President’s Universitywide Sustainability Committee Minutes
Minutes of 19th November 2009
Room 204, Bernhard Center

Members Present: Krystal Bresnahan, Chris Caprera, Samantha Cooper, Evan Escamilla, Paul Farber, Harold Glasser, John Greenhoe, Matt Hollander, Pat Holton, Carolyn Noack, Paul Pancella, Lowell Rinker, Stephanie Ruhl, Sushi Datta Sandhu, John Schmidt, Kaitlyn Shields, Pete Strazdas

Guests: Dave Lemberg, WMU Geography Professor, Will Emmert, WMU Research and Program Officer OVPR

PROCEDURAL ITEMS
Acceptance of the Agenda
Motion to approve by Lowell; seconded by Sushi; Agenda approved

Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve by Paul P.; seconded by Sushi; Minutes approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Harold Glasser welcomed Matt Hollander to the committee, our new Postgraduate Campus Sustainability Researcher. Harold also welcomed Krystal Bresnahan and Stephanie Ruhl, our new GSAC Representatives.

Pete Strazdas announced that VP Rinker authorized a WMU submetering project with every building on campus in order to track water, gas, electricity and steam usage. Pete explained that we are the first campus to be fully sub-metered! This is a brand new system that they Physical Plant staff will be improving over time so that people can capture data for research, among other features.

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION–Round 1
Professor Dave Lemberg (Geography)—“History and overview of transportation issues at WMU”
Dr. Dave Lemberg has studied transportation issues on campus for several years, and he currently chairs the CPFC’s Transportation Subcommittee. Dave graciously presented a summary of transportation issues at WMU in order to help PUSC members leverage transportation initiatives on campus. He summarized several areas for improving campus transportation, such as addressing our campus car culture, our transportation carbon footprint, our lack of campus bicycle infrastructure, campus connectivity issues, off-campus path maintenance and path safety issues (Dr. Lemberg’s ppt is available in the minutes section of the Sustainability website). After a brief discussion, the PUSC created the list below in order for us to begin moving forward with strategic incremental planning and action:
• Create a detailed asset map of our current transportation strengths, such as our free public transportation system and our wealth of non-motorized trailways
• Obtain data on campus intersection issues
• Explore purchasing bike fleets for selected WMU staff members
• Potentially amend the free-parking package included in Staff and Faculty benefits in order to provide greater incentive for non-motorized commuting.
• Explore the creation of more direct pedestrian and bike friendly pathways.
• Obtain data on bike/car & car/car accidents on/near campus and their locations.
• Research the possibility of a campus transportation planner position that could be covered by potential cost savings
• Increase the frequency of the transportation planning class at WMU & encourage Harold’s ENVS 410 students to engage in campus transportation projects

QUICK UPDATES

Lowell—mLive Sustainability Awards Event
Lowell announced that he recently attended an award ceremony in honor of WMU receiving the Greatest Green Initiative Award from Mlive. WMU was the only higher education institution recognized out of six award categories! Details can be found in the Green Award Winners article.

Paul Farber—update on the Socio-Cultural Studies of Education conversations about creating a Learning for Sustainability M.S. track
Paul updated the PUSC on a growing desire from Sociocultural Studies Faculty to develop a Learning for Sustainability M.S. track to compliment their program. This would help them accomplish their goal of looking at educational problems in a more contextual and systematic way. The faculty met with Harold in October and they are currently in the midst of discussions concerning how core courses can be tweaked to be suitable. Harold added that since he gave the presentation to the Faculty Senate on the PUSC in October, he has also been receiving more feedback and interest from faculty in developing a General Education Sustainability Course.

Casey—SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy Follow-up Project
This update was tabled until December because Casey Barrons was not present. Next month, Casey will discuss her progress on organizing a WSA project to assess best-practices in relation to endowments.

Carolyn—Meeting with Coke and update on Harold and Carolyn’s conversation with Coke
Carolyn and Harold had a conference call in October with a Coke representative, who explained that the Coke Corporation wants to implement more sustainable practices into their business model. During this conversation it became apparent that WMU and Coke had somewhat different views on sustainability. The two Coke representatives graciously agreed to do some more research to see if they could address the issues WMU is facing regarding waste and recycling. Carolyn also held a follow-up meeting with one of the Coke representatives. She explained that
Coke has a grant program that she has unsuccessfully applied for in the past. She will be consulting further with this Coke representative in order to better identify what they are looking for in the grant application. Carolyn learned that they have activity vehicles and recycling bins that may be available for Bronco Bash, though thievery could be an issue because the most useful bins look similar to coke bottles.

Carolyn—Update on progress with creating the new battery recycling project
Carolyn announced that we have successfully expanded our battery recycling program in addition to implementing a new plastic bag recycling program! Congratulations to Carolyn for moving this initiative forward! These two recycling programs are free to all students, staff and faculty. Drop off facilities for batteries are located in the Physical Plant Room 210, and the Roe-Comm store in Bronco Mall. The drop-off facilities for plastic bags are located outside Textbook Alley (the WMU bookstore), and the Physical Plant Room 210. Details can be found in the WMU article titled, “WMU Gets New Plastic and Battery Recycling Programs On Campus.”

