President’s Universitywide Sustainability Committee Minutes

Minutes of 21st January 2010
Room 204, Bernhard Center

Members Present: Casey Barrons, Chris Caprara, Samantha Cooper, Dave Dakin, Bill Davis, Mervyn Elliot, Evan Escamilla, Paul Farber, Judy Gipper, Harold Glasser, Matt Hollander, Pat Holton, Carolyn Noack, Paul Pancella, Mary Peterson, Chris Pyzik, Lowell Rinker, Anand Sankey, Pete Strazdas, Andrew Targowski

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Acceptance of the Agenda
Motion to approve by Holton; seconded by Noack; Agenda approved

Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve by Strazdas; seconded by Davis; Minutes approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please welcome our new PUSC member Mary Peterson from the College of Health and Human Services!

QUICK UPDATES:

Matt, HG & Sam—Update on Maureen Hart follow-up report progress
In order to evaluate the Maureen Hart event series and assess collective interest in—and the direction for—future sustainability indicators work, Matt explained that an online survey is slated to be released on January 21st, 2009. Matt also announced that they will be requesting that people finish the survey by February 1st. They will analyze the survey data and the results in a follow up report, which will be available for review at the February PUSC meeting.

Chris & Kate—Status on Sustainability Identity Use Agreement and Application
Kate was unable to attend this month’s PUSC meeting. Chris informed the committee that they made their first official Wesustain logo approval for Cari Delong of Landscaping Services. Cari is using the Wesustain logo on signs to highlight existing stormwater management projects at WMU. The Wesustain Identity Use Application will be available for upload on the WMU Sustainability website soon.

Kate & Sam—Green Fund Update
Sam summarized the developments of a potential “Green” or Sustainability Fund at WMU. This new Sustainability Fund Initiative (SFI) will require students to contribute a set amount each semester to fund campus sustainability projects that will benefit students. In order to implement this fund, we need to get a fee-referendum proposal on the spring ballot for WSA elections. We also need to garner widespread student support with the aid of green-fund toolkits from
universities with successful programs. Sam announced that the planning group is looking to establish a core team of SFI volunteers. Please contact Sam at s3cooper@wmich.edu if you want to be included on an SFI listserv. The first open meeting for Monday, Jan. 25, at 5 pm in the Bernhard Center Cafeteria.

**Sam—Overview on Progress with the Wesustain Service Program (WSSP) Funding Initiative**

Sam gave a brief review of the proposal for the Wesustain Service Program (WSSP). This potential program will employ WMU students, recent graduates and local high school students to help research and implement the most high leverage initiatives outlined in the Strategic Sustainability Initiatives Report, which was created by the PUSC in February of 2009. Since the December meeting update, Sam created a new WSSP proposal draft and had it peer reviewed by Matt. After receiving an additional edit from Harold, Sam forwarded the proposal to John Greenhoe for review. Sam is currently coordinating a follow-up meeting with John to begin drafting a few case statements from the updated proposal.

**Casey—Update on SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy Review**

Casey informed the Committee that a SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy Review draft is being sent to the WSA next Tuesday for approval. Casey will update the PUSC on the progress of this project at the February meeting.

**Paul F—Socio-Cultural Studies Learning for Sustainability M.S. track progress update**

Paul Farber will update the PUSC regarding progress on the proposed Socio-Cultural Studies Learning for Sustainability M.S. track at the February meeting.

**Harold and Lowell—Center for Sustainability Research and Education Earmark update**

Unfortunately, Harold received notification that the Sustainability Research and Education Earmark proposal was not put forward. With the continued support of the Committee, Harold will continue to develop additional strategies to move this project forward. Anyone interested in learning more about the vision for this project or willing to help with fund-raising should please contact him directly.

**Harold Update on Paper Policy Meeting with John Bergin, VP Rinker, Casey, and Harold**

Harold reported on a recent meeting held with John Bergin, Managing Director of WMU’s Paper Technology Foundation. As an expert in the manufacturing and business structure of paper engineering, John advised creating a more comprehensive paper policy that covers all forms of paper purchased from towel and tissue to office paper. This goals of this policy would be to: (1) maximize the number of use cycles for paper fiber, (2) reflect current best-practice in the paper industry, and (3) help drive more sustainable, cost-effective practices in the paper products industry. Harold will continue to update the PUSC as this effort develops.

