President’s Universitywide Sustainability Committee (PUSC) Minutes

Minutes of May 20 March 2010
Room 205, Bernhard Center

Members Present: Chris Caprara, Samantha Cooper, Mervyn Elliot, Paul Farber, Harold Glasser, Matt Hollander, Pat Holton, Paul Pancellia, Mary Peterson, Chris Pyzik, Joel Raveloharimisy, Lowell Rinker, Alyssa Schafer, Kaitlyn Shields, Andrew Targowski, Barbara Wygant

Guest: Mike Strong, Manager of Total Tech

PUSC Chair Harold Glasser called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Approval of Agenda
Motion by Holton to accept the Agenda as presented; seconded by Peterson; Agenda approved.

Approval of Minutes
Motion by Pancellia to approve the Minutes as presented; seconded by Sankey; Minutes approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• Welcome to our new GSAC Representative Joel Luc Raveloharimisy, M.B.A., Ph. D Candidate in Political Science!
• Welcome to our new WSA Sustainability Chair representative Alyssa Schafer!
• Chris Pyzik announced an upcoming Sangren Planning Workshop happening on May 25 from 4 pm to 6 pm at WMU’s Fetzer Center.

QUICK UPDATES:

Pat—update on April 26 Michigan Department Of Natural Resources (MDNR) Green Infrastructure Conference
There were seventy people in attendance at the "Go for the Green to Save the Blue: Using Green Infrastructure to Protect Water Quality" Conference at the Fetzer Center. WMU’s Physical Plant presented a summary of WMU initiatives relating to stormwater handling and distributed a self-guided walking tour of WMU stormwater management sites. Pat informed the PUSC that the EPA is addressing proposed rulemaking to strengthen the storm water program and expand the areas subject to federal storm water regulations. The handouts from the conference among other references can be found on the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission website.

Pete—update on visit to Detroit regarding the Ford TransConnect EV
Pete was unable to attend. This update was tabled for the June PUSC meeting.
Matt—summary of key issues from April 14 Sustainability Covenant meeting and upcoming Report
To review, Matt and Harold worked with Bruce Merchant, Mayor Hopewell and Mike Wetzel to structure the last covenant meeting. Matt gave a summary of the new follow-up report. The report outlines signatory opinions regarding different definitions of sustainability including the Brundtland Commission definition, a version of the triple bottom line definition from Sustainable Seattle and a broader, process-oriented definition from Donella Meadows and colleagues. These definitions encouraged consideration of alternative approaches to growth and different strategies for characterizing and measuring sustainability. The report also outlines signatory visions for what a sustainable and desirable Kalamazoo will look like in fifty years. Survey conclusions suggest that education and other subjective measurements such as quality of life were secondary to measurements popularized during the 1970’s environmental movement such as air, water and land quality.

After Matt’s presentation, the PUSC held a discussion about WMU’s role in moving the Southwest Michigan Sustainability Covenant forward. PUSC members agreed with Chris Caprara’s suggestion of providing clear expectations for signatories in exchange for WMU’s leadership role. In addition, PUSC members agreed that encouraging low-key, monthly work sessions is a high-leverage strategy for mobilizing signatories.

Matt—update on EcoMug Initiative for next year
Matt recently met with Fall 2010 orientation leaders and gave them EcoMugs. This year, EcoMugs will be distributed through the WMU Bookstore to all first year students, including transfer and international students. Students will be encouraged to use their EcoMugs in WMU cash-op locations, during breakfast, and during late-night carryout programs. This new initiative will also help students adapt to the upcoming no-Styrofoam® policy in the dining halls. Over the next few weeks, Sam will be meeting with businesses to maintain and increase program benefits and solicit new business partnerships. PUSC members will continue updating the EcoMug details on the Sustainability website this summer.

Harold—one Gibbs House management meetings
Harold gave a quick update regarding strategic planning for the Gibbs House Program at WMU. A group of PUSC members are holding planning meetings with former Program Coordinator Remy Long and Diane Anderson to transition management of the program to the new Office of Sustainability. Please contact Harold if you want to participate in this strategic planning process.

Chris—Marketing Committee Update
Chris announced that there will be new Marketing Committee planning meetings every Tuesday from 8:00-10:00AM to discuss marketing and strategic planning for the SFI program. Please contact Chris if you are interested in getting involved.
Chris & Kate—update on EcoRep Program and Monthly sustainability Activities Initiatives
Kate is developing a pilot program for the new EcoRep program at WMU. This summer, Kate will collaborate with Facilities Management, Division of Student Affairs and the Office Of Sustainability to develop program logistics. Eventually, they hope to engage one EcoRep from each residence hall and engage returning students to utilize their institutional knowledge. Kate is exploring ways to expand and institutionalize the program through awards recognition and contracted commitments among other strategies. Please contact Kate if you want to get involved with the EcoRep initiative.

Harold—update on meeting with Lisa Knutson re. website redevelopment
Harold recently met with Lisa to discuss strategies for expediting the updating process for the sustainability website. The sustainability website may become a pilot for a content management system at WMU. Harold will continue discussing these website management possibilities with Lisa. Please forward any ideas or suggestions to Harold.

Matt & Harold—update on “oil to mowers” pilot
We will contract with Full Circle Fuels in Oberlin, Ohio to convert an engine for the “Oil to Mower” pilot program. The effect of vegetable oil on diesel engines will be studied during this pilot to assess the viability of converting more campus lawn mowers, and hopefully some larger diesel machines, to run on waste vegetable oil from WMU Dining Services.

Harold—update on vermicomposting pilot
Harold announced that once we have space secured for the Office of Sustainability, we will begin implementing the vermicomposting pilot program at WMU. The candidate under consideration for leading this pilot program is John Lee, a former ENVS 4100 student.

Harold—overview of some highlights from this year’s ENVS 4100: Campus as a Living Laboratory Projects
- Transportation infrastructure project
- Dr. Dunn is excited about the possibility of a student-run “Re-Store” at WMU (Thrift Store). Joel stated that GSAC is also interested in collaborating with this initiative. Meetings between GSAC, PUSC, and others have been scheduled.
- Student-Run-café. Capacity building strategies are taking place. Harold explained that Carolyn Webber picked “sustainable food systems” as the new focus of the WMU Dietetics Program for accreditation purposes. Some of her students want to take on the campus café project for their internship.

Harold—Update on Sustainability Across the Curriculum Faculty Lunch & Follow
Harold received great feedback from the first Faculty Sustainability luncheon, which included a surprise guest appearance from President Dunn! Harold is developing a follow-up survey for participating faculty members to gain feedback regarding future luncheon events.
Harold—update on our GHG / CAP process  
This update was tabled for the June PUSC meeting.

Anand—Earth Hour update  
Anand reported that his office worked with Laura Darrah to observe Earth Hour at WMU. They chose to observe this initiative in March instead of February to keep the momentum going from February’s Ecothon events.

Anand—update on progress with Climate Savers Computing Initiative  
This update was tabled because Mike Strong gave a similar presentation, detailed below.

Lowell—on new initiatives to promote Endowment Transparency  
Lowell gave a quick review of the Sustainable Endowments Institute, which rates colleges in several endowment-focused areas such as transparency and shareholder engagement in addition to more traditional sustainability characteristics. WMU received mostly A’s and B’s in the sustainability/operations categories. However, we received a D for overall Endowment Transparency, which dropped our overall grade to a B-. WMU undergraduate student Casey Barrons completed a survey of best practices to identify what the SEI is looking for regarding institutional transparency. Through this report, she discovered that WMU could meet several of these expectations with minimal changes.

WMU Administrators chose to proactively meet these expectations by revising the Investment Information tab on the WMU Foundation website. These revisions explain current investments, increase transparency of investment strategies and create expectations for WMU Foundation representatives to hold informational meetings with the PUSC.

Lowell—update on progress with creating the Office of Sustainability  
Harold recently submitted a space request for office/Lab space that is being reviewed by the Campus Space Committee. Between the new sustainability fee and the budget protocol that Lowell submitted, Lowell believes we are creating a solid foundation for an Office Of Sustainability at WMU. Harold outlined an eventual goal, which involves constructing a building that meets the Living Building Challenge. This building would be a hub for all Sustainability initiatives on campus with conference, research and piloting space.

PRESENTATIONS

Mike Strong—Total Tech Presentation

1. Energy Star standards and computers on campus  
Mike announced that we sell about 1,015 computers each year through Total Tech, the computer hardware/software sales center located in WMU’s upstairs bookstore (Buster’s). Each of these computers meets or exceeds Energy Star standards and is sold with the Energy Savings Settings already preset. For instance, there are automatic settings in place for computers to use less energy or shut off. Mike also claimed that computer efficiency is typically measured by how much power it uses divided by how much power it draws.
2. **Printer Cartridge Issues**
   Mike reported that there are lots of changes happening in terms of printer efficiencies. For example, most printers allow for different levels of quality (or levels of ink density) for print-outs. For instance, if you print documents for your use, you can save up to 70% of ink simply by selecting “draft quality”. Font styles also make a difference in terms of total toner volumes required. Chips in printer cartridges are gaining popularity as well. These chips allow the cartridge to expel more ink before the cartridge “runs out”. Mike facilitated a Committee-wide discussion about the possibility of WMU developing a toner cartridge-filling program.

**E-books and electronic book readers**
Mike also presented three different kinds of electronic readers such as the Amazon Kindle, the Sony E-Reader and the Ipad. Mike summarized the wealth of interfaces offered by each reader, and encouraged PUSC members to consider the profound impacts these new technologies will have on campus paper use, usability, book sales, carbon footprints and etc. Mike reported that when e-books are purchased, books are generally cheaper and you can purchase them quickly from the initial publishing date. He also announced that most of the e-reader devices are working to utilize recycled materials. While they do not currently have a comprehensive student-textbook inventory, most of these companies are working to make these materials readily available for students.

**DISCUSSION**

Harold—How should we proceed re. last month’s presentation by Courtney & Dave (and our support for their initiative) to improve the visibility & access of sustainability website & campus sustainability activities?
This update was tabled for the June PUSC meeting.

Harold—Discussion on possible content, structure, and format for our planned PUSC Annual Report
This update was tabled for the JUNE PUSC meeting.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Items to address at the June PUSC meeting or subsequent meetings:**
1. Follow up on the May 4 Wesustain Faculty Sustainability Luncheon & plans for subsequent luncheons and strategies to facilitate building a faculty learning community around sustainability
2. Sustainability Office Development Update
3. WMU Sustainability Initiatives Funding Priorities Update
4. Discussion regarding the content & structure of the PUSC Annual Report
5. SFI Update
6. Sustainability Covenant Report Update
7. Marketing Committee Update
8. Sustainability Website Homepage Link Progress
9. Gibbs House Program Restructuring Update
10. Update on conversations about a Waste Vegetable Oil to Mower Pilot
11. EcoRep Program Development Update
12. EcoMug Progress Update
13. Progress on Student Sustainability Blog
14. Monthly Campus Sustainability Events discussion
15. Update on 410 Vermicomposting Project & Dining Hall Pilot
16. Update on Filtered Water Pilot
17. Socio-Cultural Studies Learning for Sustainability M.S. track progress update

The May PUSC meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.

**Upcoming meeting:** Bernhard Center Room 205 on Thursday June 17 at 3 pm.