

Clark County Food System Council

Working Framework

Our Vision:

To have a healthy community and thriving local food system that:

- Provides access to healthy and culturally appropriate food for all residents;
- Values and preserves community land for food production;
- Maximizes the use of local, regional and seasonal foods;
- Meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations.

Our Mission:

The Clark County Food System Council increases and preserves access to safe, local and healthy food for all residents of Clark County.

Strategies: *The Clark County Food System Council supports a viable, economical and sustainable local food system through multiple strategies including:*

- Strengthening the connections between food, health, natural resource protection, economic development and the agricultural community;
- Researching, analyzing and reporting on information about the local food system;
- Advocating for and advising on food system and food policy implementation;
- Promoting and providing education on food system issues.

Background:

The Food System Council (FSC) is a citizen advisory board that is comprised of individuals from many sectors of the community food system that have come together around common interests and beliefs about a healthy sustainable food system for Clark County. Council formation is sponsored by Community Choices and Steps to a Healthier Clark County Access to Healthy Foods Team and will also be supported by Clark County Public Health.

This framework is the working document for the initial formation of the Council and will be used as the Council is formed and as final bylaws are created and approved.

Purpose:

The Council is formed to:

- Establish and maintain a comprehensive dialogue and assessment of the current food system in our community;
- Provide a forum for people involved in different parts of our community food system and government to meet and learn about how each others' actions impact our food system;
- Identify and prioritize issues and make recommendations that promote, support and strengthen access to healthy food for citizens in our community.

Membership:

The Council will be comprised of a minimum of 15 and maximum of 21 elected members representing as many of the following professions and/or viewpoints as possible: agriculture, nutrition, education, emergency food systems, health care, food services, food manufacturers and distributors, waste management, planning, transportation, grocery, community members, business or economic development, human services, faith based organizations, land use and concerned citizens. Members shall live or work in Clark County and shall serve without compensation.

In addition to the elected membership, the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) will have the ability to appoint a member to the council. The PHAC member will have the same rights and responsibilities of other council members, including voting. The appointee will work as a liaison keeping PHAC informed of FSC activities and providing a link for PHAC support, as requested by the council.

Initially, Council members are appointed for one or two-year terms and may be reappointed for an additional term with rotations that ensure continuity with new members joining experienced members. The membership selection process shall strive to consider racial, socioeconomic, ethnic and geographic diversity.

The Council shall establish standing committees and/or issues committees to perform the work of the Council and to include additional stakeholders. As circumstances arise, the Council can alter, change or disband these committees.

Council members are expected to attend all meetings. Excused absences (sickness, death in family, business trips or emergencies) will not affect a member's status. However, three consecutive meetings and/or more than three unexcused absences in a 12-month period shall constitute cause to recommend resignation and replacement of the position.

Officers shall be elected by a majority of vote of the Council and include a chairperson and vice-chairperson. Officers shall serve for a term of one year or until their successors are elected.

Having a broad representation of support and interest from across the local food system is important to the efforts of the Food System Council. Individuals, organizations or agencies that support the mission of the Clark County food System Council are invited to participate as affiliate members. Affiliate members provide input and resources to the work of the council, including assistance on work activities, but are not voting members. The membership committee will be responsible to develop criteria for affiliate applications, to review requests for affiliate status quarterly and report back to the council regarding recommendations for affiliate membership.

Duties of Officers:

Chairperson-

- Develop meeting agendas with staff and lead the Council meetings.
- Serve as the main liaison between the Council and government representatives.
- Represent the organization to the community.
- Ensure the Council acts in accordance with policies and mission.
- Facilitate consensus decision-making whenever possible.
- Put aside personal opinions when speaking for the FSC.
- Commit to keeping the work of the FSC going between meetings.
- *(The first year will be a one- year term. The Council will revisit next year to determine continuance for a two- year commitment.)*

Vice-Chairperson-

- Assume duties of chairperson in his/her absence.
- Ensure FSC acts in accordance with its policies and mission.
- Commit to keeping the work of the FSC going between meetings.
- Assist the chairperson with FSC tasks as needed.
- Commit to taking over for chair when term is up
- *(There is an assumption that the Vice Chairperson will take over the chair position, though there is not guarantee that they will be Chairperson in 2009-2010. The Council will reassess this process next year.)*

Meetings are open to all community members but only the Council members will vote and/or take action on recommendations and work activities for the Council.

Meetings:

The Council shall hold regularly scheduled meetings that are publicly announced in advance. All regularly scheduled meetings will include a reasonable allotment of time for community input.

Special meetings can be called by the officers of the Council. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated. Except for cases of emergency, at least five (5) days notice shall be given.

Support for meeting organization, minute taking and distribution is provided by staff.

Ground Rules:

Council members agree to-

- Start and end meetings on time.
- Turn cell phones to vibrate or off.
- Read minutes when a meeting has been missed.
- Build trust by meeting commitments to one another.
- Fully participate, actively listen and use open communication methods.
- Value each others' opinions.
- Maintain a focus on vision, mission and strategies.
- Work toward progress.
- Uphold decisions made by the Council (speak with a unified voice).

Staff agrees to-

Agenda-Meeting Planning

- Receive requests from membership for agenda items prior to second Tuesday of the month.
- Meet with co-chairs to prioritize items and develop agenda for next meeting.

Meeting Setup and Support:

- Set up meeting space.
- Assure note taker and meeting leaders are present.
- Assist with flow and time keeping during meeting.
- Provide technical assistance as necessary
- Review minutes with co-chairs for completeness/accuracy.
- Send minutes, next agenda and any attachments to council 1-2 weeks prior to the next meeting.

General Support

- Be an active participant in the workings of the Council.
- Receive and distribute appropriate information e-mails to membership.
- Assist in seeking resources for council work.

- Assist council in connecting with other boards, committees and community groups and elected officials.
- Assist sub committees and task forces, as needed.

Decision Making: The FSC will make decisions by consensus.

- If consensus is not reached, the FSC will decide how to proceed on a case-by-case basis. Options could include deferring the decision and reconsidering it later, forming a subcommittee to gather more information, and/or getting external feedback on the issue.
- For each Council member, the standard for agreement is that feels that they can support the decision.
- The FSC will check consensus by a thumbs up, down, or sideways poll (sideways poll means “I need more clarification and/or check in with me”). No abstentions.
- If a Council member disagrees, s/he should clearly articulate concerns and try to offer an alternative solution.
- Everyone should understand whether the issue being discussed is time-sensitive.
- A Council member who must miss a meeting and has strong opinions about an issue that will be discussed should find a way to convey their opinions to the group.
- A quorum of Council members, which will consist of one-half of council plus one, need to be present for decisions to occur, with either the Chair or Vice chair also present.
- Council members need to be present to participate in a decision (no proxies).
- Council work tasked to committees or task forces that require timely attention may be approved via e-mail. A deadline for members to respond will be established and lack of response will be determined as consensus to move the issue forward.

Criteria for Taking on Issues:

- Is there a direct connection between the issue and the vision, mission and strategies?
- Is it an immediate issue that will have a major impact on the food system?
- Is the issue urgent or time sensitive?
- Does the issue build or sustain an existing effort?
- Can the FSC make a difference or influence the issue? What community or affiliation are we trying to influence?
- Does the FSC have the resources to commit to the issue?
- Do we know enough to decide?
- What are the basic pieces of information we need to take this on?
- Who else is working on the issue?

** Food System Definition - The chain of activities beginning with the production of food and moving on to include processing, distributing, wholesaling, retailing, preparation and consumption of food and eventually to the disposal of food waste

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