

Bylaws of the Douglas County Food Policy Council

Revised and approved November, 6 2024

ARTICLE I. NAME

Section 1.

The name of the organization shall be the Douglas County Food Policy Council. Hereinafter referred to as the FPC or the Council.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The FPC seeks to support a successful, sustainable local food system in Lawrence and Douglas County. To this end, the purpose of the FPC is:

1. To advise elected officials on food-system related policy issues and
2. To provide a community forum for local food system development.

ARTICLE III. GOALS (Areas of Focus and Community Outcomes)

Section 1.

The work of the FPC shall help advance community progress towards the following goals:

1. Agricultural producers, food entrepreneurs, and food sector workers thrive in our regional economy.
2. As our cities grow, we prioritize natural resource conservation and maintain working lands to promote soil health.
3. We build and design our communities to ensure food access, foster health, and eliminate food deserts.
4. Our community fosters an equitable food system.
5. Our community eliminates waste in our local food system.

Section 2.

While pursuing its goals, the FPC should seek to uphold the following principles:

1. Build relationships and understanding across the urban-rural divide
2. Find balance across the goals in Article III, Section 1
3. Respect individual rights while upholding the common good
4. Implement actions and policies based upon community context

ARTICLE IV. DUTIES

Section 1.

The FPC shall advance its work by convening and engaging diverse perspectives. In particular, the FPC shall give attention to two essential considerations:

1. Ensuring balance across the county's urban and rural communities, with attention to the important voice of multiple agricultural producers from various sectors, production systems, and marketing channels of agriculture.

2. Advance equitable representation towards a just and fair food system, where all residents can participate fully, regardless of socioeconomic status, geography, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, ancestry, familial status, sexual orientation, or immigration status. Equally applying universal interventions may not address the specific needs of some populations facing systemic barriers and disadvantages.

Section 2.

The FPC shall identify and address pressing issues, challenges, and policy opportunities related to the local food system. The FPC shall seek to understand and identify the following considerations as a primary means of advancing its work:

1. Local conditions.
2. Models of best practice and their relevance to Lawrence and Douglas County.
3. Possible timeline for implementation.
4. Financial implications and future impacts.
5. Consideration of those in the community who will be most impacted by potential policy changes.
6. Possible unintended consequences.

Section 3.

The FPC shall support implementation of the Douglas County Food System Plan (adopted on June 28, 2017 by the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners and on July 11, 2017 by the City of Lawrence Commission), in collaboration with city and county staff and community partners. This may include:

1. Prioritizing initiatives.
2. Clarifying responsibility for work on specific actions.
3. Assessing progress and identifying indicators to track progress.
4. Inviting community engagement.
5. Ensuring accountability in meeting goals and objectives in the plan.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERS

Section 1.

Members shall be appointed by the Douglas County Commission or City of Lawrence Commission for a term of three years.

Section 2.

Terms of service will begin at the start of the first meeting of the calendar year.

Section 3.

In the event of a member's inability to serve or resignation, the County Commission or City of Lawrence Commission shall appoint another person to serve for the remainder of the unexpired term so created. Service of a partial term will not apply when calculating applicable term limits.

Section 4.

No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms as a member.

Section 5.

There shall be thirteen (13) voting members on the FPC appointed by both the City of Lawrence and Douglas County Commissions comprised based upon the following guidelines.

1. Appointed by the County:
 - a. **Up to (3) members serving as organizational liaisons from key food system sectors.** If a liaison cannot be identified, another appointment may be recommended as outlined in Section 5.3.
 - i. One (1) representative of an agricultural or natural resource organization
 - ii. One (1) representative of an economic development or entrepreneur support organization
 - iii. One (1) representative of a local public health organization
 - iv. If they are not represented through a liaison appointment, the following organizations may serve the FPC in an ex officio capacity due to their foundational role in establishing the FPC and Food System Plan: Douglas County Farm Bureau, K-State Research and Extension-Douglas County, Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health.
 - b. **Five (5) members bringing relevant local food systems professional or personal experience,** as outlined in Section 5.3.
2. Appointed by the City of Lawrence:
 - a. **Five (5) members bringing relevant local food systems professional or personal experience,** as outlined in Section 5.3.
3. Among all thirteen (13) FPC members, professional or personal experience shall satisfy the considerations below, with recognition that individual members may bring relevant experience in more than one of these areas:
 - a. **Agricultural producer(s) from a range of production systems, sectors, and marketing channels** (including but not limited to animal protein, specialty and/or commodity crops);
 - b. **Members bringing significant experience related to building a thriving regional food economy** (including but not limited to food-based entrepreneurs, food retail outlet staff);
 - c. **Members bringing significant experience related to agricultural and natural resource conservation, preservation, and resilience** (including but not limited to agricultural producers, water or soil conservationists, rural landowners, environmentalists);
 - d. **Members bringing significant experience related to healthy food access** (including but not limited to neighborhood residents or leaders, transit riders and professionals, health professionals, institutional food service purchasers);
 - e. **Members with significant experience related to fostering an equitable food system** (including but not limited to community organizing, food security and assistance programs, cultural and ethnic food producers or entrepreneurs, health equity, social justice);
 - f. **Members with significant experience related to food waste elimination** (including but not limited to policy-based behavioral change, institutional and retail food service, food recovery and donations, on-farm gleaning, solid waste management, composting and vermiculture).
4. Up to two (2) members meeting the criteria of Section 5.3., whether appointed by the City of Lawrence or the County, may be eligible for the Douglas County Lived Experience Compensation Policy (Resolution No. 23-29). The FPC values membership with lived experiences to inform equitable food policies. Prospective members wishing to be considered under this policy should highlight their relevant experiences through the FPC Membership Interest Form. Examples of eligible lived experiences may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Current or past participation in food assistance programs.

