



Food Policy Council of Buffalo and Erie County
Regular Meeting DRAFT Minutes | November 19, 2025 | 4:00 PM
Sahlen Field, 1 James D Griffin Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14203

Councilmembers in Attendance: Sarah Gatti, Danielle Rovillo, Betsy Anderson, Eric Tower, Karine Amato, Jessica Schuster, Michelle Roberts, Thomas Baines, Mayda Pozantides, Madison Marquardt

Councilmembers Excused: Rob Free

Staff in Attendance: Margaret Barbalato

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| 1. Welcome | | 4:00 –
4:05 PM |
| 2. Consideration of the September 2025 Meeting Minutes | | 4:00 – |
| | Eric Tower made a motion to APPROVE the September 2025 meeting minutes, seconded by Michelle Roberts, and carried by all voting members. | 4:05 PM |
| 3. Treasurer Update | | 4:00 – |
| | Rob was excused from the meeting and no treasurer report was provided. | 4:05 PM |
| 4. Erie County Updates | | 4:10 –
4:15 PM |
| | 1) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan | |
| | Sarah Gatti advised the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan has been accepted by County Legislature. The Plan will be sent to NYS for approval and then will be official guiding policy document when finalized. | |
| | 2) Find Fresh Erie | |
| | Danielle Rovillo explained the texting campaign (Part I). 211 text gives link to all fresh food locations (Erie Grown, food lab, mobile markets, community stores). Part II of grant is Friends of the Market – pushed to next growing season (June) due to timing. Mayda Pozantides questioned if other language translation is available for those services. Madison Marquardt asked if FPC falls under Erie County to cross-over resources for translation? Next year Erie County is required to provide 6 languages for all vital documents. Jessica Schuster spoke about Google translator, etc. | |



5. Partner Organization Updates

4:15 –

Michelle Roberts shared MWBE info session for growers & producers had 40 people, 26 organizations attend. Based on feedback (distance & no virtual option) a second informational session is scheduled for December 11 at Merriweather Library. All surrounding counties are Erie County certified which widens horizon. Will host workshops to work with organizations/companies to get certification. EEO mentioned opportunities outside of Buffalo Bills. Mayda Pozantides questioned if vendors are part of bid process. Michelle Roberts advised partially but all NYS vendors get preference. They will also help small companies scale product up.

4:25 PM

Buffalo Go Green and MAP will be making free produce available at next 4 Saturday Academies.

6. Committee and Working Group Updates

4:25 –

1) Emergency Food: Danielle Rovillo discussed problems trying to meet due to Kathy (FeedMore) unavailability. Danielle Rovillo attended Community Organizations and Active Disaster (COAD) meeting. Working with COAD chair to make subcommittee to help with overlap in services.

4:40 PM

2) Youth: Karine Amato discussed form to be filled out to narrow down youth selected and goals. Partnering with schools and education institutes. Educational components will be added. Hope is to engage youth on what impacts them. Engaged adults can be present also. Motion to approve by Danielle Rovillo and seconded by Mayda Pozantides and Michelle Roberts.

3) Action Plan: Update goals. Will have more details in January.

7. New Business

4:40 –

1) 2026 Goals: Focus on Food Systems Assessment in coordination with UB Food Lab. Some of goals will be ongoing. Added another goal to communicate new paperwork requirements to SNAP recipients. Motion to approve by Eric Tower and seconded by Betsy Anderson.

4:55 PM

2) 2026 Meeting Calendar: Discussed dates, location, invites. Margaret Barbalato will send out calendar invites.

3) Officers: Danielle Rovillo shared Executive Committee recommendations for next term. Recommendations: Sara Gatti remains as Chair, Laura Korin serve an actual 2-year term (previous term was to replace Laura Scott) and Rob Free remain Treasurer.



Motion to approve by Jessica Schuster and seconded by Thomas Baines.

- 4) Bylaws: Danielle Rovillo shared that Governance Committee activities have been absorbed into the Executive Committee due to overlap and attendance issues. Reviewed current by-laws and changes made. Updated attendance requirement (members can be removed after 3 consecutive absences), removed officer term limits, left room to reassign tasks for FPC coordinator position due to vacancy. Added clarity around the subcommittees and working groups requiring that the annual charter must be completed in order to commence any work; ad hoc work needs to be approved by full council before beginning. Reserved right (Executive Committee and Council-at-large to review any work of working groups and dissolve groups if goals are achieved. Voting requirement updated to reflect 6 meetings scheduled. Unexcused vs. excused absence questioned by Thomas Baines. He also questioned what the action is to remove them. Sarah Gatti advised Board action would remove them. Motion to approve by Jessica Schuster and seconded by Eric Tower.

- 5) New Logo: Sarah Gatti explained new FPC logo.

8. Other Business

4:55 –

- 1) Holiday Social will be held at The Place on December 16.
- 2) Food Drive – collected 1900+ lbs and same amount in monetary donations. Kits, food drive bingo and other ideas (can sculpture, etc.) were discussed to keep momentum going.

5:00 PM

9. Adjournment

5:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 4:51pm. Motion to approve by Thomas Baines and seconded by Eric Tower.