**Pete Strazdas — Chief Facility Officers Sustainability Meetings**

Pete announced that he is helping to coordinate collaborative meetings between the Chief Facility Officers of WMU and K College to discuss sustainability practices and cost effective investments related to their field. Eventually, they are planning to include representatives from K-12 and KVCC.
PRESENTATIONS

Evan—on Dorm Energy Reduction Competition

The first annual Eco-thon competition is officially underway! Check out the recent front-page story entitled, “WMU launches eco-thon to reduce use of electricity” by Fritz Klug for competition details. You can also find an overview of the Eco-thon event on the WMU Facilities Management website. The Eco-thon and Recyclemania competitions will also be announced and have links on the Sustainability Home page. Evan announced that Trent Hines from the sign shop designed the Eco-thon logo. He also informed the committee that WMU’s Utility Dashboard is linked on the event website.

Please visit the Eco-thon Facebook fan page and invite WMU students and other campus community members!

Chris Caprara—on filtered/RO water pilot options

Chris set up a blind water taste tasting experiment with two options: (A) reverse osmosis water and (B) carbon filtration. The results of the test were fairly evenly split with 6 people preferring option A, 9 people preferring option B and one person with no preference. Lowell pointed out that the test demonstrates that we can’t make everyone happy with water options. Chris explained that there are two main locations being researched for a pilot water filtration system. These locations include outside the Bronco Express area and the President’s Dining Room. Other options discussed for increasing the use of tap water on campus included investing in water bottles with filtration in the cap and installing filters on drinking fountains. Committee members also discussed assessing current drinking fountains to evaluate infrastructure quality before we move forward with a pilot. The PUSC also discussed several potential avenues for raising awareness about campus water systems. For instance, Mervyn suggested creating a poster with information about the quality and life cycle of the tap water available on campus. This poster could be placed above each drinking fountain on campus. Paul P. agreed that we should publicize our water as a point of pride because the City of Kalamazoo has award-winning water. Chris agreed to take these suggestions into consideration and summarize his findings in February.

PUSC STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION

Harold—Is there a need to create an “Orientation Packet” for new PUSC members?

Harold followed up on a prior, unfinished conversation about a possible need for orientation materials for new PUSC members. In general, the new members seemed to think that the existing materials documenting the progress of the PUSC were adequate. The new members of the PUSC agreed to brainstorm about the need for additional orientation materials/strategies. They will send Harold an email with any additional thoughts. Harold offered to take any and all members out to lunch in order to discuss potential strategies for new member orientation.

Harold, Matt, Chris, Kate, Evan—Website discussion update

The website subcommittee held a meeting to discuss how to increase traffic to the sustainability website. Although the EcoMug clearly directs people toward the sustainability website to receive information on discounts, students do not appear to be taking full advantage of these resources.
The website sub-committee agreed to continue their efforts to explore best practices and strategies for increasing website traffic such as utilizing Facebook fanpages, creating a student-run sustainability blog, and creating monthly campus sustainability events that might include random, online “raffles” of sustainable products.

**Develop a Framework and Action Plan for creating a “PUSC Annual Report”**.

Harold explained that his goal is to develop an annual reporting framework for the PUSC that outlines our goals for the past year, assesses our progress in meeting them, and lays out our top priorities, strategies, and initiatives for the coming year. His goal is to develop this framework in the Spring and early Summer—with extensive input from the PUSC—so that we can have our Annual Report distributed at the beginning of the Fall semester. Harold proposed creating a Planning Sub-Committee to begin this process. Anand, Lowell, Carolyn, Chris, Matt and Sam all volunteered to assist with this process. Please contact Harold if you are interested in being involved with the Planning Sub-Committee or if you have ideas and suggestions for the Report content or format.

**INFORMATION ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP**

**Quick Updates to consider addressing at the February or subsequent PUSC meetings:**

1. Sustainability Office Funding Protocol submitted—VP Rinker
2. SCI / Maureen Hart Events Report and Update—Matt & Harold
3. SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy update—Casey
4. Filtered water machines pilot update—Chris
5. Progress on the GHG/CAP Best Practice Review Project—Chris and Kate
6. Update on creating a Learning for Sustainability M.S. track in the Socio-Cultural Studies of Education program by Paul F.
7. EcoMug Program update—Casey, Harold and John
8. Marketing sub-committee & Web update
9. Planning sub-committee update (coordinate first meeting)

**February Presentations**

Kate, Chris, Matt and Sam—**Sustainability Fund Initiative (SFI) presentation**

**Discussion from January Meeting that was postponed—>we need to slot when we have an opening for a 45 min.-1hr discussion opening:**

How can we best leverage the PUSC’s efforts and activities in the future (enhance visibility for sustainability activities, develop a funding campaign, establish a sustainability office, create new sub-committees, etc.) and redirect our role back as an advisory capacity?

**Upcoming Meeting: February 18th, 2010 at 3 pm. Room 204, Bernhard Center**

**Meeting Adjourned: 5:10**