



Chestnut Residence Dining Committee

Date: Monday, February 8, 2021

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM Location: Teams Conference Call

Meeting Called to Order: 4:40pm

PRESENT:	
Mengjue (Andrew) Chen	Resident
Jenna Borden	Resident
Michael Lawler	Residence Don
Ksenia Meteleva	Resident
Louis-Charles Gerard	Resident
Klara Kovarova	Assistant Dean Residence Life
Rob Grieve - Chair	Food Service - Director, CES (Chestnut)
Mustafa Nalwala	Food Service - Manager, Residential Dining
Tarini Bidaisee	Food Service - Registered Dietitian

REGRETS:	
Yeon-Joo (Jamie) Seo	Residence Don

STANDING & AGENDA ITEMS/BUSINESS ARISING		
1.	Meeting Minutes follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Goal will be to get Meeting Minutes to the group by Friday (the same week the meeting is held). Committee members to have one week to provide feedback.
	Update: Approved minutes have been posted to the Chestnut website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting Minutes from meeting on January 18th, 2021, were approved by the committee and ready to be posted online on the Chestnut website for all students to view

ROUND TABLE UPDATES		
2.	Food Service Updates Update: The interns have confirmed their attendance at our March 1 meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Food Services had nutritional and dietetic interns for a placement in first semester. They generated a report on Meal Plans at various universities provided some interesting information. We hope to have the interns present their findings at the next committee meeting, on March 1st.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hydration station was installed the week of January 23 and has already been used over 500 times. We are certain to see the number increase as awareness of the station grows.

	Action Item: Food Services to follow-up and see if additional information regarding the RFQ is available to share with the group. Student members specifically looking for information regarding how RFQ was publicized and distributed, and a copy of the RFQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope for the New College consultation process was discussed. There were 3 bids to the RFQ. Successful proponent is a company named Envision. Scope and intended outcomes were shared with committee members via email. Goal is for the report to be completed by the end of April. Meetings with New College, Food Services and Envision began Friday, February 5. Process will include student consultation and consultants will engage in a discussion with Joshna Maharaj • Questions around how many individuals were given the RFQ and where it was posted.
	Action Item: Food Services to follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to look at ways we label items- still work in progress, in terms of spice level
	Action Item: Food Services to follow-up and report how we can achieve this desired outcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to get vegetables at the grill station, this is still a work in progress. Looking into grilled vegetables, etc
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will be more flexible in terms of station timings, but timings are there to ensure for clean-up and also breaks and be back for the next meal period
	Action Item: Food Services to continue to monitor and make changes to food offerings when and where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot do custom-made omelette bar due to Covid restrictions, with some bottle-neck in the area in the dining hall and omelette bar would add to congestion. It is also due to lower occupancy numbers. Will try to have it open as soon as possible, as always popular.
	Action Item: Food Services to follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grab and Go empty fridges on Sunday- culinary team looking into that
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoothie will be available more often during the day other than breakfast. Will be based on sales, and has been implemented as of Thursday and Friday (February 4, and 5).
	Action Item: Food Services to follow-up and report in more detail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culinary team is considering having small salads available for a month, where instead of a vegetable, can have a salad as a side dish. Will conduct some trials to test appeal to the students.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price of fruit had been reduced to \$1.15, which was \$1.50 in September, which is comparable to other food service outlets of similar scale.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasta bar- similar concern as omelette bar above, with limiting bottleneck in the dining hall. In September 2021, as we increase occupancy to 6-700 will allow us to have more variety
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portion sizes should be the same for all students. There are specific portion tools, and we apologize that different students have been receiving different portions. Culinary team will rectify.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For dinner and lunch plates, the majority of the food cost is the cost of the protein. This is why an individual protein is \$6, and students are not paying as much for the vegetable and starch (sides) for the plates.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile ordering implemented to reduce crowding issues and capacity within the dining hall, and has the grill station, grab and go, and during lunch and dinner, the pan station is available. Also is there for convenience for the students. Entrée station is not included at the moment, but may be added in the future. On a daily basis, consistent increase in users of the mobile app.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistency in charging by the cashiers- have spoken to the cashiers. If you have been overcharged, please let us know so we can go back and fix it and provide a refund.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments about food choices made by the cashiers have been addressed. Food Services has spoken to all cashiers about being professional to all students.
	Action Item: Food Services to follow-up on initial contact with T-Card office and report back.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Services has spoken to the T-Card office- will have an answer in the next few days for students to exchange for a tap card without a fee.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability- Chestnut Residence Council looking at getting a set of reusable cutlery, reusable straws, and a reusable bag, Council will be using their own budget

