President’s Universitywide Sustainability Committee Minutes

Minutes of 17th December 2009
Room 204, Bernhard Center

Members Present: Chris Caprara, Samantha Cooper, Dave Dakin, Bill Davis, Mervyn Elliot, Paul Farber, Judy Gipper, Harold Glasser, Matt Hollander, Pat Holton, Carolyn Noack, Paul Pancella, Chris Pyzik, Lowell Rinker, Sushi Datta Sandhu, Anand Sankey, John Schmidt, Pete Strazdas, Andrew Targowski

Guests: Maryann Lavender, Director Of Corporate Relations for the WMU Development Office, and Evan Escamilla, Energy Management Outreach Coordinator for WMU’s Maintenance Services

PROCEDURAL ITEMS
Acceptance of the Agenda
Motion to approve by Pancella; seconded by Noack; Agenda approved

Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve by Holton; seconded by Farber; Minutes approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• Harold welcomed several new faculty members including Bill Davis from the College of Art, Andrew Targowski from the Haworth School of Business and Mervyn Elliot from the College of Aviation.

• New PUSC member Andrew Targowski announced an upcoming conference on the future of Michigan newspapers and society:
Conference title: Can an Educated Society Be Sustained Solely by Digitization?
Date & Location: March 27, 2010 at 8:30 am in the WMU-Fetzer Center.
Agenda: Keynote addresses & discussion panels with several journalists, academics & business people.
Best Papers Competition: Call for papers and registration information
Admission: $20 (lunch included). Free admission to the WMU Community—$15 for lunch.

• Cheryl Roland recently interviewed Pete and Harold for a WMU Magazine special issue that is being created to order help publicize WMU’s commitment to sustainability to its larger WMU constituency. Though Cheryl usually features just a few people per article, Harold emphasized in his discussions that our recent successes in building a culture of sustainability are the result of broad participation from the entire campus including both the top-down and bottom-up leadership.
QUICK UPDATES

Evan, Kaitlyn, & Chris—Marketing sub-committee final draft review & approval
Chris announced that the Marketing sub-committee made all of the recommended changes to the Wesustain Identity Use Agreement Application. The group is currently reviewing its first application, which came from Cari Delong from Landscaping Services. Cari requested to use the Identity for promotion of storm water management activities on campus.

Chris also announced that the group (or at least a subset of it) will begin to help review the Sustainability Website in January, after the Wesustain Identity Use Guidelines and Application Process are in place.

Sam, Kaitlyn, & Matt—update concerning the fledgling WMU “Sustainability Fund” initiative
Kaitlyn, who is working on this project as an Independent Study this semester, was unable to attend this month’s PUSC meeting. Sam gave a brief overview of the presentation she gave to the PUSC last month along with an update on recent activities. She explained that they are beginning to research creating a “Sustainability Fund” at WMU that will require a mandatory investment from students each semester (and a voluntary one from staff and faculty). This Sustainability Fund would be used to support the Sustainability Office and specific sustainability initiatives on campus, such as the Wesustain Service Learning Program that is also under development. Kate & Sam have drafted a report outline with questions concerning key players, potential institutional costs, information campaigns, potential student issues, staff green fees, etc.

After a brief discussion on terms other campus’ are using for similar initiatives—the most popular of which is “Green Fees”, the PUSC agreed that use of the term “Green Fee” is inadvisable and that alternate names for the initiative should continue to be explored.

Kate & Sam’s goal is to work with Dr. Glasser to complete a best-practices report by the end of March and launch an information campaign with a public forum. They hope to work with the Board of Trustees, the PUSC, the President, GSAC, the Faculty Senate and the WSA (among others) in order to have something to put before the Board of Trustees at their July meeting.

Sam—overview on progress with the Wesustain Service Learning Program (formerly the Wesustain Fellows) funding initiative
Sam gave a brief overview of the proposal for the WSSP, which could employ WMU students, recent graduates and local high school students to research and implement the highest leverage initiatives outlined in the Strategic Sustainability Initiatives Report. In light of John Greenhoe’s advice, the name of this program was changed from a fellowship program to a service program.

Sam drafted a new two-pager with John Greenhoe’s assistance. This draft is currently being peer reviewed. Sam will continue to work with John in order to draft a few Case Statements for different potential funders. Please contact Sam directly (and cc. Harold) if you would like to review or comment on the DRAFT two-pager.

Evan and Chris—follow-up research for a possible filtered-water machine pilot
Chris reported that he is currently exploring single serving water vending machines that can be used with reusable water bottles. Evan and Chris plan give a brief presentation of progress at our
January PUSC meeting. Harold also reported that WMU has been approached by Proctor & Gamble. They are interested in discussing a potential business partnership that meets the needs and goals of WMU to offer an option for reducing bottled water usage on campus (We have received requests from many campus community members expressing their interest in such options.). Harold will give us an update about the discussions with P&C after he has had a chance to meet with them and learn more about their ideas.

Casey—update on SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy Follow-up Project
Casey was unable to attend this month’s PUSC meeting to give us an update on WSA’s progress on this project. Harold, however, gave a brief overview of the topic and the SEI process and reported that he was also asked to participate in an SEI webinar in January to highlight WMU’s administrative strategies for simulating progress on campus sustainability.

