



Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan  
Council of Governments

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CASS CLAY  
FOOD  
PARTNERS

## 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Cass Clay Food Commission

November 8, 2023 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Location: Fargo City Commission Chambers

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|----------|---|
| 10:30 am | 1. Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Approve Order &amp; Contents of the Overall Agenda</li><li>b. Review &amp; Action on Minutes from September 13, 2023<br/><b>(Attachment 1)</b></li></ul>  |
| 10:35 am | 2. Commission Introductions – Chair Preston   |
| 10:40 am | 3. Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review – Adam Altenburg & Erika Franck <b>(Attachment 2)</b>  |
| 10:50 am | 4. North Central USDA Regional Food Business Center Update – Cheryal Hills  |
| 11:10 am | 5. Asset Inventory Activity – Janice Tweet  |
| 11:35 am | 6. Steering Committee Updates – Michelle Draxten  |
| 11:40 am | 7. Kudos & Community Recognition – Michelle Draxten <b>(Attachment 3)</b>   |
| 11:45 am | 8. Public Comment Opportunity – Chair Preston <b>(Attachment 4)</b>   |
| 11:50 am | 9. Commission & Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates & Meeting Reflections – Chair Preston  |
| 11:55 am | 10. Future Meetings & Commission Action Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Food of the North Farewell Celebration – December 1, 2023</li><li>b. Next Coffee with the Commission Event – TBD</li><li>c. Next Commission Meeting – January 10, 2024</li></ul> |
| 12:00 pm | 11. Adjournment   |

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Cass Clay Food Commission meetings are taped and rebroadcast on cable channel TV Fargo 56 each Friday at 11:00 am. People with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and need special accommodations should contact Savanna Leach at Metro COG at 701.532.5100. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements. Meeting minutes are available on the Cass Clay Food Partners website at [www.cassclayfoodpartners.org](http://www.cassclayfoodpartners.org) and Metro COG's website at [www.fmmetrocog.org](http://www.fmmetrocog.org).

A PLANNING ORGANIZATION SERVING

FARGO, WEST FARGO, HORACE, CASS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA AND MOORHEAD, DILWORTH, CLAY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

# **Attachment 1**

**45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Cass Clay Food Commission  
September 13, 2023  
Fargo Commission Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Heather Neseimeier, Moorhead City Council, Interim Chair  
Tony Grindberg, Cass County Commission  
Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission  
Dave Steichen, Dilworth City Council  
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member  
Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member  
Carin Engler, At-Large Member  
Jeff York, At-Large Member

**Members Absent:**

Arlette Preston, Fargo City Commission  
Jace Hellman, Horace City Council (proxy)  
Mandy George, West Fargo City Commission  
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member

**Others Present:**

Michelle Draxten, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Rory Beil, Clay County Public Health  
Janice Tweet, Great Plains Food Bank  
Erika Franck, Clay County Planning and Zoning  
Deb Haugen, Cass Clay Food Partners  
Megan Myrdal, Food of the North  
Jill Ambuehl, Great Plains Food Bank  
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 Mr. Krabbenhoft and seconded by Mr. York. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1b. Review and Action on Minutes from May 10, 2023.**

A motion to approve the minutes for May 2023 was made by Ms. Engler and seconded by Ms. Johnson. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**2. Commission Introductions**

Interim Chair Neseimeier lead Commission and steering committee members in a brief round of introductions.

**3. Food of the North Update**

Megan Myrdal, co-founder and operations director of Food of the North, provided the Commission with a brief update as well as information on a few of Food of the North's concluding events and activities, including a farewell celebration at Drekker Brewhalla in Fargo on December 1.

#### **4. GleaND Presentation**

Ms. Tweet provided the Commission information on GleanND as well as key food system statistics in Cass and Clay counties. She explained that gleaning is the act of collecting excess fresh food from farms, gardens, farmers markets, grocers, restaurants, and other sources to provide for those in need. She noted that 4.7 percent of households in Cass County and 7.4 percent of households in Clay County are food insecure, and that of the 37,432 individuals served by the Great Plains Food Bank in the area, 34 percent are children and 15 percent are seniors.

