President’s Universitywide Sustainability Committee (PUSC) Minutes

Minutes of February 17, 2011
Room 205, Bernhard Center

Members Present: David Dakin, Mervyn Elliott, Paul Farmer, Judy Gipper, Harold Glasser, Matthew Hollander, Patricia Holton, Paul Pancella, Chris Pyzik, Anand Sankey, Alyssa Shafer, Pete Strazdas, Kaitlyn Shields, and Andrew Targowski

Guests: Kate Binder and Darin Howard

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Two requests for revising the agenda were made: Chris P. requested time to discuss the Sustainable Design Committee and Andrew requested a few minutes to discuss the Haworth College of Business’ efforts to infuse sustainability into its graduate program. Motion by Paul P. to approve the revised Agenda; seconded by Paul F.; Agenda approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mervyn to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Andrew; minutes approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

• The Office for Sustainability is revising our Campus Sustainability website. We have been asking all PUSC members to submit a photo and a short, one paragraph bio for web posting. Thanks to all of you that have submitted this information so far. For those of you that haven’t done it yet, please email the requested information to Harold by April 29.

• Harold introduced Kristie Sturmoski, the Office for Sustainability’s new office coordinator.

• Carolyn Noack, Manager of Recycling and Waste Reduction, has been selected for WMU’s Supervisor of the Year Award and can’t be here today. Please send her your congratulations!

• Kate Binder, our GA, is spearheading a series of behavior change initiatives and research projects. If you have an interest in or ideas for projects that address the relationship between information and education programs and the elicitation of meaningful, lasting behavior change, please contact her.

• Darin Howard is a Presidential Scholar for Environmental studies and one of our Interns. Darin has been working very hard to promote and enhance the effectiveness of the EcoMug Program.

UPDATES:

MATT: 2012 GIBBS HOUSE FELLOWSHIP & GIBBS HOUSE REMODELING UPDATE

The Gibbs House (GH) program has been restructured to a one-year long fellowship that includes automatic inclusion as an OIS intern. Applications for next year’s fellowship program will be available on the Sustainability Website after Spring Break. Please help us to promote this great living, learning opportunity for bright, highly motivated students. With assistance from VP Rinker, Cari DeLong, and FM staff a number of remodeling projects a number of remodeling projects were completed to enhance the space reduce it’s carbon footprint. These improvements, partially funded by a new fee to live in the house, include an energy efficient refrigerator, new floors in both of the bathrooms and kitchen, and some painting. We also have approval to install a super energy efficient washer and dryer. We also have a student intern working on a major, low maintenance native landscape plan for the GH. By the end of the summer, we also hope to improve the driveway. If you would like to visit the GH, please send Matt an email and he will arrange a visit.
Under Matt’s direction, the OfS has been researching options for cargo and electric assist bikes for campus. Paul is continuing to do background research, pull together our campus Climate Action Planning Subcommittee, and coordinate meeting schedules.

**Matt: Oil to Mowers**
We are currently converting a lawnmower to run on waste vegetable oil from Dining Services. Sam Merrett from Full Circle Fuels in Oberlin Ohio will pick up the lawnmower tomorrow to make the conversion. Our first step will be to run on virgin soy oil from beans grown and produced in Michigan (Dining Services purchases this product already). This will give us baseline data on diesel engine performance using vegetable oil. Subsequently, we will be experiment with filtered waste oil from Dining Services.

**Matt: Student Sustainability Survey**
The Student Sustainability Survey, which has been created to assess student interest in particular sustainability projects and initiatives and help us to effectively allocate funding, is completed and pending approval from HSIRB. We have a spectacular poster to promote the survey that was made by Peter Klebb, one of our design interns. We had to get approval from the Secret Service to print the posters—we think they will catch your eye! The survey will be accessible online through the Campus Sustainability website. Judy Gipper graciously offered to advertise the survey through the Dining Services table tents. Please contact our intern, Callie Hudson, for more information.

