



43rd Meeting of the Cass Clay Food Commission

March 8, 2023 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Location: Fargo City Commission Chambers

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| 10:30 am | 1. Welcome |
| | a. Approve Order & Contents of the Overall Agenda |
| | b. Review & Action on Minutes from January 11, 2023 (Attachment 1) |
| 10:35 am | 2. Commission Introductions – Chair Nesemeier |
| 10:40 am | 3. 2023 Farm Bill Update – Ben Lien (Attachment 2) |
| 10:50 am | 4. West Central Initiative Regional Food Systems Plan Update – Mike Zastoupil & Emily Reno (Attachment 3) |
| 11:05 am | 5. North Dakota & Minnesota Legislative Updates – Janice Tweet |
| 11:15 am | 6. Great Plains Food Bank Statistics Update – Janice Tweet |
| 11:25 am | 7. Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review – Adam Altenburg (Attachment 4) |
| 11:35 am | 8. Steering Committee Updates – Michelle Draxten |
| | a. New Cass Clay Food Partners Video |
| | b. Coffee with the Commission Update |
| 11:40 am | 9. Kudos & Community Recognition – Michelle Draxten (Attachment 5) |
| 11:45 am | 10. Public Comment Opportunity – Chair Nesemeier (Attachment 6) |
| 11:50 am | 11. Commission & Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates & Meeting Reflections – Chair Nesemeier |
| 11:55 am | 12. Future Meetings & Commission Action Steps |
| | a. Next First Fridays – TBD |
| | b. Next Coffee with the Commission Event – April 12, 2023 |
| | c. Next Commission Meeting – May 10, 2023 |
| 12:00 pm | 13. Adjournment |

Cass Clay Food Commission meetings are taped and rebroadcast on cable channel TV Fargo 56 each Friday at 11:00 am. People with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and need special accommodations should contact Savanna Leach at Metro COG at 701.532.5100. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements. Meeting minutes are available on the Cass Clay Food Partners website at www.cassclayfoodpartners.org and Metro COG's website at www.fmmetrocog.org.

A PLANNING ORGANIZATION SERVING

FARGO, WEST FARGO, HORACE, CASS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA AND MOORHEAD, DILWORTH, CLAY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Attachment 1

**42nd Meeting of the
Cass Clay Food Commission
January 11, 2023
Fargo Commission Chambers**

Members Present:

Arlette Preston, Fargo City Commission, Chair
Heather Nesemeier, Moorhead City Council
Jace Hellman, Horace City Council (proxy)
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member
Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member
Carin Engler, At-Large Member

Members Absent:

Tony Grindberg, Cass County Commission
Mandy George, West Fargo City Commission
Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission
Dave Steichen, Dilworth City Council
Jeff York, At-Large Member

Others Present:

Michelle Draxten, Fargo Cass Public Health
Lisa Meader, Fargo Cass Public Health
Rory Beil, Clay County Public Health
Rita Ussatis, NDSU Extension
Noelle Harden, U of M Extension
Janice Tweet, Great Plains Food Bank
Zoe Absey, Great Plains Food bank
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Chair Preston noted that a meeting had been scheduled in the Fargo Commission Chambers for 12:00 and that the Food Commission would need to adjourn several minutes early.

1a. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda

A motion to approve the order and contents of the overall agenda was made by Ms. Nesemeier and seconded by Ms. Kopperud. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1b. Review and Action on Minutes from September 14, 2022 and November 9, 2022.

A motion to approve the minutes for September and November 2022 was made by Ms. Nesemeier and seconded by Ms. Kopperud. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1c. Welcome to New Food Commission Members

Chair Preston noted that Moorhead City Councilmember Heather Nesemeier, Dilworth City Councilmember Dave Steichen, Horace Community Development Director Jace Hellman, Cass County Commissioner Tony Grindberg, and Clay County Commissioner Paul Krabbenhoft had been appointed to serve on the Food Commission.

