

Attachment 1

**48th Meeting of the
Cass Clay Food Commission
March 13, 2024
Fargo Commission Chambers**

Members Present:

Arlette Preston, Fargo City Commission, Chair
Heather Nesemeier, Moorhead City Council
Paul Hankel, Horace City Council (proxy)
Jim Kapitan, Cass County Commission
Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission
Dave Steichen, Dilworth City Council
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member
Carin Engler, At-Large Member
Jeff York, At-Large Member

Members Absent:

Mandy George, West Fargo City Commission
Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member

Others Present:

Michelle Draxten, 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
Eric Hegg, Global Refuge
Melissa Anderson, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Linda Schloer, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Amber Lockhart, Northern Cass School District
Zoe Absey, 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 Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Ms. Nesemeier. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1b. Review and Action on Minutes from January 10, 2024

A motion to approve the minutes for January 2024 was made by Ms. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Krabbenhoft. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1c. Welcome to New Food Commission Member Paul Hankel, City of Horace (proxy)

Chair Preston welcomed Communications Specialist Paul Hankel as the new proxy member for the City of Horace.

1d. Mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners

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

2. Commission Introductions

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

3. Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review

Ms. Tweet provided a brief overview of the revised Hunger and Food Insecurity snapshot. She referred to Hunger on the Plains 2023, the Great Plains Food Bank quadrennial report that surveyed 518 clients from 68 food pantries across North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota that noted that 43 of households served included children, 11 percent included seniors, 74 percent had a household member with at least one chronic condition, 40 percent did not have access to a vehicle, and nearly two in five households surveyed had to make choices between paying for food and other essential needs such as utilities, transportation, and healthcare. She concluded by mentioning initiatives to reduce hunger and food insecurity in the region including federal programs, food assistance programs, local organizations, and local initiatives such as farmers markets, community gardens, and others.

4. Implementation of USDA Nutrition Assistance Programs in North Dakota

Linda Schloer and Melissa Anderson from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) presented information on USDA child nutrition and food distribution programs in North Dakota. They noted that NDDPI administers three USDA household programs in North Dakota: the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). They also explained that NDDPI administers multiple child nutrition programs in North Dakota: the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Summer EBT (S-EBT), the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) which includes the School Breakfast Program and the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program.

5. Meal Repack Program

Zoe Absey of the Great Plains Food Bank and Amber Lockhart of Northern Cass School District informed the Commission about the Cass Clay Hunger Coalition Meal Repack Program.

Ms. Absey explained that the Meal Repack Program started in 2021 and that the goal is to support students and families experiencing food insecurity. She noted that there are currently six participating schools: Moorhead High School, the Moorhead Career Academy, Northern Cass, Carl Ben Middle School, Sheyenne High School, and Barnesville Public Schools.

Ms. Lockhart noted that key stakeholders of the program include nutrition staff to ensure safe preparation and repacking of food, a school pantry coordinator to assist with meal storage and distribution and also to maintain records, and an administrative team to launch and sustain the program. She also noted food label requirements and a review implementation guide to assess available resources, determine distribution processes and location, and determine who will receive meals.

6. Steering Committee Updates

Ms. Draxten provided an informational update to the Commission regarding the steering committee's recent activities.

7. Kudos and Community Recognition

Ms. Draxten recognized Keith Lehman and his support for the Fargo North Open Door program. She explained that Open Door is a hybrid food pantry and clothing room for students in need. She noted that Fargo North Mathematics teacher and Department Chair Keith Lehman has helped raise nearly \$10,000 for Open Door over the past four years by running one mile for every \$100 raised each fall and winter.

Ms. Draxten also recognized area restaurants and chefs that had been named semifinalists for the James Beard Award. She explained that the James Beard Foundation's Restaurants and Chef Awards recognize exceptional talent and achievement in the culinary arts, hospitality, media, and broader food system, as well as demonstrated commitment to racial and gender equity, community, and sustainability. The 2024 Restaurant and Chef semifinalists were recognized across 22 categories and included:

- Outstanding Restaurateur: Nikki Ness Berglund and Ryan Nitschke, Luna Fargo, Sol Ave. Kitchen, Nova Eatery and others, Fargo, ND
- Outstanding Bakery: Nichole's Fine Pastry & Café, Fargo, ND
- Best Chef: Midwest – Andrea Baumgardner, BernBaum's, Fargo, ND

8. Public Comment Opportunity

Chair Preston 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.

No additional public comments were made.

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

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

10. Future Meetings and Commission Action Steps

Chair Preston stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on May 8 and noted that the next Coffee with the Commission event would be on a date yet to be determined.

Chair Preston adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM.