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**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Cass Clay Food Partners  
Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (Metro COG)  
**Date:** November 4, 2022  
**RE:** Cass Clay Food Commission Agenda and Correspondence

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### 41<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Cass Clay Food Commission

November 9, 2022 10:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Location: Virtual Meeting –

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85680008246?pwd=UzY3Vmo2RG1vNWFXd1RYdTVtUElZZz09>

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| 10:30 am | 1. Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Approve Order &amp; Contents of the Overall Agenda</li><li>b. Review &amp; Action on Minutes from September 14, 2022 (<b>Attachment 1</b>)</li></ul>  |
| 10:35 am | 2. Commission Introductions – Chair Aasness   |
| 10:40 am | 3. At-Large Commissioner Spotlight – Jeff York  |
| 10:45 am | 4. Steering Committee Updates – Michelle Draxten <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Community of Practice for Regional Food Policy Councils</li><li>b. New Cass Clay Food Partners Videos<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <a href="#">The Cass Clay Food Partners and Our Food System</a></li></ul></li></ul> |
| 10:55 am | 5. Report from Hunger & Health Summit – Janice Tweet  |
| 11:05 am | 6. Review of Mission & Recent Work – Noelle Harden ( <b>Attachment 2</b> )  |
| 11:10 am | 7. Conversation & Shape of Future Work – Noelle Harden ( <a href="#">Jamboard link</a> )  |
| 11:30 am | 8. Food Commission Meetings in 2023 – Noelle Harden   |
| 11:35 am | 9. Kudos & Community Recognition – Michelle Draxten ( <b>Attachment 3</b> )   |
| 11:40 am | 10. Public Comment Opportunity – Chair Aasness  |
| 11:50 am | 11. Commission & Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates & Meeting Reflections – Chair Aasness   |
| 11:55 am | 12. Commission Action Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Next First Fridays – December 2, 2022</li><li>b. Next Commission Meeting – January 11, 2023</li></ul>  |
| 12:00 pm | 13. Adjournment   |

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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](http://www.cassclayfoodpartners.org) and Metro COG's website at [www.fmmetrocog.org](http://www.fmmetrocog.org).

# Attachment 1

**40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Cass Clay Food Commission  
September 14, 2022  
Virtual Meeting**

**Members Present:**

Jim Aasness, Dilworth City Council, Chair  
Arlette Preston, Fargo City Commission  
Deb White, City of Moorhead  
Duane Breitling, Cass County Commission  
Mandy George, West Fargo City Commission  
Jeremiah Utecht, At-Large Member  
Jeff York, At-Large Member  
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member  
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member  
Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member

**Members Absent:**

Chelsey Johnson, Horace City Council  
Jenna Kahly, Clay County Commission

**Others Present:**

Michelle Draxten, 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  
Erika Franck, Clay County Planning and Zoning  
Deb Haugen, Cass Clay Food Partners  
Anita Hofsommer, Growing Together Community Gardens  
Don Kinzler, NDSU Extension, Cass County  
Jill Sokness, NDSU Extension, Cass County  
Susie West, U of M Extension, Clay County  
Mindy Grant, U of M Extension, Clay County  
Hali Durand, Kesselring Vineyards  
Don B., Public Citizen  
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Chair Aasness called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

**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. George and seconded by Mr. Breitling. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1b. Review and Action on Minutes from May 11, 2022**

A motion to approve the minutes for May was made by Ms. George and seconded by Mr. Utecht. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

## **2. Commission Introductions**

Chair Aasness lead Commission and steering committee members in a brief round of introductions.

## **3. At-Large Commissioner Spotlight**

Ms. Johnson spoke about her work with Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP) as nutrition manager for the Head Start Program. She explained her role in preparing children for school and kindergarten by providing health, nutrition, and education services, as well as parent engagement. She stated that she manages food service operations for approximately 160 children at their on-site facility and tracks growth assessments and BMIs of children over two years of age.