Matt, Sam & HG—overview of Maureen Hart events and follow-up progress
The Maureen Hart events were a great success, culminating in three days of community networking and sustainability indicators education. Matt, Harold and Sam are currently organizing community notes from the workshop and drafting a survey regarding the Maureen Hart events and the possibility of advancing sustainability indicators work in Kalamazoo (and the region). This survey will be distributed to all workshop and speaker participants in mid-January. After this data is collected, they will draft a brief follow-up report. Harold summarized the focus of the survey by stating the following question. “What is our vision for a sustainable, desirable Kalamazoo in 2050 that addresses longstanding systemic issues and creates a place where the best and brightest want to live and work?”

HG & Matt—“Center for Sustainability Research & Education” Earmark proposal
Matt and Harold announced that they successfully submitted an earmark proposal for a potential Sustainability Center at WMU. Barb informed the committee that there were nineteen total Earmarks submitted by WMU this year.

PRESENTATION
Chris Pyzik & David Dakin—Update on the Sangren and Campus Housing Projects
Chris and Dave gave an excellent presentation regarding the Sangren “renovation” project on campus, including a brief overview of their efforts to green the building and surrounding landscape. Strategies for the proposed new Campus Housing Projects were also outlined for PUSC members. Please contact Chris or Dave if you would like to receive a copy of their presentation. Summary notes from the presentation will be posted on the Sustainability Website.

DISCUSSION
PUSC Strategic Planning
Harold raised two key question/issues that are before the PUSC—a summary of the discussion is included below:
1. How should we 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?

After a brief discussion, the PUSC agreed that drafting the first annual report outlining our goals for the past year, assessing our progress and creating our top priorities for the coming year are a top priority. PUSC Committee members agreed to brainstorm about how to proceed with this process and come prepared to draft a “report action plan” at the January PUSC meeting.

2. What is (and should be) the role of the PUSC on Campus?

As a new PUSC member, Bill Davis asked the committee whether it is more important for us to represent our colleges through an advisory role, or through implementation of sustainability initiatives. Judy Gipper explained that she uses her PUSC membership as a learning opportunity, which she teaches back and/or implements in Dining Services. The PUSC at large agreed that we have, for better or worse, moved beyond a simple, straight-forward advisory/review capacity. After more discussion, the Committee agreed that while they are currently balancing advisory and implementation responsibilities, they want to move toward functioning chiefly as an advisory body. As a result, the Committee agreed to work on building capacity to support the creation and maintenance of sustainability initiatives. Strategies for leveraging this goal include increasing visibility, creating a funding campaign, and reinvesting in PUSC sub-committees (or other organizational models for maintaining progress and momentum), which will be discussed in detail at the January PUSC meeting.

Brainstorming Session: What are our main priorities for next year and in the future? [HG would like to present a “Key Priorities” list for the Capital Campaign]

1. Get a Sustainability Office up and running
2. Build financial sustainability for WeSustain Initiatives and Programs
3. Expand participation by PUSC members, possibly through new sub-committees
4. Institutionalize the EcoMug Program (including a strategy for securing ongoing funding)
5. Create Faculty Sustainability Luncheons to support research and teaching on sustainability and to facilitate interdisciplinary, cross-college collaboration
6. New undergraduate sustainability courses, co-majors, certificates, etc. as well as new graduate sustainability-related/themed certificate and degree options
7. Create a Bike or non-motorized transit initiative
8. Develop a framework for meeting ACUPCC requirements and reporting responsibilities
9. Help develop or support a Community Sustainability Indicators Project or other related initiative, such as a Community Sustainability Asset Mapping Project, to support capacity building for regional sustainability strategic planning
INFORMATION ITEMS

Discussion items to continue at the January PUSC meeting:
(1) What should be the Strategy and Framework for creating the annual PUSC report?
(2) 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 re-direct our role back to an advisory capacity?
(3) Should we create an “Orientation Packet” (possibly online) for new & current PUSC members (potentially including the Strategic Initiatives Report; committee member names, affiliated program, & interests; sub-committee missions, members, etc.)?

Items to address at the January or subsequent PUSC meetings:
(1) Filtered water machines pilot update from Chris and Evan
(2) Marketing sub-committee update
(3) SEI Best Practice in Endowment Policy update by Casey
(4) EcoMug Program update by Casey, Harold and John
(5) Update from Carolyn and Harold on potential collaboration with Coke
(6) Progress on the GHG/CAP Best Practice Review Project from Chris and Kate
(7) Matt, Sam and Harold will discuss the Maureen Hart Survey
(8) Update on creating a Learning for Sustainability M.S. track in the Socio-Cultural Studies of Education program by Paul
(9) “Green Fund” Initiative Update by Kate and Sam
(10) Wesustain Service Learning Program proposal update by Sam
(11) Continue discussion on supporting/promoting a possible Bike Initiative (drawing from Dr. Lemberg’s presentation and UI’s student run project reported on by Strazdas in October)

Upcoming Meeting:
January 21st 2010 at 3 pm in Room 204 of the Bernhard Center

Meeting adjourned:
4:45 pm