**Harold: GSAC**
Since the creation of the Office for Sustainability this fall, we have been learning that there are graduate student in all of the colleges that have both an interest in sustainability and a desire to conduct sustainability-related research. Since Joel could not be here Harold wanted to share that we are having ongoing discussions with GSAC to help create more opportunities to support and fund this graduate research. If anyone has a particular interest in this topic or ideas about how to secure funding for this effort, please contact Joel and Harold.

**Darin: EcoMug Art Contest**
In an effort to explore creative strategies for promoting the EcoMug Program, Darin has been putting together a contest for art that will help to persuasively raise awareness about the EcoMug. Please encourage students to make submissions—there is a $300 grand prize! Information and details are available on the Campus Sustainability website—or the link above.

**Kaitlyn: Climate Savers Computing Initiative**
Anand, Kate, and Harold recently met with Greg Lozeau and his campus computer lab managers to discuss strategies and opportunities for reducing electricity use. Kate is working with campus lab managers and one of our students to do a proposal to do energy audits on the computing labs. We have fifty-six computer labs around campus that may participate and Kate hopes to get his project completed by the end of the semester. While some fantastic policies and practices have been implemented at some campus computer labs these are not consistent throughout all of our computer labs. The goal of this research is to help us to design new policies and initiatives to reduce electricity consumption associated with computers and peripherals that can be implemented in all of WMU’s computer labs. Click on the following link for more details on the Climate Savers Computing Initiative, which has three main components: (1) purchase of EPA Energy Star computing equipment—WMU now does this at TotalTech under Mike Strong’s stellar leadership, (2) make computers default to energy saving settings, (3) unplug from phantom loads (shut down equipment when it is not being used overnight or for extended periods).

**Paul: Climate Action Planning Subcommittee**
Paul is continuing to do background research, pull together our campus Climate Action Planning Subcommittee, and coordinate meeting schedules.

**Matt: Cargo & Electric Assist Bike Pilots**
Under Matt’s direction, the OfS has been researching options for cargo and electric assist bikes for interns and campus...
staff—especially FM. One of our interns has created testing protocol on the bike and electric motors and systems. We are in the process of testing some of the equipment to see which ones pan out and try to work out some recommendations with facilities management soon to evaluate what the needs and usage would be. We will be following up with FM staff to get further details on their requirements. Upon completion, we will post our reviews on line and try to get companies to donate products for on-site testing. If we are unsuccessful with this effort we will purchase several option for testing. Anything that is junk will be on E-bay soon!

**Action Item:** The Office for Sustainability will check with DPS regarding policies for electric assist bikes on roads and pathways.

**DISCUSSION I**

Pete Strazdas mentioned that Western Michigan DPS is going through a review of our policies for bikes on campus pathways. While it is appropriate by State statute to take bicycles on sidewalks in downtown Kalamazoo and Portage, University policy currently prohibits bicycles on campus sidewalks and pathways. With today’s University policy bicycles are only permitted on paved streets. Pete suggested that OIS representatives should meet with the appropriate campus representatives from DPS and Campus Planning to develop more sound and sensible policies that can facilitate non-motorized transit on campus safely for bikes, pedestrians, and cars. Harold mentioned that he and his staff and students have already had a very productive meeting with Captain Dedow and Officer Bachmann to discuss collaboration and non-motorized transit “hot spots” on campus. Harold mentioned that he is in the process of pulling together a subcommittee to address these issues in the context of designing a full non-motorized transit master plan for campus that will integrate with local, county, and state initiatives and planning efforts. He expects this process to take a full year.

**AMELIA: NEXT CAMPUS BEET EVENT**

The next Campus Beet event will take place on April 8, 2011 at the Bernard Center North Ballroom from 6:00-9:00pm. It is being planned for 300-400 people and it will try to simulate a café style with art, music, spoken word, and ecoculturally sound, allergy sensitive food options.

**CHRIS: CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES**

The Campus Lifecycle Design Guidelines, for new construction for renovations, were first created in 2004 and updated in 2008. With the many changes in sustainable architectural and building practice and research on the marginal costs associated with building USGBC LEED facilities, Chris would like to discuss and revise our 2008 Campus Sustainable Design Guidelines. He will be meeting with Anand, Pat, and Harold to revise them in the coming month.