## **4. Hunger Action Month Update**

Ms. Tweet informed the Commission that September is Hunger Action Month in North Dakota. She explained that throughout the month, people are encouraged to wear orange to help raise hunger awareness. She also talked about a daily calendar that is published each year which has different ideas on how people in the community can help alleviate hunger. She also noted that the Great Plains Food Bank would be holding a virtual food drive in collaboration with Corwin Automotive and Valley News Live. She concluded with ways people could help with Hunger Action Month including hosting virtual food drives, signing up to volunteer at food bank locations in Fargo or Bismarck, making financial contributions, or signing up to become a Hunger Advocate.

### **5a. Panel at the Health and Hunger Summit**

Ms. Harden explained that the Food Partners had submitted a proposal to have a panel discussion at the Health and Hunger Summit on October 20. She stated that it would be a 45-minute session and that she was hoping to have three former or current Commissioners to be featured. She noted that Ms. Preston had already agreed to serve on the panel. Ms. White stated that she would potentially have interest in being part of the panel discussion.

### **5b. 2023 Commission Schedule**

Ms. Harden brought forward several potential ideas about amending the Commission schedule, including whether to meet quarterly or to keep the number of Commission meetings at five. She also brought forward ideas about potentially adding one or two community listening sessions per year or adding “office hours” in which members of the public could reach out to Steering Committee members to discuss issues or ideas.

Several Commissioners provided general remarks, including positive comments on including community listening sessions and the desire for meetings to be in-person rather than virtual if they were to be quarterly. Ms. Harden stated that the Steering Committee would discuss these proposals further at their next committee meeting.

## **6. Cass Clay Food Partners Video Project Update**

Ms. Draxten informed the Commission about several promotional videos being developed in collaboration with Fargo Cass Public Health and the City of Fargo. She noted that the videos would include an informational video about food systems and the Cass Clay Food Partners, the importance of local foods, pollinators, backyard chickens, and gleaning. She stated that three of the videos had already been filmed, with a fourth video scheduled for later in September.

## **7. Food Tank Opportunity**

Ms. Kopperud provided the Commission information on Food Tank, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that highlights environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable ways of alleviating hunger, obesity, and poverty. She noted that Concordia College is represented in one of the academic working groups associated with the organization. She highlighted several articles, podcasts, and summits from the organization's website, including an article about food insecurity on college campuses. She also showcased an article on urban gardens and the soft skill training they can provide as well as a food summit that was held at the University of Minnesota in May 2022. She noted that Food Tank also had a free newsletter that people could subscribe to.

## **8. Growing Together Community Gardens Update**

Anita Hofsommer from Growing Together Community Gardens provided an update on its activities over the past several years. She noted that the Covid-19 pandemic likely had an impact on the number of volunteers at each of the garden sites, especially New American volunteers. But she stated that Growing Together was on track to produce over 40,000 pounds of fresh produce in 2022, an increase of over 60 percent from the year prior.

## **9. Veggies for the Pantry Update**

Don Kinzler from NDSU Extension in Cass County provided the Commission information on the Veggies for the Pantry program. He stated that the program allows citizens to donate any garden surplus that they may have at several different drop-off locations, which is then brought to one of the food banks in the area. He noted that master gardener volunteers have donated over 9,000 pounds of produce in 2022 so far, which translates into approximately 36,000 servings for those in need.

## **10. MN Department of Agriculture Public Input Opportunity**

Mr. Altenburg noted that the Minnesota Department of Agriculture was gathering ideas for the state's next biennial budget and had put out a call for input from farmers, food businesses, and others affected by food and agriculture systems. He stated that ideas could be related to food policies, funding, and program suggestions that would benefit individuals and communities throughout the state.

Mr. Altenburg explained that two virtual public input sessions occurred on September 7 and September 8 but that there was still time to submit comments directly to the Department of Agriculture on ideas on how the Minnesota Legislature might appropriate funds for agricultural activities. He provided web links where people could submit comments as well as a link to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture agency website.

## **11. Kudos and Community Recognition**

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

- Area youth that was involved in showing livestock at the Cass and Clay county fairs
- New Minnesota agricultural license plate which supports the Future Farmers of America program and 4-H

## **12. Public Comment Opportunity**

Chair Aasness informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments. He noted that members of the community can submit comments via a comment link when Commission packets are emailed out.

