

MINUTES
LINN COUNTY FOOD SYSTEMS COUNCIL
Thursday, April 25, 2024

The Linn County Food Systems Council meeting was called to order at 12:01 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
Brittany Hannah- Via Sofia's
Matthew McGrane-NewBo City Market
Drew Erickson- Rodale Institute

ABSENT: Laura Krouse-Abbe Farm
Kim Guardado- HACAP
Emily Qual- Cobble Hill
Kelly Ridenour Giurato- Eat Greater Des Moines

OTHERS

PRESENT: Corey Lewis- AmeriCorps
Sarah Blais- NewBo City Market

STAFF: Mike Tertinger, Senior Planner
Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Schrader, to approve the March 28, 2024 minutes. All members present voted yes.

Public Comments:

None at this time.

Budget Update:

No change from last meeting. Still have a balance of \$4,905.55 that needs to be spent, or requested before June 30, 2024 to be returned to the council for specific FY25 projects.

New Business:

FARE Grant Updates:

Round 1 Final Reports: All reports have been completed and submitted.

Echollective (submitted): They did send in metrics stating they sold to 6 restaurants, sold 24,000 pounds to NewPi and had 30 CSA members totaling \$22,575.00 in sales. Their goals are sustainability and to maintain or increase their sales for this year.

Motion made by Sandberg, seconded by McGrane to approve Echollective's final report. All members present voted yes.

Fairfax Library: Purchased a fridge. They did submit a receipt but not other data. Renshaw asked for numbers on how many they serve/served. Blais to reach out to see if they keep any data on that. Was decided to bump it to next month to see if data can be secured.

Olivet: Purchased a cargo van with a \$15,000.00 grant. Their program had 469 deliveries to 90 individuals and their goal is to increase that to 750 deliveries. Their 2024 goals are to increase access to groceries and to build capacity.

Motion made by Montoya, seconded by Sandberg to approve Olivet's final report. All members present voted yes.

Round 2 Midterm Reports: Kazimour had an updated request to their grant. After they cleared 7 acres of land, they wanted to request 2 pole saws, a hole digger and an auger for \$2,140.00 out of the \$2,300.00 they had left.

Motion made by Hannah, seconded by Erickson to approve Kazimour's equipment change. All members present voted yes.

Marion Public Library: Bought a \$1,000.00 freezer and storage supplies with grant money. From July 2023-March 2024, 3,818 pounds of food was donated serving 5,001 teens and 120 adults. Their goal is to further develop the role of connecting people with community resources.

Motion made by Sandberg, seconded by Hannah to approve the Marion Public Library's final report. All members present voted yes.

Matthew 25: Was granted \$1,500.00 for marketing. They used the money to purchase 3 billboards, do a postcard mailing and Facebook advertising. They had a 34% increase in sales from December 2022-December 2023. Their goals are to reach \$12,500.00 in weekly sales, increase production of Ready to Eat Meals to 100 per week and to donate \$12,000.00 in free produce.

The Council is asking for what the increase in sales was after the advertising occurred, what are the SNAP sales revenue and the numbers for foot traffic in the store. Blais will reach out to obtain that information. Will table until next month.

Old Business:

Restaurant/Farmer Meeting @ Cobble Hill Update: Cobble Hill would be available on Monday, June 10, 2024. Qual submitted documents via email for what the brochure could include. The Council decided to form a subcommittee to work on the document itself and a subcommittee to help Qual with bringing the restaurants and farmers together. Project is now named Linn County Farmer & Chef Connection. The subcommittee to work on the document will be comprised of Qual, Renshaw, Schrader and Briana Wagner of Feed Iowa First. The subcommittee to work on bringing restaurants and farmers together will consist of Qual, Sandberg, Hannah and Brewer. The Council discussed having 3-4 events throughout the growing season.

Motion made by Ondler, seconded by Montoya to approve spending up to \$3,000.00 of the budget for local events, marketing, local food and translation in relation to Linn County Farmer & Chef Connection. All members present voted yes.

NewBo Seasonal Testing: Discussion was had on making these events come to fruition. To The Rescue has mentioned that they have immigrant workers that may want to teach cooking classes using culturally relevant, in-season, local foods. It was discussed that four events (two free and two with a paid ticket) will be offered between June and September. Will try to plan events around NewBo's events. NewBo will help to organize it with our subcommittee. The subcommittee consists of Montoya, Hannah and McGrane.

Motion made by Sandberg, seconded by Hannah to approve spending up to \$1,000.00 of the budget for chefs and marketing in relation to the NewBo Seasonal Testing events. All members present voted yes.

Market Support: The Council also discussed how to finish using up the budget of \$905.00.

Motion made by Ondler, seconded by Montoya to approve spending up to \$905.00 of the budget for marketing and translation services for other local markets and events, including local foods. All members present voted yes.

Open Discussion: Erickson invited the Council to come to Rodale Institute on July 9, 2024 for a Field Day. He will send out an email invitation.

Next Meeting: May 23, 2024

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 1:25 PM.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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

Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approved,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Emmaly Renshaw", written over a horizontal line.
vice chair

Emmaly Renshaw, Chair