

MINUTES
LINN COUNTY FOOD SYSTEMS COUNCIL
Thursday, May 22, 2025

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 2nd floor conference room 234.

PRESENT: Hailee Sandberg-ISU Extension
Alora Kraus- Feed Iowa First
Aaron Tarchinski- Horizons
Brittany Rohling- Grand Living
Stephanie Schrader- City of Cedar Rapids
Jacqueline Montoya- LCPH
Eva Donnelly- ISU Extension-VIRTUAL
Emmaly Renshaw- IVRCD
Sarah Blais- NewBo City Market
Drew Erickson- Rodale Institute
Kelly Ridenour-Giurato- United Way

ABSENT: Kim Guardado-HACAP
Mariah Andrews- Prairiemoons
Karla Hogan- CRCSD
Gina Mobley- New Pioneer

OTHERS

PRESENT: Audrey- Iowa Big
Ava- ISU Extension Intern

STAFF: Sami Scheetz, Board of Supervisor
Mike Tertinger, Senior Planner
Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

New Member Introductions:

Kraus introduced herself and gave a bit of background to the Council.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Sandberg seconded by Renshaw, to approve the April 24, 2025 minutes. All members present voted yes.

Public Comments:

None

Budget Update:

Tertinger reported the balance to be \$4,887.00.

Old Business:

FARE Grant/Iowa Big Video Project Update:

Audrey presented the video. Discussion was had to add captioning to the video and fix the sound on parts of it. Erickson to get with Audrey before school is out.

New Business:

Small Business Owner: Andrea Miller-Miller Hill Garden

It was decided to take this item off the agenda until Erickson speaks with her.

2025 Plan:

Strategic Planning Project Discussion:

Erickson presented 4 offers to the group. They included Strategy Solutions Incorporated, ISU Extension and Outreach Community and Economic Development (ISUEO-CED), Empowered Solutions Collective and Linn County Community Services/ECICOG.

Blais recused herself and left the meeting at this point due to a possible conflict of interest.

The Council took the offer from Strategy Solutions Incorporated off of the table for discussion due to the bid being over budget.

The Council focused on the remaining three proposals.

ISUEO-CED was discussed first. Renshaw liked the opportunity for multiple facilitators that matched the Council's need. Sandberg appreciated the direct connection to foods. Erickson liked the itemized budget and how we could choose additional services.

Empowered Solutions Collective was discussed next. Montoya thought the company had a great understanding of local food systems. Multiple Council members commented on the optics and a possible conflict of interest with a member on the Council.

Linn County Community Services/ECICOG was discussed next. Renshaw liked the hefty data component and that it has merit with Ashley Balius working so much with the local community. Montoya reiterated that Balius does have a deep understanding of community. Sandberg questioned how much time we would actually receive from Balius. Donnelly liked how it exactly referenced our request. Rohling stated that she liked the examples and links to their other projects.

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Rohling to approve the Council hiring Linn County Community Services/ECICOG to prepare the Food Systems Council Strategic Plan. All members present voted yes.

Tertinger volunteered to reach out to get the contract to sign before June 30, 2025. Discussion was had on how much to put up front (total estimate of project is \$6,750.00).

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Rohling to approve a payment of \$4,887.00 before July 1, 2025, and then the remainder upon completion. All members present voted yes.

At this time, Renshaw and Montoya left the meeting- quorum still met.

Open Discussion:

After additional discussion, an amendment to the motion of hiring Linn County/ECICOG was made in which Chairperson Erickson can sign the contract as it comes in without needing an additional vote.

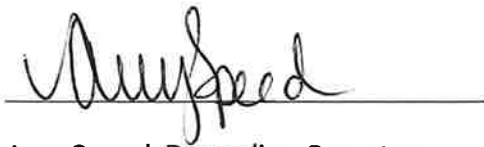
Amended motion was moved by Sandberg, seconded by Rohling, to give Erickson signing authority for the contract when it comes in. All members present voted yes.

Next Meeting:

June 26, 2025

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 1:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approved,



Drew Erickson, Chair