2. Approve Appointments of At-Large Members

Mr. Altenburg explained that the steering committee had sought applicants for one new at-large member to replace the opening left by Mr. Utecht. He stated that the steering committee reviewed and recommended the appointment of Carin Engler as a new at-large member. He further noted that current at-large member Jeff York had agreed to serve an additional two-year term.

A motion to approve the appointment of Carin Engler and the reappointment of Jeff York to the Commission was made by Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Ms. Neseheimer. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

3. Cass Clay Food Commission Onboarding and Orientation

Mr. Altenburg provided new Commission members with a brief onboarding and orientation presentation that included a definition and overview of food systems, the beginnings and timeline of the Cass Clay Food Partners initiated in 2010, and the history, purpose, and work of the Cass Clay Food Commission since its formation in March 2015.

4. At-Large Commissioner Spotlight

Mr. Miller provided the meeting's commissioner spotlight and offered insights from his work as Director for the Cass County Soil Conservation District including habitat restoration, working with farmers and ranchers, and the urban conservation program which helps to establish pocket prairies, community gardens, and includes other cost share opportunities for residents and organizations in the area.

5. Steering Committee Updates

Ms. Draxten provided information to the Commission regarding the Regional Food Policy Council Community of Practice program as well as an update on the Food Partners video project. She noted that three additional informational videos had been finalized and were available to preview on the City of Fargo's YouTube channel, each highlighting the work of the Cass Clay Food Partners and local food systems. The videos include: The Impact of Pollinators on our Food System, Eating Fresh and Local on a Budget, and Backyard Chicken Keeping.

6. Great Plains Food Bank Pop-Ups Presentation

Zoe Absey, Community Initiatives Manager for the Great Plains Food Bank, provided information to the Commission regarding its pop-up pantries program that started in September 2022.

Ms. Absey noted that there are recognized challenges in New American, immigrant, and refugee community leaders reaching out and connecting with food assistance resources for their communities in the Fargo-Moorhead area. She explained that to address these challenges, the Great Plains Food Bank put together a program to create low-barrier pop-up distributions with culturally relevant and medically tailored foods. She described the program as including a task force with key individuals from multiple communities that helped to create a program framework including: purchasing products from local international stores, a food voucher system with local markets, and distribution logistics.

Ms. Absey noted that a total of 2,527 households were served between September and November and that 300 food vouchers were distributed through community partners in December. She stated that, while pop-ups were efficient, they are not sustainable and that the next steps included working with existing partners in the community to help spread resources and culturally and medically relevant foods.

7. Letter of Support for Multicultural Urban Food and Ecology Initiative

Ms. Harden informed the Commission about the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Urban Agriculture Grant Program, a program designed to promote urban youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development within urban or areas adjacent to urban areas in Minnesota. She noted that the program funds projects that help non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, schools, Native American Tribal communities, and local government entities obtain the materials and services necessary to successfully promote urban youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development.

Ms. Harden stated that in early January 2023, the steering committee was asked to develop a letter of support for the Multicultural Urban Food and Ecology Initiative by the Prairie Rose Agricultural Institute for Research, Innovation, and Education (PRAIRIE). She explained that PRAIRIE is a non-profit that demonstrates regenerative and organic agricultural practices with hands-on education in Clay County. The initiative brought forth by PRAIRIE would work to provide increased access to fresh food in the area, promote efforts that better enable young people and members of the BIPOC community entry into farming, develop demonstration gardens and test sites that utilize season extenders and other best practices, and create pathways for food and ecology careers in the community.

Ms. Harden explained that the initiative would support the Commission's mission and core values and that the steering committee developed a letter of support for the Commission's review and approval.

