

MINUTES
LINN COUNTY FOOD SYSTEMS COUNCIL
Thursday, February 22, 2024

The Linn County Food Systems Council meeting was started at 12:00 pm at the Harris Linn County Public Health Building, 1020 6th St SE, Cedar Rapids, IA in the 3rd floor conference room 303.

PRESENT: Emmaly Renshaw-Feed Iowa First
Laura Ondler- Horizons
Jacqueline Montoya-LCPH
Stephanie Schrader-City of Cedar Rapids
Hailee Sandberg- ISU Extension
Aaron Brewer- Prairie Woods
Kim Guardado- HACAP
Emily Qual- Cobble Hill

ABSENT: Matthew McGrane-NewBo City Market
Laura Krouse-Abbe Farm
Brittany Hannah- Via Sofia's
Drew Erickson- Rodale Institute
Kelly Ridenour Giurato- Eat Greater Des Moines

OTHERS

PRESENT: Andy Schumacher- Cobble Hill
Melaine- AmeriCorps

STAFF: Stephanie Lientz, Planning & Zoning Division Manager
Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Schrader, seconded by Sandberg, to approve the January 25, 2024 minutes. All members present voted yes.

Public Comments:

None

New Business:

FARE Grant Updates:

Renshaw mentioned we are still awaiting reports from Olivet and Fairfax Public Library. The deadline is March 1 for the final report. Sarah Blais will reach out to both of them as well as Guardado reaching out to Olivet and Montoya reaching out to Fairfax Public Library.

Echollective submitted their new application with the update for onsite cold storage. The Council is asking that they reach out to Molly to get more specific information and data. Sandberg asked if there are any barriers as to not providing the information they have requested. Council to revisit in March.

An emerging farmer received funds in Phase 2 for a vehicle. There has been mention that they are not farming this year. Renshaw asked Council if funds can be recalled until the farmer figures out what they are doing for a land lease?

Renshaw shared with Council that New Adventure has reached out to the Council to help them with applying for a LAMP federal grant that is up to \$250,000 over two years. It could go towards a food hub in Cedar Rapids, farmer education, processing and a Food Systems Coordinator for two years. They would need \$3,000-4,000 for them to write the grant. It is due in late April. If there is any interest in applying, Council could use the budget to have them write the grant. It was asked if they go through the County or another organization and Lientz said it can go through the county.

Motion by Sandberg and seconded by Qual to go forward with the LAMP grant process with a ceiling of \$3,500 to have New Adventures do the grant writing for the planning grant for \$250,000. All members present voted yes.

Sandberg, Schrader and Guardado all volunteered to be on a task force for the grant consultation.

2024 FSC Project Plan:

Renshaw went over the survey results that were sent out regarding what the upcoming focus will be. The three categories are Communication, Connections and Events, Sustainability and Education.

In Communication, Connections and Events, Sandberg stated that the Council could try to partner/connect with the Cedar Rapids Economic Alliance for local food events. Discussion was had about what this could look like. Qual stated that the Council needs to connect restaurants and farmers together. Schumacher said he will host at Cobble Hill and discuss how to write a menu using what is available. It was decided Monday mornings around 9:15 AM would work for the host. April was mentioned for the starting time period. Farmers will need to bring a list of what they grow. Qual, Sandberg and Renshaw will help with this project.

In the Sustainability piece, Guardado and Renshaw both spoke about field to family and how that could help out our local food procurement until our hub could be viable. Renshaw mentioned how there needs to be more communication and can be included in the education portion of the project plan.

For the Education aspect, Renshaw mentioned leaning on Newbo from June-Sept. with a seasonal food awareness campaign that includes different cooking strategies with culturally relevant, in season crops. Could also have cooking classes and pop-up markets. Renshaw to connect with Blais and Matthew McGrane from Newbo.

Open Discussion:

Montoya mentioned that they may try to merge this Council with the Food Security Group from Public Health since a lot of the members are on both groups.

Next Meeting: March 28, 2024

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 1:21 PM.

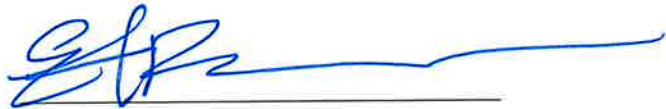
Sandberg motioned to adjourn and Brewer seconded. All members present voted yes.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Speed", written over a horizontal line.

Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approved,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Emmaly Renshaw", written over a horizontal line.

Emmaly Renshaw, Chair