Chris and Kate—Progress report on the GHG / CAP Best Practice Review Project
Chris explained that they are in the process of analyzing all of their data. Through their comparative research, Chris and Kaitlyn feel that overall we are on the right track. However, they are finding some examples of several exciting, high-leverage policies and practices that might be built into our Climate Action Panning process. Kaitlyn gave several examples of these potential future policies such as a green fee and an annual report to track our progress in relation to the Strategic Sustainability Initiatives Report. Kaitlyn also mentioned creating incentives to encourage greater awareness and positive behavior change on campus. Chris and Kaitlyn applauded WMU for implementing creative sustainability initiatives despite our scarce financial resources. Examples include our EcoMug Program, which gave free mugs to all incoming freshman, our free citywide bus transportation system, our tray-less cafeterias and our free battery and plastic bag recycling program among others.

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION—Round 2
Evan—presentation and discussion on a filtered water machine pilot for Bernhard
Evan recently held a meeting in the Bernhard Center with several potential water-purification business partners. Evan recommended the carbon filter system for water purification. Initially, Evan and Chris decided not to purchase a reverse-osmosis system because they read that it uses four gallons for every purified gallon. According to Sushi’s research, this ratio is too high. As a result, Chris agreed to do some more research before the December meeting in order to confirm water usage for reverse-osmosis systems.

After a discussion about a potential filtered water machine pilot, the PUSC agreed that there are several details to address such as maintenance, communication, location and financial issues. For example, can we increase overall operating expenses in buildings? Evan agreed to continue exploring these issues before our December meeting.

Sam Cooper—presentation and discussion on Wesustain Fellows draft
Sam passed out hard copies of a two-page draft summarizing the Wesustain Fellows Program that Harold and Sam have been working on. Influenced by successful service-learning models, this pilot program could provide employment for WMU students, recent graduates and local high
school students to research and implement—and build on—WMU’s Strategic Sustainability Initiatives Report. This program could also eventually help strengthen the Kalamazoo Promise by engaging and recruiting the best and brightest local high school students.

Sam also gave the PUSC a brief overview of potential fundraising strategies. The PUSC agreed that we should explore the proposed option of a Green Fee program at WMU. Sam explained that the fees generally fall between $6-10 per student and they are used for everything from creating project funding groups to hiring sustainability staff. Currently, there are 66 Green Fees and 94 initiatives on campuses across the country. Most schools have fixed mandatory fees for each semester, although some fees fluctuate depending on the economy.

Regarding the two-page draft, John Greenhoe recommended including more anecdotal information about current WMU sustainability projects. He also suggested including information on how universities are becoming leaders in the sustainability revolution in order to create a sense of urgency and make a case for why WMU should be funded. John agreed to meet with Sam in order to help create tailored Case Statement documents to distribute to potential individual funders.

Marketing Sub-Committee—discussion of the DRAFT Identity Use Guidelines and discussion / update on their proposed future plans
Evan, Chris and Kaitlyn passed around a Draft detailing the Identity use guidelines for the Wesustain logo. Initial suggestions included creating a box for emergencies or special situations that require quick approval. Overall, the PUSC agreed that this draft looks great so far. The PUSC decided to leave a two week commentary period open before the marketing sub-committee submits the final draft to the sustainability website. Please send any draft edits, comments or concerns to Chris Caprara at christopher.b.caprara@wmich.edu. Before closing the discussion, the PUSC also agreed to merge the marketing sub-committee into the website sub-committee in order to help increase the turnaround time for website updates.

Harold—update on the Maureen Hart events and discussion on how the PUSC should proceed in relation to helping to: (1) further develop and support a Community Sustainability Indicators Project and (2) participate in or lead the development of a community sustainability asset mapping project
Harold announced that the Maureen Hart event series at WMU was a great success! Harold, Sam and Matt will be analyzing data from the event series into a brief report that will be completed and distributed to the public in January. In order to address all of the proposed PUSC meeting topics, Harold decided to table this discussion for the December PUSC meeting.

Harold—discussion on possibly developing a “Center/Institute for Sustainability Research and Learning” Earmark proposal
Discussion of this initiative was also tabled for the December PUSC meeting.
INFORMATION ITEMS

**Items to address at the December—or future—PUSC meetings:**

1. Chris & David will give us an update on the Sangren and campus housing projects
2. Discussion on how to proceed with developing an annual review, assessment and re-evaluation of the PUSC’s progress since the February 2009 release of our Strategic Sustainability Initiatives Report.
3. Update by Sam, Kaitlyn and Matt concerning the fledgling WMU Green Fee initiative.
4. Overview of progress with the Wesustain Service Program funding initiative.
5. Presentation by Evan and Chris on developments in the filtered-water machines pilot.
6. Marketing sub-committee final draft overview.
7. Update on SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy Follow-up Project by Casey Barrons
8. Overview of Maureen Hart events and update on follow-up report progress.
9. Discussion on possibly developing a “Center/Institute for Sustainability Research and Learning” Earmark proposal
10. Update on creating a Learning for Sustainability M.S. track in the Socio-Cultural Studies of Education program.
11. Continue discussion on supporting/promoting a possible Bike Initiative (drawing from Dr. Lemberg’s presentation and the UI’s student run project reported on by Strazdas in October)

**Upcoming Meeting:**
December 17th, 2009 at 3 pm in Room 204 of the Bernhard Center

**Meeting adjourned:** 4:53 pm