- b. Experiences of racism or discrimination within food and farm systems as part of a marginalized group including People of Color.
- c. Experiencing current or historical barriers to a fair and just food system.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS

Section 1.

FPC officers shall consist of up to two (2) Co-Chairpersons and up to two (2) Vice-Chairperson(s), and shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2.

The Chairperson(s) shall preside at meetings and perform other duties as prescribed by these bylaws. The Chairperson(s) shall be the principal spokesperson for the FPC and shall sign official communications from the Council. The Chairperson(s), from time to time, may appoint committees to perform specific duties related to the Council's purpose.

Section 3.

The Vice-Chairperson(s) shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson(s) and may perform other duties of the Chairperson(s) when empowered by the Chairperson(s) to do so.

Section 4.

Officers shall be elected at the final regular meeting of the calendar year. Nominations may be made from the floor at that time. In the event of contest for an office, voting shall be by secret ballot.

Section 5.

Terms of office shall begin at the conclusion of the meeting when elections are held.

Section 6.

In the event an officer is unable to serve or resigns from his or her office, the FPC shall elect a replacement no later than the next regular meeting.

Section 7.

An officer may be recalled from office by a majority vote of the membership at a regular meeting of the FPC.

ARTICLE VII. MEETING ATTENDANCE

Section 1.

Council member attendance is expected at every meeting of the FPC. In the event of more than two (2) unexcused absences, or more than five (5) total absences in one (1) calendar year, a Council member may be asked to resign from the Council.

Section 2.

For those members appointed as liaisons in Article V, Section 5 (a), a designee from the same organization may attend a Council meeting from time to time in the appointed member's place with full voting rights if previously approved by FPC to serve as said designee.

Section 3.

Members who know they will be absent at an upcoming meeting will send notice beforehand to the FPC

Chairperson(s) and designated staff person. Failure to notify the FPC Chairperson(s) or staff liaison of an absence at least 24 hours before a FPC meeting will constitute an unexcused absence.

Section 4.

Members may receive an excused leave of absence if they submit a request to the Council detailing the number of meetings they will miss, along with the dates of the first meeting they will miss and the meeting date on which they will return. Leaves of absence will be approved by a majority vote of the Council.

Section 5.

Attendance will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS

Section 1.

Regular meetings shall be held as necessary, at least six (6) times each calendar year.

Section 2.

The date, time and place of the regular meetings shall be fixed by the Executive Committee and announced to members at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.

Section 3.

The first meeting of the new calendar year will include announcing the new appointments of the FPC. In instances of new members appointed to serve the remainder of the unexpired term, announcements shall be made at the next regular FPC meeting following appointment.

Section 4.

A simple majority of Council members shall constitute a quorum of the Council. There must be a quorum present (in person or by teleconference) before the Council may conduct any official business. Informal discussions may occur in the absence of a quorum.

Section 5.

Official business, actions, and recommendations of the FPC shall be advanced or approved by simple majority vote of all members of the FPC or quorum thereof. These votes shall be recorded in regular minutes of the FPC.

Section 6.

The Executive Committee shall meet as necessary.

Section 7.

All meetings of the full FPC are public, and members of the public are invited to attend and monitor meetings. Chairperson(s) shall provide an opportunity at some point during each regular business meeting for introductions of public and brief comments or questions from members of the public as time allows.

Section 8.

In the rare case that timely issues must be considered outside of the normal monthly meeting timeframe, the Chairperson(s) may call a special meeting of the Council. This meeting can be conducted in-person, or via conference call. These meetings shall be open to the public, in accordance with the Kansas Open Meetings Act, with 24 hours' notice provided on the Lawrence and County websites.

Section 9

A proposed agenda for each meeting shall be approved by the Executive Committee and made available to all FPC members at least one (1) week in advance of each meeting. Requests for changes to the proposed meeting agenda can be made to the Chairperson(s) at any time prior to approval of the proposed agenda at each meeting. Proposed changes are subject to approval by the full FPC.

ARTICLE IX. STAFF LIAISON

The Douglas County Sustainability Office shall provide staff support for the FPC as part of its regular duties, and serve as administrative liaison between the Board of County Commissioners, City of Lawrence Commission, city and county staff, and the FPC.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS, AND APPROVAL

Section 1.

All revisions to FPC bylaws shall be submitted to the City of Lawrence and County Commissions for joint approval. Any proposed bylaws amendment or revision shall first be approved for Commission consideration by affirmative vote of a majority of the total FPC membership at a regular meeting or a quorum thereof. Written notice of the proposed changes shall be in the hands of FPC members at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote to approve for Commission consideration is scheduled.

Section 2.

The most current FPC bylaws shall be reviewed at the first regular FPC meeting of each calendar year to identify any amendments or revisions to consider.

Adopted May 17, 2010

Revised June 20, 2011

Revised October 22, 2013

Revised April 21, 2014

February 12, 2019

November 6, 2024