

**50th Meeting of the
Cass Clay Food Commission
September 11, 2024
Fargo Commission Chambers**

Members Present:

Jim Kapitan, Cass County Commission, Interim Chair
Amy Zundel, West Fargo City Commission
Paul Hankel, Horace City Council (proxy)
Dave Steichen, Dilworth City Council
John Strand, Fargo City Commission
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member
Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member
Carin Engler, At-Large Member
Jeff York, At-Large Member

Members Absent:

Heather Nesemeier, Moorhead City Council
Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission

Others Present:

Michelle Draxten, Fargo Cass Public Health
Cheryl Stetz, Fargo Cass Public Health
Rory Beil, Clay County Public Health
Rita Ussatis, NDSU Extension
Noelle Harden, U of M Extension
Janice Tweet, Great Plains Food Bank
Nicolina Page, Great Plains Food Bank
Chani Thorne, Concordia College
Sarah Orr, Concordia College
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

1a. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda

A motion to approve the order and contents of the overall agenda was made by Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Ms. Johnson. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1b. Review and Action on Minutes from May 8, 2024

A motion to approve the minutes for May 2024 was made by Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Mr. York. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1c. Welcome to New Food Commission Members

Interim Chair Kapitan noted that Fargo City Commissioner John Strand and West Fargo City Commissioner Amy Zundel had been appointed to serve on the Food Commission.

1d. Mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners

Interim Chair Kapitan noted the mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners included as part of meeting agendas in 2024.

2. Commission Introductions

Interim Chair Kapitan led the Commission and steering committee members in a brief round of introductions.

3. Steering Committee Updates

Ms. Draxten provided an informational update to the Commission regarding the steering committee's recent activities, including its participation in the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future Community of Practice that concluded in May 2024, the upcoming Cass Clay Food Partners Strategic Plan, and the formation of a new Food Action Network.

4. Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review

Mr. Altenburg explained that in the past eight years, the Cass Clay Food Partners had developed nearly two dozen resource documents highlighting urban agriculture, food access, sustainability, and other food systems topic areas relevant to the Fargo-Moorhead area. He noted that these documents have included blueprints, which look at food systems from a land development code perspective; and issue briefs and snapshots, which provide overviews of local community issues.

Mr. Altenburg provided a brief overview of the blueprint developed for Backyard Season Extenders (2020).

5. Cornucopia Garden High Tunnel Presentation

Chani Thorne, Concordia College Garden Manager, and Sarah Orr, Concordia College Sustainability Coordinator, presented information on the Cornucopia Garden High Tunnel.

Ms. Thorne stated that Cornucopia was founded in 2009 with a goal to create a more sustainable campus and function as an educational outdoor space. She explained that the high tunnel was funded in 2014-2015 and includes a solar-thermal design to utilize solar energy and adjustable walls that provide ventilation. She noted that the season extension enables multiple crop rotations per growing season and that all produce goes to the college and local community including the Cobber Food Pantry, Heart-n-Soul Community Café, and the Dorthy Day Food Pantry in Moorhead.

6. Hunger Action Month

Janice Tweet and Nicolina Page, Partner Network Manager at the Great Plains Food Bank, provided the Commission information on Hunger Action Month, a nationwide campaign that takes place every September to raise awareness about hunger in communities across the United States.

Ms. Tweet and Ms. Page provided an overview of the Great Plains Food Bank, its goals, and information on several of its programs and services including the Backpack Program, Youth Summer Meals Program, Schol Pantry Program, Mobile Food Pantry, and others. They also provided service statistics from the food bank, information on local food pantries, and several updates from the community including: the recent closing of Dorthy Day West, expansion of community support services at The Arbors at McCormick and A Place for Hope, and Champions Temple, a new food bank partner that works with New Americans in accessing culturally significant foods.

7. Kudos and Community Recognition

Mr. Beil recognized Michelle Draxten for her contributions to the Cass Clay Food Partners over the past three years. He noted that Ms. Draxten has been a vital part of the local health promotion community for eight years working on childhood obesity prevention, breastfeeding support, and food insecurity and food systems. He also noted that Ms. Draxten has been the co-chair of the Cass Clay Food Partners steering committee since September 2021 and the chair of the Cass Clay Hunger Coalition advisory board.

8. Public Comment Opportunity

Interim Chair Kapitan informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments. He noted that members of the community may also submit comments via a comment link when Commission packets are emailed out.

No additional public comments were made.

9. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates and Meeting Reflections

Interim Chair Kapitan asked for the Commission and the steering committee to share any additional updates or meeting reflections.

10. Future Meetings and Commission Action Steps

Interim Chair Kapitan stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on November 13, 2024. He also noted that the next Food Action Network monthly newsletter would be emailed on October 4 and that people could visit the Cass Clay Food Partners website to sign up to receive those.

Interim Chair Kapitan adjourned the meeting at 11:26 AM.