

MINUTES
LINN COUNTY FOOD SYSTEMS COUNCIL
Thursday, August 26, 2021

The Linn County Food Systems Council meeting was called to order at 12:00 P.M. in conference room 3A/3B at the Jean Oxley Public Service Center, 935 2nd St. SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

PRESENT: Sandy Rosenberger, ISU Extension
Chris Thoms, At-Large
Stephanie Schrader, City of CR Community Services Coordinator
August Stolba, Prairiewood Franciscan Spirituality Center
Kim Guardado, HACAP
Mary Griffin, Horizons
Carter Oswood, Feed Iowa First
Jason Snell, Sunrise Movement Community Action Fund

ABSENT: Laura Seyfer, At-Large
Tiffani Green, At-Large
Lynne Abbott, Linn County Public Health
Scott Koepke, Indian Creek Nature Center, Farm Manager

OTHERS Ilsa Dewald, City of Iowa City
PRESENT: Stacey Walker, Linn County Supervisor
Louis Zumbach, Linn County Supervisor

STAFF: Mike Tertinger, Linn County Planning and Development, Staff
Jessie Black, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the August 26, 2021 Food Systems Council Meeting were approved as submitted.

Budget

Tertinger said FSC account balance is \$3604.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Discussion

Darrin Gage, Director of Policy and Administration for the Linn County Board of Supervisors, introduced himself to the council. All members of the council introduced themselves as well.

Gage explained what ARPA funds were and how they were to be allocated. ARPA funding is a 1.9 trillion dollar relief fund to help those affected by the pandemic. He stated that Linn County will receive \$44 million of that in two payments, each for \$22 million. The county has already received the first payment and is holding three public forum sessions to get input on how to allocate the funds. Tonight will be the third of three sessions. Gage encouraged all members of the council to take the survey on the Linn County website to vote on ways to spend funds. At the end of these sessions, the Board of Supervisors will create applications for those who wish to receive funds. Gage said he was trying to coordinate the application process with the City of Cedar Rapids and Marion to create one fluid process for all. The Board of Supervisors would be responsible for reviewing applications and determining how funds will be spent.

The Supervisors will have until December 31, 2022 to allocate funds. All funds will need to be spent by December 31, 2026.

Oswood wondered if there were other Iowa counties that had already established an application process. Gage said yes, but added that most other counties do not have as high a population as Linn, so our process would need to be more robust.

Walker added that the underlying theme for the application process would be equity; he would like to create an application that is simple enough anyone can apply, regardless of resources or social status.

Zumbach reminded the council that these funds are one & done. Once the \$44 million has been distributed, it is gone. He recommended applications not be submitted for reoccurring expenses such as an employee salary.

Gage said requests for a salary position would be considered, but it may be something that requires grants to help fund down the road. He mentioned applying for ARPA funds to get position up & running, but added that the position should not rely on ARPA funds because they are not revolving.

Gage referenced the US Department of the Treasury's website for council members to learn more. Specifically, the Interim Final Rule.

The group discussed several ways the funds could be spent within the council; salary for Food Systems Coordinator, micro-grant program, more land and infrastructure for future farmers, more infrastructure and collaboration with HACAP to store perishables, etc.

Oswood asked Walker how many elections would take place between now and allocation of ARPA funds. Walker said two.

Oswood suggested each proposal be presented as one page or less.

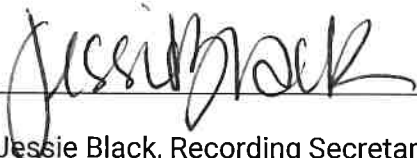
Open Discussion

Guardado informed the council that HACAP is pursuing a proclamation for Hunger Action Month of September from the Linn County Board of Supervisors.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 1:41 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved,



Jessie Black, Recording Secretary

~~Carter Oswood, Chair~~

August Stolba, Vice Chair