A motion to sign the letter of support for the Multicultural Urban Food and Ecology Initiative as part of its application for the Minnesota AGRI Urban Grant Program was made by Ms. Nesemeier and seconded by Mr. Miller. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

8. Commission Priorities and Processes in 2023

Ms. Harden explained that at the Commission meeting in November 2022, members took time to discuss priorities and processes for the upcoming year. She stated that after that meeting, the steering committee conferred and reviewed ideas and proposed three priorities for the Commission in 2023:

- Address food needs and opportunities with New American community members
- Understand social determinants of health and actions that may strengthen the local food system
- Examine strategies for community food system development in underserved neighborhoods, in alignment with the FM Wellness Coalition

In addition to these priorities, she stated that the steering committee recommended the implementation of new group processes to strengthen its work and connection with the broader community:

- Host "Coffee with the Food Commission" in each of the five cities in 2023
- Invite commissioners to attend monthly steering committee meetings held the fourth Monday of each month from 1:00 to 2:30 PM at Fargo Cass Public Health
- Host one or more additional community events using the stipend from the Regional Food Policy Council Community of Practice.

A motion to approve the steering committee's recommendations for priorities and group processes in 2023 was made by Mr. Hellman and seconded by Ms. Johnson. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

9. Kudos and Community Recognition

Ms. Draxten highlighted several people and organizations for their work in the community including:

- Rick Hall and Verna Kragnes were the recipients of the 2022 Moorhead Human Rights Award in the Education and Non-Profit category. The award recognizes significant contributions to human rights in the community and was presented by the Moorhead Human Rights Commission on December 12, 2022. Rick and Verna started the New Roots organization to help new farmers become successful and independent in the region.
- Fourteen-year-old Gowri Pillai hosted her 10th annual food drive in Grand Forks. Over the years, she has collected 5,227 pounds of food and \$4,387 for the Great Plains Food Bank. She was named one of the 2021 Hunger Relief Champions of North Dakota by the Great Plains Food Bank.

10. Public Comment Opportunity

Chair Preston informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments. She noted that members of the community may also submit comments via a comment link when Commission packets are emailed out.

Verna Kragnes mentioned that there would be a community discussion on the book *Reinventing Food Banks and Pantries* on March 22 at the Indigenous Association in Fargo. She also noted that First Congregational UCC in Moorhead had received two grants in its work with the Multicultural Food and Ecology Initiative, one through the FM Area Foundation and one through West Central Initiative. She noted that grant funds were being used to purchase additional copies of the mentioned book as well as for pollinator plant and education resources.

11. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates and Meeting Reflections

Chair Preston asked for the Commission and the steering committee to share any additional updates or meeting reflections.

12. Commission Action Steps

Chair Preston stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on March 8 and noted the schedule for the remainder of 2023. She also mentioned that the next First Fridays event would be held at 701 Eateries in Fargo on February 3 at 8:00 AM.

Chair Preston adjourned the meeting at 11:38 AM.



To: Cass Clay Food Commission
From: Noelle Harden, University of Minnesota Extension
Date: March 3, 2023
Re: *2023 Farm Bill Update*

Every five years, the U.S. Congress passes legislation that sets national agriculture, nutrition, conservation, and forestry policy, commonly referred to as the “Farm Bill”. The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry formally kicked off its process for the 2023 Farm Bill with field hearings in 2022 and continues throughout the early parts of 2023. Committee members include Senator Hoeven of North Dakota and Senator Klobuchar and Senator Smith of Minnesota.

Ben Lien, with the Northwest and Central Minnesota Office of Senator Klobuchar, will provide a brief update on the 2023 Farm Bill process.

Ideas and proposals for the 2023 Farm Bill may be submitted via [this form](#) or by emailing farmbill2023@ag.senate.gov.

