

**16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Cass Clay Food Commission  
September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Fargo Commission Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Arland Rasmussen, Cass County Commission, Chair  
Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commission  
Jenny Mongeau, Clay County Commission  
Jim Aasness, Dilworth City Council  
Heidi Durand, Moorhead City Council  
Mindy Grant, At-Large Member  
Chris Olson, At-Large Member  
Kayla Pridmore, At-Large Member  
Dana Rieth, At-Large Member

**Members Absent:**

John Strand, Fargo City Commission  
Jon Evert, At-Large Member

**Others Present:**

Megan Myrdal, Project Coordinator  
Kim Lipetzky, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Noelle Harden, U of M Extension  
Deb Haugen, Cass Clay Food Partners  
Joleen Baker, Cass Clay Food Partners  
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

**1(a). Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda**

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

**1(b). Review and Action on Minutes from May 10 and July 12, 2017**

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Durand and seconded by Mr. Thorstad. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

Dana Rieth arrived at 10:33 AM.

**1(c). Commission Check-In**

Chair Rasmussen informed the Commission that Barb Witteman from Concordia College would be serving on the Steering Committee.

Chair Rasmussen stated that Commission members had an opportunity to provide updates on news or events happening in the community.

Ms. Durand stated that Ruby's Pantry, a non-profit organization that collects and distributes surplus food items, was now operating at M|State. She explained that this was in response to a

school survey which found that up to 30 percent of students face food insecurity and have difficulties being able to afford food. She stated that the program is open to the public.

Ms. Grant explained that Growing Together, the community gardening network in the metro area, was having a good season. She also stated that FARRMS would be having a business development program in November and that registration was now open for those interested in becoming new farmers.

Ms. Harden informed the Commission that a Future of Food event would be held on November 20.

Mr. Aasness stated that the Whistle Stop Park Farmers Market in Dilworth was having its best season to date.

Ms. Haugen explained that the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) would be holding a class entitled 'Farm to School Benefits and Procurement' on October 17. She stated that the all-day session would be held at the Dakota Medical Foundation in Fargo and that people could contact Deb Egeland for more information.

Ms. Baker stated that the Prairie Roots Co-op celebrated its grand opening on September 6 and encouraged Commission members who hadn't already stopped by to check out the new store in downtown Fargo.

Ms. Lipetzky explained that the Cass Clay Food Partners had received funding from the chronic disease grant administered through the North Dakota Department of Health. She stated that this money would fund activities of the Commission as well as provide resources for gleaning activities in collaboration with the Great Plains Food Bank.

Ms. Myrdal stated that it was Welcoming Week in the metro area and that a Community Table/International Potluck would be at the Plains Art Museum on September 14 from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. She explained that the Red River Market would be holding a Welcoming Day celebration on September 16 highlighting immigrant-owned businesses in the area. She also stated that she and Mr. Altenburg would be speaking at the North Dakota Planning Association meeting on September 28 highlighting the work of the Commission and discussing ways in which planners and food policy experts can better address food systems issues in their communities.

Ms. Myrdal also informed the Commission that she had taken a new position as the Family Nutrition Program Agent for NDSU Extension. She stated that she would be stepping down from her role as Project Coordinator but would still be active on the Steering Committee and future Commission meetings.

## **2. Gleaning Blueprint Discussion and Vote for Approval**

Chair Rasmussen asked Ms. Baker if there were any updates or revisions made to the gleaning blueprint. Ms. Baker informed the Commission that she included additional information on the Sportsmen Against Hunger program, a program by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department and the Community Action Partnership that connects hunters with certified processing facilities in North Dakota. She also include information on the Minnesota Hunter Harvested Venison Donation Program, a collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. She also noted changes to some of the contacts for food donation centers in the metro area which were listed in the appendix.

