



### 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Cass Clay Food Commission

March 12, 2025 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

**New Location: Metro COG Conference Room**

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| 10:30 am | 1. Welcome  |
|          | a. Welcome to New Food Commission Member Amber Borah, City of Dilworth  |
|          | b. Approve Order & Contents of the Overall Agenda   |
|          | c. Review & Action on Minutes from January 8, 2025 ( <b>Attachment 1</b> )  |
| 10:35 am | 2. Commission Introductions – Chair Nesemeier   |
| 10:40 am | 3. Steering Committee Updates – Cheryl Stetz  |
| 10:50 am | 4. Action Network Updates – Felicity Merritt  |
| 10:55 am | 5. Backyard Chickens Update – Adam Altenburg ( <b>Attachment 2</b> )  |
| 11:15 am | 6. Cass Clay Food Commission 10 Year Celebration & Discussion – Noelle Harden   |
| 11:40 am | 7. Kudos & Community Recognition – Adam Altenburg ( <b>Attachment 3</b> )   |
| 11:45 am | 8. Public Comment Opportunity – Chair Nesemeier ( <b>Attachment 4</b> )   |
| 11:50 am | 9. Commission & Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates & Meeting Reflections – Chair Nesemeier                |
| 11:55 am | 10. Future Meetings & Commission Action Steps   |
|          | a. Next Steering Committee Meeting – March 24, 2025, 1:00 pm<br>Metro COG – 1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street N Suite 232, Fargo |
|          | b. Next Action Network Newsletter – April 4, 2025   |
|          | c. Next Commission Meeting – May 14, 2025, 10:30 am   |
| 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 Angela Brumbaugh 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).

# Attachment 1

**52<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the  
Cass Clay Food Commission  
January 8, 2025  
Fargo Commission Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Heather Nesemeier, Moorhead City Council, Chair  
Tim Flakoll, Cass County Commission  
Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission  
Paul Hankel, Horace City Council (proxy)  
Dave Steichen, Dilworth City Council  
John Strand, Fargo City Commission  
Carin Engler, At-Large Member  
Jeff York, At-Large Member  
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member  
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member  
Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member

**Members Absent:**

Amy Zundel, West Fargo City Commission

**Others Present:**

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  
Erika Franck, Clay County Planning and Zoning  
Deb Haugen, Cass Clay Food Partners  
Dylan Kallman, Great Plains Greens  
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

**1a. Welcome to New Food Commission Member Tim Flakoll, Cass County**

Chair Nesemeier noted that Cass County Commissioner Tim Flakoll was newly appointed to serve on the Food Commission.

**1b. 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 Mr. Krabbenhoft. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1c. Review and Action on Minutes from November 13, 2024**

A motion to approve the minutes for November 2024 was made by Mr. Hankel and seconded by Ms. Engler. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1d. Approve Appointments of At-Large Members**

A motion to approve the reappointments of Carin Engler and Jeff York to the Commission was made by Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Mr. Flakoll. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

## **2. Commission Introductions**

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

## **3. Steering Committee Updates**

Ms. Tweet provided an informational update to the Commission regarding the steering committee's recent activities, including its new mission, vision, values, and items related to the 2025 work plan.

## **4. Urban Agriculture Framework**

Anna Johnson presented the urban agriculture framework, based in part on the draft blueprint on urban agriculture presented to the Commission in November 2024. She explained that the framework is based on one of the five new pillars developed for the Cass Clay Food Partners to serve as a tool in evaluating existing document, with information related to local ordinances and their impact on the food system. She noted that, since zoning controls land use, many elements of the food system are impacted by zoning codes in one way or another. She also noted the importance of promoting equity and access in urban agriculture.

A motion to approve the urban agriculture framework was made by Mr. Krabbenhoft and seconded by Ms. Kopperud. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

## **5. Backyard Chickens Review**

Mr. Altenburg began by explaining that, in August 2024, the Fargo City Commission received a public comment on whether the city would consider raising the number of permitted chickens from four to six. He stated that no official action was taken at that time, though city commission members asked that the idea be vetted through proper channels and that a request to change the ordinance had been received by the City Auditor's Office.

Mr. Altenburg noted that in recent years, Moorhead and West Fargo had both adopted ordinances allowing urban chickens. Both cities allow up to six chickens per permit holder, and Moorhead allows up to 12 on lot sizes of one acre or more. He also noted that Horace currently allows chickens with a conditional use permit in its SR-1 Suburban Residential zoning district. He stated that there were approximately 50 active permit holders in Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo, and that complaints had been minimal in all three cities.