	<p>Action Item: Food Services to report to the committee the unit cost of the disposable and compostable cutlery packs, and approximate daily use number. Also plastic bags.</p> <p>Action Item: Food Service to assist Chestnut Residence Council with their initiative to create “sustainability” kits for the resident population to discourage use of disposable and single use plastics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compostable cutlery is a 77% increase in cost. Compostable cutlery is a Band-Aid fix, where instead better to work with Residence Council and Sustainability office to have reusable cutlery given to all residents. • The brown boxes used to serve food are not compostable but are recyclable. If the boxes are clean or washed through, they can then be recycled. • Food Services will be working on a marketing push to promote the Eco2Go containers • Education piece required educating students about using reusable items, Food Service will work with Residence Council to get the education piece out in student areas. • Discussion about moving to compostable cutlery in the interim. Decided it would be better to wait till Residence Council can provide the reusable cutlery. • Discussion about the auditing the use of reusable cutlery when implemented. Potentially 1000 cutlery sets used on a daily basis. Need to find out about the number of plastic bags used on a daily basis. • Discussion about charging for plastic bags. Food Services to go to the sustainability office to make sure reusable alternatives are available to students first, including reusable cutlery, reusable tote bags, and the already available Eco2Go containers. Will first use an opportunity to educate through conversations and signage.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 150 Food Service personnel on layoff, including full-time and part-time staff, and none of those individuals have been replaced by contract employees.

	<p>Action Item: Food Services to review possibility of a trial of some ethically sourced, local confection items, to determine potential demand for these products.</p> <p>Action Item: Committee to suggest a list of specific SKUs (menu items) that they are interested in tracking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pie chart was shown indicating how dining dollars were used by students at the Chestnut Dining Hall. This was also shared with all committee members. • Around 5% of sales were used for Sundry items which include confectionary items like chocolate bars. • Goal is to increase the variety offered at the Chef's Table including the more popular Chicken Wings Night that occurred this past month • Discussion on tracking certain specific items as there are many SKUs. In addition, would be beneficial to understand what items fall under each category. • Discussion on chocolate specifically, and the ethical sourcing of chocolate in the dining hall, and the brands the dining hall supports and by extension the brands supported by the University. • Discussion on fair trade and how it is a misnomer. • Discussion on educating students about ethical sourcing, and how the institution as a whole needs to source from companies that align with the values of students residing at Chestnut. • Discussion about the cost of sourcing local, and sourcing ethically, would lead to cost increases for the end-user. • Can educate students by having signage located beside the products that have changes in sourcing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Services is not contractually bound to sourcing from certain companies only (there is no exclusivity). Food Services is associated with other universities in Canada which allow for more efficient procurement.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition month in March. Culinary team to have healthier options available, and specific dietitian programming to happen in March as well.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black History Month programming will occur in the dining hall in February.
3.	<p>Student Round Table Items</p> <p>Action Item: Food Services to review forecasting of demand for the special items, and work to ensure better availability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday night specials have run out at 7pm. Food Services acknowledges it was popular and was a reason for it running out.
	<p>Action Item: Food Services to investigate and report back</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salad station closes at 7pm, yet dinner goes till 8pm. It would be beneficial to have salad available after 7pm.
	<p>Action Item: Food Services to investigate and report back</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pan station also closes at 7pm and it would be beneficial to have it run till 8pm.
	<p>Action Item: Food Services to investigate and report back</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to have a custom coffee machine available at the dining hall to have lattes, etc. Food Services to follow-up.