Requested Action:
None



To: Cass Clay Food Commission
From: Adam Altenburg, Metro COG
Date: March 3, 2023
Re: *West Central Minnesota Regional Food Systems Plan Update*

In November 2022, PartnerSHIP 4 Health announced the launch and development of West Central Minnesota's first regional food systems plan. As part of its initial outreach, the project team held three community asset mapping input meetings in November and December to better understand projects, resources, and existing food infrastructure in Becker, Clay, Otter Tail, and Wilkin counties. These sessions included meetings with farmers and local food producers, distributors, co-ops, food shelves, farmers markets, food advocates, and other members of the public. Upon its completion, this strategic planning document is intended to lay out a vision for local food systems growth and help align policies such as ordinances, land development codes, and incentives to support the local food system in the four-county area.

Emily Reno, project lead and facilitator with Creating Community Consulting/Mezclada, and Mike Zastoupil, Agricultural and Food Systems Planner with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, will both provide an update on this plan.

Requested Action:
None



To: Cass Clay Food Commission
From: Adam Altenburg, Metro COG
Date: March 3, 2023
Re: *Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review*

Since March 2015, the Cass Clay Food Partners has developed nearly two dozen resource documents highlighting urban agriculture, food access, sustainability, and other food systems topic areas relevant to the Fargo-Moorhead area. These documents have included blueprints, which look at food systems from a land development code perspective; and issue briefs and snapshots, which provide more of an overview of an issue the community may have seen locally.

The steering committee will provide a brief overview of these documents and how they have been implemented to date as well as a closer look at two original blueprints: [Backyard Chicken Keeping](#) and [Community Gardens](#).

All blueprints, snapshots, and issue briefs can be found at the link below:

<https://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/fargo-cass-public-health/health-promotion/cass-clay-food-partners/blueprints>

Requested Action:
None



To: Cass Clay Food Commission
From: Michelle Draxten, Fargo Cass Public Health
Date: March 2, 2023
Re: *Kudos and Community Recognition*

Since May 2022, the Cass Clay Food Commission has highlighted individuals and organizations for their work in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area and the broader community. This includes awards and recognitions as well as state and local initiatives that support food systems and the values of the Commission.

In March 2023, the Steering Committee would like to recognize the following:

1. Moorhead High School Career Academy – Cooking Up Culinary Careers

The MHS Career Academy is offering culinary arts courses to educate students about the career possibilities in the food industry. The culinary arts program is intended as a sampler to allow students to try their hands at a profession they may not have previously considered. Students learn food safety and sanitation, knife skills, meal assembly, flavor profiles, and more. The program is pioneered by Culinary Instructor Johanna Heigaard and the Chair of the Family and Consumer Science Department Cheryl Adams.

Potential career opportunities include: chefs in restaurants, catering, hotels, schools, hospitals, nursing facilities, industry and other settings; hospitality and food service management; food distribution corporations; product development in manufacturing companies; and ag commodities groups.

<https://www.thefmextra.com/career-academy-cooks-up-culinary-careers/>

2. Growing Together: A Gardening Podcast with Don Kinzler and John Lamb

NDSU Extension horticulturist Don Kinzler and The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead reporter John Lamb began Growing Together: A Gardening Podcast in late February. The podcast is intended to give novice and experienced gardeners throughout the Midwest insight into making successful gardens grow through conversation, audience questions, and a shared curiosity for plants. The podcast can be found through InForum, Apple, Spotify, or Audible, and questions for the show can be emailed to donald.kinzler@ndsu.edu.

<https://www.inforum.com/lifestyle/introducing-the-growing-together-gardening-podcast-with-don-kinzler-and-john-lamb>

Requested Action:

None.



To: Cass Clay Food Commission
From: Heather Nesemeier, Chair
Date: March 3, 2023
Re: *Public Comment Opportunity*

The public comment opportunity is an open forum for the public to provide comments about specific items on this meeting's agenda, as well as any other issues that may pertain to food systems policies or programs. Members of the public may also submit comments online through the comment form link sent out with the meeting's agenda and packet. People may sign up to receive notices about the Cass Clay Food Commission at <http://fmmetrocog.org/get-involved>.

Comments to the Cass Clay Food Commission will be limited to one minute per individual or at the discretion of the Commission Chair.

Requested Action:
None