Mr. Altenburg concluded by explaining potential issues should Fargo amend its current ordinance to allow up to six chickens, including the potential need for existing coops to be expanded so as to meet the requirements that each chicken has four square feet within coops and 10 square feet in fenced-in chicken run, and the need for coops to be reinspected upon expansion. He noted that these issues were all relatively minor.

After discussion by the Commission, a motion for the steering committee to review and revise the Backyard Chickens blueprint last amended in 2020 was made by Mr. Strand and seconded by Mr. Miller. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

## **6. Great Plains Greens Presentation**

Dylan Kallman, founder of Great Plains Greens, presented information on Great Plains Greens. He explained that, since 2023, he and his team have been producing leafy greens in a retrofitted shipping container using hydroponic practices. He noted that this helps grow produce with 99 percent less water and that their team delivers between 20 and 40 pounds of lettuce and herbs a week to area venues. In addition to providing produce to multiple restaurants, Great Plains Greens has also participated in local farmers markets.

## **7. Kudos and Community Recognition**

Ms. Franck noted the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton school's "share cart" program which helps reduce food waste by allowing students to share unwanted or unfinished food with others. She explained that the initiative is part of a broader effort to combat food waste in Minnesota, where public schools generate nearly 500,000 pounds of waste daily. Students can place unopened, shelf-stable items like granola bars and crackers on the cart, as well as fruits with intact skins and temperature-controlled items like milk and string cheese. The program not only helps reduce waste but also provides food for students who may need it.

## **8. Public Comment Opportunity**

Chair Nesemeier 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.

Paul Bervik, a Fargo resident with backyard chickens, expressed his appreciation to the Food Commission and the discussion regarding urban chickens.

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

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

## **10. Future Meetings and Commission Action Steps**

Chair Nesemeier stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on March 12, 2025. She noted that this meeting would be held at a new location at Metro COG. She noted that the next steering committee meeting would be January 27 and that Commissioners and others were welcome to attend. She also noted that the next Food Action Network monthly newsletter would be emailed on January 10 and that people could visit the Cass Clay Food Partners Facebook page to sign up to receive those.

Chair Nesemeier adjourned the meeting at 11:54 AM.



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Adam Altenburg, Metro COG  
**Date:** March 7, 2025  
**Re:** *Backyard Chickens Update*

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 topics 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 a local community issue. Members have also developed a new framework document with information regarding zoning practices, local ordinances, and urban agriculture. This framework is intended to be one of five historical pillar framework documents for the Cass Clay Food Partners to serve as a tool for evaluating existing documents.

In January 2025, the steering committee was directed to review and revise the Backyard Chickens blueprint originally developed in 2015 and amended in 2020. This is in response, in part, to comments received by the City of Fargo to raise the number of permitted chickens from four to six as well as updated information about new ordinances in Moorhead and West Fargo.

Additionally, the steering committee has reached out to Dr. Abby Schuft, a poultry specialist with University of Minnesota Extension. She will talk about the impacts of avian flu and what that means specifically for communities that have adopted urban chicken policies or ordinances. A pre-recorded video will be presented to the Commission at the meeting.

Other Cass Clay Food Partners resources can be found at the links below:

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

<https://www.fmmetrocog.org/resources/planning/food-commission>



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Adam Altenburg, Metro COG  
**Date:** March 7, 2025  
**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 March 2025, the Steering Committee would like to recognize the following:

1. Certificate of Appreciation to Deb Haugen, MPH, RD

Deb Haugen has been with the Cass Clay Food Partners since its original inception as the Cass Clay Food Systems Initiative in 2010. During that time, she has served as an invaluable source of knowledge and expertise on issues related to school nutrition and wellness policies. For the past 16 years, she has provided dietitian consulting services to the community by sharing her knowledge at classes, seminars, and community events. She has also worked with CassClayAlive! where she assessed and promoted stronger school wellness policies and provided continuing education for school food service directors. She is also an active member of Growing Together Community Gardens, a group comprised of over 300 volunteers who work at nine different locations throughout the area.

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



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Heather Nesemeier, Chair  
**Date:** March 7, 2025  
**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 two minutes per individual or at the discretion of the Commission Chair.

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