Ms. Tweet explained that a blueprint for gleaning practices was developed by the Cass Clay Food Partners in September 2017 and that Fargo Cass Public Health allocated funding to launch a regional gleaning network in 2018. She noted that during GleaND's pilot season, volunteers collected 7,092 pounds of food during six separate gleans. Produce collected during these periods included corn, cucumbers, green beans, swiss chard, and peppers. She stated that the network was expanded to Bismarck in 2021, with a focus on apple gleaning, and that nearly 100 volunteers remain in the network today.

#### **5. 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 more of an overview of an issue the community may have seen locally.

Mr. Altenburg provided a brief overview of the Backyard Beekeeping blueprint first developed in August 2015.

#### **6. Steering Committee Updates**

Ms. Draxten provided an informational update to the Commission regarding the Regional Food Policy Council Community of Practice program as well as an update on the new USDA Regional Food Business Center for North Dakota and Minnesota. She also presented a video on Eating Fresh and Local on a Budget developed by the Cass Clay Food Partners and the City of Fargo in late 2022.

#### **7. Cass Clay Hunger Coalition: Overview and Invitation to Annual Hunger and Health Summit**

Jill Ambuehl, Community and State Coalition Coordinator at the Great Plains Food Bank, highlighted the work of the Cass Clay Hunger Coalition and spoke about the upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Hunger and Health Summit on October 26.

Ms. Ambuehl stated that the Cass Clay Hunger Coalition represents more than 40 organizations working collaboratively to end hunger. She noted that organizations include school nutrition programs, local businesses, healthcare partners, charitable feeding organizations, local non-profits, public health and human services, and others. She explained that the coalition works to improve health, wellness, and the livelihoods of those living in Cass and Clay counties by focusing on the root causes of hunger, and increasing access to food and other services. Some of the strategies she highlighted were expanding and strengthening the coalition's Meal Repack Program, collocating essential services, assessing and coordinating food resources and access, and engaging with the coalition's other members.

Ms. Ambuehl informed the Commission about the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Hunger and Health Summit at the Bluestem Center for the Arts on October 26. She noted that confirmed speakers for the event include Ruth Buffalo of the First Nations Women's Alliance and the North Dakota Human Rights Coalition, Ava Williams of Solutions Consulting, Faye Seidler of Faye Seidler Consulting, and Whitney Johnson of Family HealthCare.

## **8. Kudos and Community Recognition**

Ms. Draxten highlighted several people and organizations for their work in the community including:

- The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) recently awarded funding to schools across Minnesota to increase the amount of healthy local foods through its Farm to School programs. The programs support Minnesota school districts and early childhood education centers that want to buy and serve agricultural products produced in Minnesota. Through this program, Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton (DGF) Public Schools and Shannon Nowak, Director of Nutrition Services, received \$71,000 in grant funding to kick start its Farm to Tray program. DGF hopes to work with 10 local farmers during the 2023-24 school year. Locally grown food and ingredients include beef, potatoes, whole wheat, honey, and vegetables.

Shannon Nowak and DGF Public Schools Superintendent Shannon Hunstad were both congratulated for their efforts.

- Steering committee member Rory Beil will be inducted into the UND Letterwinners Association Hall of Fame on October 12 and honored with the Thomas J. Clifford Award. This award was established to honor former UND President, Thomas J. Clifford, and recognizes UND alumni who serve as athletic coaches at the high school or collegiate level. Rory is a former UND sprinter and hurdler who still holds four spots in the program's all-time top-10 list, and has served as the head coach for Fargo Davies High School for the last 10 years. His teams have won eight state titles, including four consecutive championship teams from 2016-19. He has also won state coach of the year four times.

## **9. Public Comment Opportunity**

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

Interim Chair Neseemeier noted that a virtual question had come from Dr. Nancy Turrubiates and students from the NDSU School of Nursing asking what voice would be helpful for future advocacy for the Food Commission and what future nurses in the community should consider regarding food insecurity.

Ms. Engler inquired about the questions that are asked during well-child check-ups at specific ages and whether food insecurity is addressed at these times. Ms. Draxten responded that there are validated questions to address food insecurity that are asked at a majority of appointments and that questions are implemented at each public health institution.

Ms. Johnson encouraged opportunities outside of a clinical setting for work, such as opportunities within public health or Head Start programs. She expressed that, in her experience, she is able to connect to people on a deeper level and is able to work more closely with people to address food insecurity and additional needs.

