

MINUTES
LINN COUNTY FOOD SYSTEMS COUNCIL
Thursday, August 28, 2025

The Linn County Food Systems Council meeting was called to order at 12:04 PM at the Harris Linn County Public Health Building, 1020 6th St SE, Cedar Rapids, IA in the 2nd floor conference room 234.

PRESENT: Kim Guardado-HACAP
Alora Kraus- Feed Iowa First
Hailee Sandberg- ISU Extension
Brittany Rohling- Grand Living-VIRTUAL (present during Leo's presentation)
Karla Hogan-CRCSD-VIRTUAL
Jacqueline Montoya- LCPH
Gina Mobley- New Pioneer-VIRTUAL
Emmaly Renshaw- IVRCD
Sarah Blais- NewBo City Market (came during Leo's presentation)
Drew Erickson- Rodale Institute
Mariah Andrews-Prairiewoods-VIRTUAL
Stephanie Schrader- City of Cedar Rapids-VIRTUAL
Eva Donnelly- ISU Extension
Kelly Ridenour-Giurato- United Way-VIRTUAL

ABSENT: Aaron Tarchinski- Horizons

OTHERS

PRESENT: Ashley Balius- Linn County Community Services
Leo Broughton-Resident
Grace Nieland- The Gazette

STAFF: Stephanie Lentz-Planning & Zoning Division Manager
Amy Speed-Recording Secretary
Grace Hobson-Intern

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Guardado seconded by Sandberg, to approve the June 26, 2025, minutes. All members present voted yes.

Public Comments:

Leo Broughton- Resident of Linn County discussed his proposal for regenerative gardens in Cedar Rapids Parks (See QR code attached at end of minutes). His ask was for support/gathering of signatures for long-term leases in coordination with the CR Parks. Erickson offered up resources with Rodale and Feed Iowa First.

Budget Update:

Speed gave the budget update. The new fiscal year has arrived and the starting balance is \$4,000.00.

Old Business:

FARE Grant Video Update: Erickson is refining the video. Was at a standstill but with Iowa Big back in session, this should finish up quickly. Guardado and Renshaw to help with voiceovers as well as Sandberg.

Iowa Food Systems Coalition Update: Erickson attended a meeting on Monday and listened to challenges and opportunities.

New Business:

FSC Meeting Day/Time Discussion: Erickson sent out a doodle poll. The “winning” time was every 4th Wednesday from 3:00-4:30 PM.

Guardado made a motion that the Council meets every fourth Wednesday from 3:00-4:30 PM, except November and December will have an alternate day/time, with no July meeting. Renshaw seconded this. All members present voted yes.

After the vote, Nieland pointed out that Supervisor Scheetz has a standing meeting with Public Health that would conflict with that time frame.

Erickson will reach out to Scheetz to see what would work best and then bring that back to the group at the next meeting.

Rodale Field Day Update: Kraus spoke about the field day, which will be held on October 2nd from 4:00-7:00 PM at the Rodale Institute. It is a collaboration with Feed Iowa First regarding organic vegetable production. Erickson invited everyone to attend and please market to the Council’s contacts to get the word out.

Strategic Plan Update: Balius opened the discussion asking for an extension so she could reach more people to gain more opinions. She then presented what she was working on.

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Blais to allow Balius an extension until November 30, 2025, to complete the final Strategic Plan report. All members present voted yes.

Erickson reminded the Council to email any contacts that Balius should be talking to.

Open Discussion:

Renshaw mentioned the DNR public water quality public hearings are happening on September 18th and the 23rd.

Next Meeting:

September 24, 2025, from 3:00-4:30 PM at the Kirkwood ISU Extension Office in Hiawatha.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 1:39 PM.

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 "Drew Erickson", written over a horizontal line.

Drew Erickson, Chair