provide a small surplus
- Meal Plan Rates
 - Andrea D. reminded the Committee that UTM Meal Plans were declining balance, which meant that these meal plans represented purchasing power

- Because meal plan rates had to follow the CRA formula (average meal price x 10 meals per week x # of weeks per year) in order to be tax-exempt, meal plan rate increases had to be tied to food price increases in order to maintain purchasing power from year to year
 - UTM consistently ranked amongst the lowest in food prices in CCUFSA's annual food price survey and had the lowest minimum meal plan rates among declining balance universities in Ontario each year
- Andrea D. also reviewed some of the ways H&AS was working to mitigate increases in food prices and to fight food insecurity
 - working with contractors
 - i. capping non-branded price increases (contractual)
 - ii. non-branded price increases once prior to beginning of school year
 - iii. branded pricing = street pricing
 - iv. multiple price points – value pricing (contractual)
 - v. half-portions (e.g. salads, pastas)
 - vi. monitoring pricing throughout the year – recommending changes or elimination of products
 - vii. vending – request price reductions by taking reduced commission
 - freight farm and honey
 - i. providing these products at cost to the food service contractor
 - relationships with Second Harvest
 - i. supporting campus food bank and Food Bank of Mississauga
- The UTMSU asked what plans the department had to address food security on campus
 - Andrea D. asked the UTMSU to contact H&AS to have more pointed discussions about this
- Andrea D. proposed an average increase to Basic Dollars of 6.8%, which fell in line with what he believe would be a 6.7% increase in food prices next year
 - Andrea D. clarified that, because there was no proposed increase to Flex Dollars, the average proposed meal plan rate increase is 6.1%
 - Mark O. stated that the proposed increases seem reasonable as presented
 - Andrea D. confirmed that the Resident Student Dining Committee also felt that the proposed increases were reasonable
- Lee B. asked if recent interest rate increases will affect meal plan rates
 - Andrea D. responded that they would not
- The UTMSU asked if a Minimum Commitment was required on the meal plans
 - Andrea D. responded that the Minimum Commitment represents the minimum level of spending required to support the provision of the hours of operation for food services
- Lee B. asked for examples of items that can be purchased with Flex by not Basic

- Convenience items, grocery items, off-campus partners, food trucks, UTMSU outlets
- Andrea D. reviewed meal plan fees and restrictions that UTM has in place compared to the other declining balance schools in Ontario
 - UTM has a CIPE of \$50 and charges a \$100 Administration Fee to process meal plan refunds for students moving out of Residence prior to the end of the school year
 - Other schools have much higher CIPE and/or have non-refundable Overhead portions of their meal plans amounts and/or charge to carry over residual funds from year to year
- Deborah B. asked the students for their opinion on the quality of food
 - The UTMSU commented that they have heard student feedback on lack of food diversity (e.g. vegetarian/vegan, halal)
 - Vicky J. responded that this was not a lack of options issue, it was a lack of communications issue – the options are available, but Aramark does not do a good job of advertising these options
 - The students also stated that, now that the campus is fully back to in-person, the hours of operations for food outlets is better than in the past
 - UTMAGS suggested longer hours to support Grad students who are on campus later in the evenings
 - Mark O. stated that the menu rotation period is longer at UTM than typically seen elsewhere
 - Mark O. also suggested that the posting of pricing on packaged items was lacking

NEXT MEETING: Early 2023