Interim Chair Nesemeier responded that the Food Commission has five at-large positions and that many current and former members have had public health backgrounds. She lauded their voices on the Commission over the years. She also stressed the importance of having those with nursing and other public health backgrounds run for public office to influence policies and to better shape the well-being of communities and individuals.

Whitney Oxendahl, former steering committee member and co-founder of the Red River Market, shared information about the Fargo-Moorhead Local Foods Facebook page. She noted that over the past few years, the group has grown to nearly 5,000 members and that the page has updates on farmers markets, community gardens, restaurants, producers, and local food nonprofits.

#### **10. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates and Meeting Reflections**

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

#### **11. Commission Action Steps**

Interim Chair Nesemeier stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on November 8, 2023. She also mentioned that the next First Fridays event would be held at 701 Eateries in Fargo on October 6 at 8:00 AM and that the next Coffee with the Commission event would be held in October.

Interim Chair Nesemeier adjourned the meeting at 11:52 AM.



# CASS CLAY FOOD PARTNERS

**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Adam Altenburg, Metro COG  
Erika Franck, Cass County Planning and Zoning  
**Date:** November 3, 2023  
**Re:** ***Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review***

Since March 2015, the Cass Clay Food Partners has developed nearly two dozen resource documents highlighting urban agriculture, food access, sustainability, and other food systems topic areas relevant to the Fargo-Moorhead area. These documents have included blueprints, which look at food systems from a land development code perspective; and issue briefs and snapshots, which provide more of an overview of an issue the community may have seen locally.

In September 2023, the steering committee provided information and an overview of two original blueprints; [Gleaning Practices](#) and [Backyard Beekeeping](#). This month, the steering committee will present information from the issue brief for [Incorporating Food Systems Language into Comprehensive Plans](#).

All blueprints, snapshots, and issue briefs can be found at the link below:

<https://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/fargo-cass-public-health/health-promotion/cass-clay-food-partners/blueprints>

**Requested Action:**

**None**



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Michelle Draxten, Fargo Cass Public Health  
**Date:** November 6, 2023  
**Re:** ***Kudos and Community Recognition***

Since May 2022, the Cass Clay Food Commission has highlighted individuals and organizations for their work in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area and the broader community. This includes awards and recognitions as well as state and local initiatives that support food systems and the values of the Commission.

In November 2023, the Steering Committee would like to recognize the following:

1. Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Public Schools launches Future Farmers of America Chapter

Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton (DGF) School is launching its first Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter. There are currently 20 FFA chapters within a 50-mile radius and DGF and CoBank announced a \$5,000 joint grant to assist in the startup of the new FFA chapter. CoBank is a cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America.

Future Farmers of America is a dynamic youth organization that prepares members for leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. FFA develops members' potential and helps them discover their talent through hands-on experiences, which give members the tools to achieve real-world success. Members are future farmers, chemists, veterinarians, government officials, entrepreneurs, bankers, international business leaders, teachers, and premier professionals in many career fields.

<https://www.ffa.org/>

2. Thank you and congratulations to the Food of the North team

Food of the North has served as the Cass Clay Food Action Network since 2017. During that time, Food of the North has hosted over 80 unique events, launched multiple community partnerships, and has been recognized as a driving force for change in the Fargo-Moorhead local food community.

Food of the North's farewell celebration will be held Friday, December 1st, from 4:30 to 6:00 PM at Drekker's Brewhalla. This event will be a culmination of the Food of the North's impact and a celebration of the improved landscape of local food systems.

<http://foodofthenorth.com/events>

**Requested Action:**  
**None.**



# CASS CLAY FOOD PARTNERS

**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Arlette Preston, Chair  
**Date:** November 3, 2023  
**Re:** ***Public Comment Opportunity***

The public comment opportunity is an open forum for the public to provide comments about specific items on this meeting's agenda, as well as any other issues that may pertain to food systems policies or programs. Members of the public may also submit comments online through the comment form link sent out with the meeting's agenda and packet. People may sign up to receive notices about the Cass Clay Food Commission at <http://fmmetrocog.org/get-involved>.

Comments to the Cass Clay Food Commission will be limited to one minute per individual or at the discretion of the Commission Chair.

**Requested Action:**

**None**