	Action Item: Food Services to investigate and report back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability- When purchasing a breakfast sandwich, it is wrapped in paper, and then put in a box- is it possible to just leave only in the wrapped parchment paper
	Action Item: Food Services to investigate and report back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it possible to get lunch entrées available on the weekend, instead of just brunch. Students are purchasing the grill items on the weekend as no specific lunch entrée.
	Action Item: Food Services to investigate and report back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it possible to have toast available throughout the day instead of just at breakfast.
	Update: Due to sanitary concerns we are not able to do this at this time. Food Services is committed to returning to washable plates, drinkware, and cutlery as soon as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it possible to give out metal utensils to students and students return them to the dining hall similar to the Eco2Go return program.
	Update: Food Services has determined that there should always be a vegetarian version of any special offering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetarian options are often tofu, beans, or tempeh. Is it possible to have vegetarian specials similar to the Wednesday specials?
	Action Item: Food Service recognizes this as an on going problem for both students and staff. The search continues for a solution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is difficult to converse with front-line staff. Is it possible to implement a more effective communication system? Food services did try a microphone, but it did not work. Food Services is still trying to find a solution. Is it possible to have non-verbal, visual communication to address the Plexiglas and mask barrier. In a Covid environment, we can't have paper order forms and common pens, but Food Services to look at finding a better solution to communicating with staff behind the Plexiglas.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food quality concerns, such as ordering fries and having chicken pieces in the fries, and also having mold in Jello. Food Services to reimburse students when mistakes happen, we will replace the product and give you a refund. Any item can be taken back. If the food is not prepared to your specifications, please take it back. Please let us know right away, so we are able to address the concern and re-check all similar items. Please ask the cashiers for the sous-chef on duty for a replacement.

	<p>Action Item: Food Service to provide additional resources at the peak mealtimes to assist with customer flow, and encouraging residents to maintain proper distancing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing in the dining hall specifically at the intersection of the Chef's Table and the pan station is difficult. It is hoped that Mobile ordering will help to alleviate the bottle neck. • Food Services will continue to encourage students to social distance. • Klara Kovorova (ADRL) reminded the students that social bubbles are not a recognized concept at Chestnut Residence, and that all normal social distancing protocols should be followed when student leave their floors. • Students were reminded that the floor decals on the ground outline where students need to stand, and are intended to be single occupancy.
	<p>Action Item: Food Services to advise how current procurement supports local purchasing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sourcing audits have not been conducted recently, but Food Services to provide more information about local food sourcing practices at the University. • Questions about if the percentage of local food procurement has increased since the implementation of the declining balance model
	<p>Update: Both Food Services and Residence Operations are engaging with the UofT Office of sustainability to review a number of issues related to waste diversion and management. Audits may be a part of that process, but it will be done for the building as a whole, not just food service areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Services to get back about implementing waste audits using available resources
	<p>Action Item: Food Services to follow-up and see if additional information regarding the RFQ is available to share with the group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Services to provide scope and objectives of the New College consultation process. Students were told that they would be engaged in the formation of the scope. Students interested in knowing more about the RFQ process. Food Services to report back.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question asked about the unit cost for the compostable cutlery. Food Services to revert back.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricing concern about fruit salad, fruit parfait, crudité, plant-based yoghurt, and avocados. Prices are reviewed by Food Services on a consistent basis. Food Services to look at products that do not provide value, and if prices cannot decrease based on cost of food, then to remove from being available in the dining hall.
	<p>Action Item: Food Services to review variety and pricing of granola / snack bars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to have cheaper, alternative, healthier options for granola bars?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sushi is not fresh when purchased from the dining hall on the second day. • Students are encouraged to bring food back when dissatisfied.

	Action Item: Food Services to look at ways to communicate the generous return / refund policy so that students understand that it is a readily available option for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it possible to have signs to let students know about the refund policy? Food Services to implement.
	Update: At lunch and dinner, there are always three vegetable sides available. The comments regarding the overcooking of the Eggplant, Zucchini, Squash mix have been relayed to the culinary team.	Eggplant, zucchini, and squash is often overcooked when served and is a large portion of the vegetarian plate. These vegetables are served 4-6 times a week and is difficult to eat.

The following were submitted by student committee members requesting clarification for the minutes. The comments in red, are from Food Services indicating action to be taken or responding to the request.

