

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

The Linn County Food Systems Council meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM at the Harris Linn County Public Health Building, 1020 6th St SE, Cedar Rapids, IA in the 2nd floor conference room 234.

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
Gina Mobley- New Pioneer
Kim Guardado-HACAP
Drew Erickson- Rodale Institute
Kelly Ridenour Giurato-SILT

ABSENT: Laura Krouse-Abbe Farm
Matthew McGrane- NewBo City Market
Emily Qual- At Large
Brittany Hannah-At Large

OTHERS

PRESENT: None

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

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Guardado, to approve the June 27, 2024 minutes. All members present voted yes.

Public Comments:

None

Budget Update:

No update

New Business:

January 2025 Symposium vs Smaller events: discussion:

Renshaw opened the discussion on if the council would rather take a step back from the symposium and do the chef/farmer connection instead. Ridenour Giurato liked the chef/farmer. Sandberg stated that both external and internal conversations need to exist and the symposium would be much easier to do since it was well received last year. It was agreed to continue with planning the symposium and a committee was formed that includes: Ridenour Giurato, Guardado, Sandberg and Renshaw. The committee will bring back a date and location as well as budget numbers at the September meeting.

Urban Ag Policy Subcommittee-discussion:

Renshaw and Sandberg went to the National meeting in Detroit. Both think the council should have a subcommittee to work with policy within the government. Guardado asked if they could appoint a team member or others from their organizations. The answer was yes. Renshaw stated how policy changes can take a long time and this was about laying the groundwork and how do we support growing in capacity. Renshaw will reach out to Solid Waste as well.

FARE Grant Video Project – Discussion:

Renshaw and Tertinger would like something to be able to present to others such as short interviews and compilations. Renshaw stated they needed decent equipment to do that. Tertinger said that Linn County communication team could help. Guardado asked for specifics as she has someone from her office that may be able to help as well. Schrader would like a summary of stats in the video as well. Council decided to try to get the Marion Public Library, SE Linn Community Center, Darious, Over the Moon, Buffalo Ridge, Green Square Meals and Aroma Artisan for the project. Erickson may have a drone connection.

FARE Grant Updates:

Round 1 Final Reports:

Olivet Mission:

They are closing on August 31, 2024. HACAP is stepping in. The council will request the funds back. Church has not been responsive to council requests. A certified letter did go out to the church requesting the funds back. If they decide to keep with the program, it will require approval from the council, the van will not be used for anything else, and metrics will need to be reported at six months and 1 year. Council is requesting a response by 9/30/2024.

Fairfax Library:

To be tabled until the next meeting.

Round 2 Midterm Reports:

Full Bowl:

Only changes were for scale. They bought fewer equipment and supplies.

Local Harvest:

No additional information. Follow up next meeting.

Horizons:

Need city approval of design of parking lot.

Round 2 Final Reports:

ASAC:

Increased capacity by 50%. Council is still looking for cubic feet/poundage numbers. Sarah Blais to follow up.

Black Earth Gardens:

They won't know numbers until the end of the season (October/November timeline). Blais to follow up. Guardado asked for final numbers before approving.

United We March Forward:

They would like to shift the funding to a fence (\$2,500.00). A motion was made by Guardado and seconded by Erickson to reallocate funding from the garden to a fence. All members present voted yes.

Old Business:

Chef/Farmer Event Review-Next Steps:

The council agreed as a whole that this was a great first event. Discussion was made about connecting local, inviting farmers to bring product to show, how to utilize the Food Hub, etc. Renshaw stated next event could be early/mid October or November. A committee was formed with Qual.

Future Project Funding-Discussion:

None

Linn County Food Systems Assessment Project Update to BOS-Discussion:

Looking to use this in the recap discussion with the Board. Not much was discussed.

SILT Circle our Cities Next Steps-Discussion:

Ridenour Giurato discussed that this is a USDA funded program to increase land grants. She needs a signed letter from the council that we support. Only looking for support at this time and the money comes from outside. The BOS was sent a letter.

Seasonal Tasting at NewBo City Market- Update:

Renshaw to follow up.

Market Support- Update:

Partnership with Catherine McAuley Center for 3-5 farmers – they are SNAP certified. Asking if council could buy a couple tables and tents (should be under \$500.00).

Iowa Food System Coalition- Discussion:

Discussion on whether the council should sign up as a whole? Guardado stated their website has a lot of great information. Ridenour Giurato is already on the policy team. Renshaw is on land access and Guardado is on the hunger group.

Open Discussion:

Sandberg said ISU has a new employee for the Adult in Youth Rural/Urban Youth Coordinator and that Sandberg has been given a new title which is Regional Director.

Renshaw invited council to come to the Feed Iowa First Field Dat at Wanatee Farms on Friday, September 13, 2024, from 8 – 11 AM.

Next Meeting: September 26, 2024

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Montoya motioned to adjourn and Schrader seconded. All members present voted yes.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approved,



Emmaly Renshaw, Chair