Hali Durand with Kesselring Vineyards stated their vineyards have had a bumper crop in 2022 and that they were looking for volunteers to help harvest native wild grapes in the Sheyenne River Valley. She stated that Kesselring Vineyards would provide breakfast bites and lunch at the winery and that volunteers would be compensated based on the pounds of grapes that they picked.

**13. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates and Meeting Reflections**

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

**14. Commission Action Steps**

Chair Aasness stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on November 9, 2022. He also mentioned that the next First Fridays event would be held at 701 Eateries in Fargo on October 7 at 8:00 AM.

Chair Aasness adjourned the meeting at 11:44 AM.

# Cass Clay Food Partners

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Review of Mission and Recent Work

November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022



CASS CLAY  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERS

# Cass Clay Food Partners

*Building a strong, healthy and vibrant food system*

**Mission:** To improve all levels of our community food system to assure that residents have access to safe, nutritious, affordable and culturally-based foods.

**More Info:** [www.cassclayfoodpartners.com](http://www.cassclayfoodpartners.com)



CASS CLAY  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERS

# Our Network



CASS CLAY  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERS



Cass Clay Food  
Commission



Cass Clay Food  
Partners Steering  
Committee



Food of the  
North



CASS CLAY  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERS



# Priorities Addressed in 2020 / 2021

- ✓ **Integrate food systems into comprehensive planning efforts**
  - Created community snapshot and issue brief
  - Engaged with City of Moorhead and Clay County
  
- ✓ **Continue our COVID response efforts**
  - Participated in national Food Resilience Community of Practice - toolkit coming out soon!
  - Elevate the work of “front-line” organizations (FirstLink, local food assistance programs)
  
- ✓ **Form a stronger connection with the Cass Clay Hunger Coalition**
  - Cross representation between networks
  - Panel at Hunger and Health Summit
  - Huge thank you to Janice Tweet, incoming co-chair of CCFP



# Looking Ahead

- ❖ What topics should we cover in the next year?
- ❖ Who do we want to learn from or support?
- ❖ Who is not at the table?
- ❖ How should we engage with each other, and with the community?



CASS CLAY  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERS

# Attachment 3

**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Michelle Draxten  
**Date:** October 31, 2022  
**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 November 2022, the Steering Committee would like to recognize the following:

- Growing Together Community Gardens saw fantastic growth at its six community garden sites in 2022, doubling what it produced the year prior. Volunteers at the communal gardens produced and shared a combined total of 50,568 pounds of fresh produce in 2022, compared to 25,139 pounds of produce in 2021.
- West Fargo Eats, a mobile food pantry and the first food share alliance program in the community, celebrated its first anniversary on October 27. West Fargo Eats is a collaboration between Lutheran Church of the Cross, Gate City Bank, YWCA Cass Clay, and Great Plains Food Bank. Food available through the mobile food pantry includes fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, dairy, meat, and shelf-stable items. In August alone, West Fargo Eats shared 12,616 pounds of food with more than 358 families, amounting to over 13,000 meals.
- The Emergency Food Pantry celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September. Established in 1972, the pantry has helped feed people in Cass and Clay counties in times of crisis, unemployment, fire, family violence, medical problems, and other challenging times. The Emergency Food Pantry provides a week's worth of nutritional food every other month, up to six times a year. Food baskets include bread, meat, eggs, dairy, and a variety of non-perishables: cereal, canned soup, canned fruit and vegetables, sugar, pasta, and peanut butter. In 2021, the pantry connected with 4,800 families and provided over 9,300 food baskets.
- Veggies for the Pantry is a Cass County NDSU Extension Master Gardener initiative to help area citizens donate their garden surplus to local food pantries. In 2022, the initiative donated nearly 19,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to area food pantries in Fargo and Moorhead.
- The Steering Committee would also like to thank Chair Jim Aasness and Commissioner Jeremiah Utecht for their time, commitment, and service to the Food Commission. Chair Aasness is the longest-serving member of the Commission, serving since its inception in March 2015. Commissioner Utecht has served as an at-large member since January 2019.

**Requested Action:**  
**None**