- Discussion on Request for Quote (RFQ)**

- o Rob suggested that students may use alternative means to access this document, through the use of a "Freedom of Information" request - The Chair did indicate that he felt there may be alternate avenues to access the document. A student representative inquired if the Chair was referring to a FOI request under FIPPA, and the Chair agreed that this was one possibility.
- o Food services questioned why students want to see a copy of the RFQ, which was followed by a discussion wherein students voiced support for operating with transparency and accountability - The question was intended to glean supporting rationale to put forward with the request.
- o Action Item: The request was twofold: 1) for more information around where this RFQ was publicized and distributed and 2) for a copy of the RFQ

Minutes revised to reflect these specific requests from the committee members

- It should be noted that Food Services declined the following suggestions at this meeting:**

- The role of this committee as stated in the Terms of Reference is to provide recommendations and suggestions. - It is the intent that all discussion points are communicated to Food Services senior leadership, regardless of opposing viewpoints expressed during conversation at the meeting.
- o removal of plastic cutlery with alternative options such as bamboo or cutlery – FS agreed to provide costing estimates, and see what alternatives were available. This was included in the minutes. FS agreed to assist the CRC with their project to provide a reusable kit to students.
- o removal or introduction of pricing measures for plastic bags – See comment above – a suitable alternative needs to be developed rather than charging students \$0.05 or \$4.00.
- o any price reductions for fresh fruit and vegetables – Pricing is always under review. Several price changes have been implemented since the fall.
- o removal of disposable containers from the dining hall - Alternate service models are under review.
- o provision of fresh sushi every day - Under investigation by the culinary team.

- **Audits (Local food)**
 - This section is vague and unclear re: food audits not being conducted "recently". To date, I have asked to see these audits since September and it seems they have never been conducted. If audits have been conducted, please indicate the last year in which they were conducted by Food Services and provide a copy of these audits. Otherwise, please indicate that these do not exist. - **As was stated during the meeting, the last audits were conducted in 2017/2018 The audits were conducted as part of an evaluation of contracted food service providers purchasing. Copies have been requested.**
- **Waste audits & waste**
 - Food Services indicated there is no budget for conducting waste audits in the Chestnut Dining Hall - **This is not accurate. This committee has no budget at all. All costs for actions will be borne by Food Services or Chestnut Residence. Waste audits will need to be conducted on the building as a whole. Food services supports any effort to increase waste diversion, however, due to the pandemic restrictions, the majority of food being consumed on the student floors, the solution needs to be provided on the floors as well.**
 - Please attribute the concept of removing plastic cutlery as a "band-aid fix" to Food Services - this sentiment was not shared by students at the meeting and all were in favour of removing or amending these items - **Agreed. The comment was made by the Chair. It is not possible to remove the plastic cutlery until a suitable alternative is found. FS and CRC are both looking at alternatives. The use of disposable packaging is driven by the pandemic restrictions, and not by a policy of Food Service.**
- **Dietetic Intern report**
 - In a December meeting, Colin had mentioned passing along this document for students to see. I have requested a copy several times but this request has never been approved.
 - **Action Item: Please provide this report on nutrition in the Dining Hall to the committee prior to the presentation so we can have time to prepare appropriate questions and understand the content**

A copy of the report will be provided in advance of the March 1 meeting.
- **Sushi**
 - The student request and the action item do not correspond. The response to consistent complaints about food not being fresh should not be to highlight a return policy, rather, to investigate ways to ensure the food served is fresh - **Investigation into the quality of the Sushi is being undertaken by the culinary team. However, given the discussion around the lack of understanding of the return policy, this needed to be included as well.**
- **Staff layoffs**
 - At the meeting, it was indicated that no decisions would be made in terms of these layoffs until September 2021 - **The temporary layoffs have an end date of September 2021. Staffing needs are being constantly evaluated and adjusted as needed.**

- **Options about environmental education**

- Food Services expressed a desire to 'educate' students about the environmental impacts of plastic use. I do not believe this expressed the sentiment of the students on our committee. The students across campus do not need further education - they know the environmental impacts of single use plastics and waste more broadly - they need to have alternative options at the Dining Hall. In this case, we need Food Services to recognize the environmental impacts of the current model and make appropriate changes. - **The education of students, through the provision of signage etc. was suggested and supported by students on the committee. We all agree that alternative service delivery methods are desirable and need to be implemented.**

NEW BUSINESS:		
Meeting ADJ :		
<p>The Committee Chair thanked everyone for their active participation, and for staying on the call for an extra hour to get through the material.</p> <p>Sales mix pie chart of sales in January at the Chestnut dining hall and the scope and objectives of the New College consultation process will be shared in an email to all Committee members by end of day on February 8, 2021.</p> <p>The next meeting will take place on March 1st, 2021 at 4:30pm – A meeting invitation will be sent to the membership. In keeping with the University policy on meetings, it will be a virtual gathering.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm</p>		