



City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 15-2283

Type: Staff Briefing - Without Ordinance

In control: City Council B Session

On agenda: 4/1/2015

Title: Briefing on the Comprehensive Approach to Obesity Prevention for San Antonio [Erik Walsh, Deputy City Manager; Dr. Thomas L. Schlenker, Director of Public Health]

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Dr. Thomas Schlenker

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Briefing on Comprehensive Approach to Obesity Prevention for San Antonio

SUMMARY:

This item provides a briefing by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District on a comprehensive approach to obesity prevention for San Antonio. This approach is aimed at continuing the trend of reducing the prevalence of adult and adolescent obesity in the community by 1) improving access to and increasing consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and healthy beverages, and 2) educating residents on the negative effects of a sedentary lifestyle while increasing access to physical activity resources.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), two out of three adults and one out of three children in the United States are overweight or obese. Similarly, it is estimated that the nation spends nearly \$190 billion a year treating obesity-related health conditions such as type-2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, stroke and certain types of cancer. In San Antonio, Metro Health along with the CoSA Parks and

Recreation Department, Mayor's Fitness Council (MFC) and Bexar County are taking the lead in working to reverse these trends.

In May of 2014, Metro Health provided a presentation to City Council during a B Session focused on the accomplishments of Metro Health's two year "Communities Putting Prevention to Work" effort to reduce obesity. Data showed that the prevalence of obesity among adults in Bexar County had shown a significant decline from 35% to 28.5%. This decline was closely associated with a parallel decline in daily soda consumption and an increase in individuals engaging in muscle building exercise. At that time, City Council asked Metro Health to work with community partners to develop a comprehensive obesity prevention strategy that focused on promoting the importance of a healthy diet and regular physical activity.

Metro Health identified that there were multiple initiatives being implemented related to promoting physical activity and nutrition, however there was no work being done locally on reducing the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages (SSBs). Therefore, Metro Health began by convening a workgroup of stakeholders to develop an educational campaign to address this issue specifically. The workgroup identified campaigns across the country in an effort to determine what kind of messaging would be most appropriate for San Antonio. Ultimately, the workgroup was not able to agree on how to best address this issue and decided to table the project until March 2015. On February 17th, the Bexar County Commissioners Court passed a resolution on SSBs, and Judge Wolff formed a coalition to work on a campaign to reduce the consumption of SSBs. Metro Health has been invited to be a member of the coalition led by University Health System. Rather than the City restarting our workgroup, Metro Health will work in partnership with the County to develop a campaign to educate the community about the high content of sugar in SSBs and encourage water as a healthy alternative.

The Mayor's Fitness Council (MFC) was formed in 2010 with the goal of making San Antonio residents among the healthiest in the nation. The MFC strategies are to reduce obesity among adults and youth by increasing physical activity, encouraging water consumption, encouraging people to eat at home, and increasing daily fruit and vegetable consumption. On February 24th the MFC kicked off Veg Out SA! funded by H-E-B, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas and The Children's Hospital. This educational campaign will include Public Service Announcements, outdoor marketing, social media, and an employee based contest and a school-based contest. The campaign will run throughout the rest of 2015.

ISSUE:

Recognizing the negative impact of poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles as well as the accomplishments of targeted initiatives to improve healthy behaviors in the community, Metro Health, the Parks and Recreation Department, MFC, and Bexar County are each involved in strategies that work to reverse these trends by (1) improving access to and encouraging consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables and healthy beverages, and 2) increasing access to physical activity resources.

This approach is being addressed through the following initiatives which involve targeted education campaigns and messaging coupled with built environment improvements to better facilitate regular physical activity:

- Mayor's Fitness Council Veg Out SA! Campaign
- Bexar County Sugar Sweetened Beverage (SSB) Reduction Workgroup
- CoSA Parks and Recreation - Fitness in the Parks / Mobile Fit SA / Fit Pass / Fitness Stations

In an effort to address these initiatives, the Health Department presented to the Quality of Life Committee on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. The Committee was in support of this item moving forward the full City Council in

a B Session presentation.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.