

MINUTES
LINN COUNTY FOOD SYSTEMS COUNCIL
Wednesday, December 17, 2025

The Linn County Food Systems Council meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM at the Harris Linn County Public Health Building, 1020 6th St SE, Cedar Rapids, IA in the 3rd floor conference room 333.

PRESENT: Brittany Rohling- Grand Living-Virtual
 Alora Kraus- Feed Iowa First-Virtual
 Emmaly Renshaw-IVRCD
 Hailee Sandberg- At-Large
 Jacqueline Montoya- LCPH
 Gina Mobley- New Pioneer-Virtual
 Sarah Blais- At-Large
 Drew Erickson- Rodale Institute
 Stephanie Schrader- City of Cedar Rapids-Virtual
 Kelly Ridenour-Giurato-At-Large-Virtual

ABSENT: Mariah Andrews- Prairiemoons
 Eva Donnelly- ISU Extension
 Kim Guardado- HACAP
 Karla Hogan- CRCSD
 Aaron Tarchinski-Horizons

OTHERS Leo Broughton-Public

PRESENT: Ashley Balus-LCCS

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

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Blais, to approve the October 22, 2025, minutes. All members present voted yes.

Public Comments:

Broughton announced that he was now a member of the Cedar Rapids Park Foundation. They have earmarked \$10,000 for a pilot project at Sinclair Park which will consist of gardens ready to plant (cardboard, compost and hopefully deer fencing). Hope to have ready by Spring 2026.

Budget Update:

Tertinger updated the Council that the balance is \$4,000.00.

Old Business:

FARE Grant Video Final Cut: Erickson shared the final cut that will be presented to the Board of Supervisors. Everyone in attendance agreed that this project was now completed.

Strategic Plan- Wrap up data portion and vote on releasing final payment to ECICOG: Erickson asked the group if the Council is ready to release the final payment. Sandberg agreed with it. Erickson said that we don't have the strategic plan quite yet but Balius chimed in and said the next steps are better to collaborate in person but ECICOG's part is done.

Motion by Renshaw, seconded by Kraus, to approve the release of final payment in the amount of \$1,863.00, to ECICOG for the Strategic Plan Assessment. All members present voted yes.

Strategic Plan- Reflections: Renshaw stated that we need some dedicated time with stickies on a wall. Sandberg said an hour and a half is good for starting the conversation but after the presentation, she personally walked away with "it's so much". The Council really needs to figure out what to focus on. Renshaw mentioned that the Council needs to make sure they are not duplicating work that Public Health is doing. Speed to send Balius all upcoming calendar invites so she can be present.

New Business:

Presentation to BOS- FARE Grant, Symposium Summary and 2025 Accomplishments: Erickson plans on presenting twice: January (2025 Wrap up) and February (Strategic plan summary). Once the presentation is on the BOS agenda, Speed will send out an invitation to everyone. Please attend if you can.

Symposium: After some discussion during the reflections, several members of the Council mentioned that no speakers have been lined up, etc. Erickson asked if it would be ok to move the Symposium. Sandberg thinks an elected official forum type of meeting with surrounding town local leaders would work well. Blais wondered if the library would be a good spot and then do a presentation and networking after.

Motion by Blais, seconded by Sandberg, to postpone the Symposium until the Strategic Plan is finalized. All member present voted yes.

Open Discussion: Renshaw mentioned that there is a new USDA Bridge Loan for \$12 billion dollars for fruit/veg/sugar growers. It is based on acreage. Due by December 19th. IVRCD also has a new 2- year fellowship program that focuses on field training and businesses in incubation. Johnson County Historic Poor Farm Kitchen should be opening in January.

Erickson mentioned that the Food Policy Council meeting was moved to February due to bad weather.

Next Meeting:

January 28, 2026

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Speed, Recording Secretary

Approved,



Drew Erickson, Chair