A motion to approve the gleaning blueprint was made by Ms. Mongeau and seconded by Mr. Aasness. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

### **3. Heart-n-Soul Community Cafe**

Leola Daul provided a brief update on the Heart-n-Soul Community Café, a pay-what-you-can café that operates the fourth Sunday of each month. She thanked members of the Commission who have helped with the café in the past.

Ms. Daul informed the Commission that she had received a grant from the Consensus Council, a non-profit organization that provides services to support building public policy agreements. She explained that the café has put out a survey to gauge issues such as food insecurity and social isolation in the community. She stated that the survey is both online and that paper copies were available at the café and other agencies and community groups in the area. She also explained that she is working with a consultant on achieving 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

### **4. Cass Clay Food Partners: New Structure and Strategic Plan**

Ms. Myrdal provided the Commission information on the new structure of the Cass Clay Food Partners. She explained that there was a need for the former Cass Clay Food Systems Initiative (CCFSI) to move beyond an “initiative” to better serve the needs of the community. She also stated that this would help create a pathway for more community involvement in food systems considerations.

Ms. Myrdal explained that, in addition to the Cass Clay Food Commission and the Steering Committee, an additional group called the Cass Clay Food Action Network would be starting up to facilitate community involvement in increasing access to safe, nutritious, affordable, and culturally-based foods. She stated that the Food Action Network would meet monthly and would be open to any individual or organization interested in working to advance the mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners.

Ms. Mongeau stated she was excited to see the new structure and felt the Food Action Network would be instrumental in helping community members have a platform to bring forward food systems issues to their local jurisdictions.

Mr. Thorstad asked what role corporate partners may have, such as distribution facilities and retail operations. Ms. Myrdal responded that this may depend on the conversations the Food Action Network has with these types of organizations and that it might also depend on the corporate partners themselves and their desire to engage in the work of the Cass Clay Food Partners. She stated that there may be opportunities for collaboration with corporate partners on future gleaning activities. Ms. Durand added that Ruby’s Pantry already works to distribute corporate surplus food items.

### **5. Discussion on City of Horace Representative to the Cass Clay Food Commission**

Mr. Altenburg stated that, with growth issues and increased urbanization in the southwest metro area, the City of Horace had recently become a full member of Metro COG’s Policy Board, bringing it to a total of seven voting members. He stated that the Steering Committee had, on several occasions, discussed the idea of approaching the City of Horace to gauge their interest in becoming a member of the Cass Clay Food Commission. He explained that the Steering Committee ultimately wanted to ask the Commission their views before extending a formal invitation to Horace.

A motion to extend an invitation to the City of Horace on appointing a member to the Cass Clay Food Commission was made by Ms. Mongeau and seconded by Mr. Thorstad. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

#### **6. Public Comment Opportunity**

Chair Rasmussen informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments.

Stacie Loegering, Executive Director of the Emergency Food Pantry, provided the Commission information on some of the recent activities of the pantry. She stated that she has been working with other hunger relief organizations and service providers to reestablish the Hunger Coalition in the Fargo-Moorhead area and that its next planning meeting would be held on September 27 at the Great Plains Food Bank.

Nancy Carriveau, Food Resource Manager for the Great Plains Food Bank, stated that in response to some earlier questions, her organization works with many corporate partners to provide bulk food items for distribution to approximately 218 food pantries in North Dakota and Clay County. She explained that the food bank also has drivers that make regular pick-ups at major retailers such as Costco, Sam's Club, and Walmart, as well as several school districts and other distributors.

Margie Bailey stated that she was at the meeting to learn more about the work of the Commission. She explained that she has had several discussions over the years with NDSU and NDSCS about establishing a culinary arts program in downtown Fargo.

#### **7. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable**

Chair Rasmussen asked for the Commission and the steering committee to share any additional updates.

#### **8. Commission Action Steps**

Ms. Myrdal asked Commissioners to complete a brief survey regarding their knowledge and understanding of food access strategies.

Chair Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 11:51 AM.