**ANDREW: HAWORTH COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

Andrew reports that the Business College has introduced sustainability into the graduate program and that this initiative has wide support from faculty. Andrew is planning a conference for September 30, “From Crisis to Hope” that will address regional economic transformation for and how to bring back vitality to our economy. Harold thanked Andrew for his comments and offered to have the OIS help support recruiting for his student paper competition.

**HAROLD: UPHOLSTERY SHOP OIS RENOVATION**

We are glad to report that WMU is moving forward on the renovation of the Upholstery Shop for the OIS. Our plan is to complete the renovation and move in for the fall semester. Pete has been instrumental in facilitating connections for Harold to explore in-kind support and donations to make this renovation project more sustainableproject. Thank you Pete for all of your help!

**HAROLD: MARKETING/BEHAVIOR CHANGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

Kristie, Matt, and Kate will be leading the development of a new Marketing/Behavior Change Subcommittee. They will be coordinating meetings and subcommittees and trying to get engage Marketing and Communications students and faculty in this endeavor. Kate will also try to get some psychology students to help with this effort.

**HAROLD: GREENTOWN**

We are in a tentative conversation with the Chicago-based a5 marketing and communications group about bringing the GreenTown conference to Kalamazoo—and hosting it on the Western Michigan University campus. The tentative date is
Thursday, September 22, 2011. At a5’s suggestion, we are also considering the idea of pre- and post-meetings. One possibility, for instance, might be to hold a pre-meeting to support and facilitate action by the SW MI Regional Sustainability Covenant signatories. At the last, Southwest Michigan Sustainability Business Forum there was an announcement that their Board has been exploring strategies for how to help raise awareness, engender collaboration, and jump-start more activity related to the mission and goals of the SW MI Regional Sustainability Covenant.

HAROLD: FYE / FYS COLLABORATION
Bill Davis has taken the lead to help initiate a conversation with Toni Woolfork-Barnes, Director of First-Year Experience Programs about infusing sustainability into these FYE and FYS. Harold would like to invite Toni to an upcoming PUSC meeting for an open brainstorming conversation about how we might collaborate in the near future.

PETE: EV CHARGING STATIONS
Pete wanted to let us know that he has arranged for WMU to receive four Coulomb EV charging stations for free that will be in three locations around campus. The charging stations will go up at the Physical Plan on Stadium Drive (2), in from of Siebert, and at the CEAS. Bring your electric vehicle to campus!

HAROLD: STARS
We are moving forward with signing on to the AASHE Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS) Program. More details will be provided soon regarding our efforts to collect data for this self-reporting, web based campus sustainability rating system. Pete discussed Ball State’s innovative strategy for collecting data and pushing it on to the web. He graciously offered FM’s support to help the OIS create a similar system. Harold mentioned that he is in close contact with Bob Koester the leader of the Ball State effort. Bob is an old friend and colleague and Harold will likely be going down to Ball State to learn from them and give a talk about some of our sustainability efforts in early May.

HAROLD: TERRY LINK VISIT
Terry Link, the founding Director of MSU’s Office for Sustainability will be visiting campus on March 16. Terry will be giving a lecture, “How Higher Education Can Lead Us to Higher Ground”, in 1120 Chemistry at 7:00 PM, please mark your calendars. We will have a small dinner at 5:15 on campus for PUSC members, interns, and ENVS 4100 students—if anyone would like to join us for dinner RSVP with Kristie by March 9.

FINAL DISCUSSION
Harold has received several suggestions and feedback to expand PUSC engagement with two key campus areas: Admissions and Athletics. He sought feedback from the PUSC about identifying and inviting representatives from these areas to serve on the PUSC and received unanimous support for this initiative. If you know someone from Admissions or Athletics that might be an ideal candidate for the PUSC, please contact Harold.

The February PUSC meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.
Upcoming Meeting: Bernhard 205, Thursday, March 17 at 3:00 pm.