

## **WKU Sustainability Committee**

Meeting Minutes: 11.17.09

In attendance:

Cristin Lanham, Greg Fear, Dale Dyer, Seth Cude, Nancy Givens, Matt Vaughan, Kevin Smiley, Ouida Meier, Terry Wilson, Robin Hume, Larry page, Tejas Sangoi, Meredith Tooley, Sara Ferguson and Christian Ryan-Downing

**Meeting materials:** (attached at the end of this document)

1. WKU Sustainability Scavenger Hunt (facts every committee member should know)
2. List of all blackboard submissions of goals and priorities for the coming year

### **General announcements and updates:**

The annual sustainability report goes to print today, should be ready to distribute by week's end. The report will also be available electronically as a pdf on the sustainability website for virtual sharing.

### **Nancy Givens, Co-chair Education for Sustainability Task Force and Chair Fundraising Task Force:**

The fundraising task force has not met since the last meeting of the greater committee, so there is nothing new to report on that front. Nancy would like to find ways to promote and grow the green fund. Discussion ensued about ideas for promotion – possible marketing campaign for the Holiday Season – give to the Green Fund for the Holidays... or something like that.

The Educating for Sustainability Subcommittee has several initiatives in process – developing proposal (resolution) to President Ransdell for inclusion of sustainability education in Strategic Plan, planning meetings with Gatton Academy and Honors College, working on preliminary plans for faculty training/retreat.

Approval and funding for portal has been granted.

### **Kevin Smiley, President of SGA:**

SGA send out an annual survey to students to get an overview of their level of satisfaction with various aspects of the university, and this year they included an open-ended question regarding the Sustainability and Recycling initiatives on campus. Though the response rate was not as high as they'd hoped for, they did get 100 responses to this particular question, and Mr. Smiley had the answers consolidated and brought a copy for each of us. Some responses indicated as awareness and appreciation of sustainability efforts. Most responses concerned recycling, but were predominantly positive – the bins are full (a good problem to have), and opportunities to recycle are available.

(Matt Vaughn suggests that SGA take responsibility for some of the maintenance of the bins in the residence halls to keep them from getting so full that students are discouraged from using them.)

(Terry Wilson suggests that WKU Recycling follow the waste stream to the end and publicize their findings to help prove to the community that individual recycling efforts are worthwhile.)

One repeated complaint is about the lights being left on in the stadium even when nothing is going on. Dale addresses this concern by reminding us that control of those lights is in athletics, so pressure should be directed towards Wood Selig and the football administration.

### **Dale Dyer, Energy Update:**

Discusses the adaptation to 70 degree inside rule (summer was easy, but winter is tougher). We have a number of folks who are uncomfortable at 70, and their first reaction is to go get a space heater. Space heaters are wasteful, hazardous, and the problem is exacerbated by folks unwilling to accept new rules.

(Nancy suggests individual attention to different places, since all are set at same temp, but different buildings react differently and some stay too hot or too cold. Dale says that these buildings have little or no temperature controls (GW, EST, TCNW, IEB).)

ESPC is awaiting final acceptance by CFO and Chief Controller and will be enacted soon. Construction could start as early as end of month.

(Ouida suggests public education as charge of the committee to teach folks to conserve on campus in the winter like you do at home. )

(Seth suggest that some concerns are valid, and that handing out thermometers, but Dale does not like this because cheap thermometers are not reliable, and it must be placed in the exact same location as the control. Concerns will be addressed, and calls are encouraged to check for mechanical issues, bad thermostats, drafts or leaks, etc. Calls should be made before a space heater is considered an option. )

(Christian points to energy savings last year and the link to conservation culture, education, and awareness. Committee should communicate the importance of shutting down and unplugging over upcoming breaks. Christian can draft, Greg suggests talking to Herald and getting an article out. Last year's hard shutdown set the stage for continued conservation, and we need to keep it up (CRD). We made the USA Today a couple weeks ago, Lucid Design site, and energy savings. )

(Dale reports that Johnson controls has similar software that has been offered as part of ESPC for FREE. Independent meters are in place already. Planetarium, center wing, both sides of stadium, health services, DUC, Weatherby, are "talking" and numbers have been reported to Dale. )

(Ouida suggest an ad hoc, one time energy publicity subcommittee to address the education and awareness aspects of enacting another Conservation Vacation – CRD suggests SGA help too, and Kevin says Fo' Sho', and the generation gap is profoundly apparent as Ouida reminds him that it is not for show, but for work. HA! Seth says success comes from Eco Reps in each building, or each floor, because folks listen to their neighbors better than they listen to Dale.)

**Action: The sustainability committee agrees to form an ad hoc task force to help communicate energy awareness and conservation, especially for upcoming holiday breaks. This committee will include Ouida Meier, Kevin Smiley, Robin Hume, Dale Dyer, Christian Ryan-Downing**

Dale – natural gas boiler in Central Steam Plant:

Explains the problems with permitting from Frankfort. "Construction" restarted yesterday, so at least 45 more days for operating license on or about December 27<sup>th</sup>. It will reduce dependence on coal – we have already voluntarily reduced consumption by 1000 pounds, this year we have committed to using no more than 4000 pounds (traditionally 5000, and will continue to decrease in the future). CRD will arrange for tour for the committee, perhaps next month. Natural gas market is being driven by demand, so price is cheap. Gas storage is at 10-year high, and gas wells are continuing to operate even though gas is not being used as much. Boiler was purchased with cost savings of past few years. Our other small gas boiler is in use right now. A minimally loaded coal boiler will be started on Monday. The gas boiler will remain on for the duration of the heating season.

**Celebrated one year anniversary of Sustainability Committee** with a game – WKU Sustainability Scavenger Hunt (see questions and answers at the end of meeting minutes). Everyone won – reusable water bottles –something every committee member should have and use!

## **GOALS AND PRIORITIES for upcoming year:**

Some ideas from handout, blackboard and discussion included: Green tour for WKU; Purchasing Policy – Ban on Bottled water!; Guest speakers/lecture series -- funding? Sponsored by Sust. Comm.?; Get folks to give to Green Fund; stronger and public commitment from President, university leaders; stormwater quality management plan; AASHE STARS; partnering with SGA; student representation on subcommittees. (Idea submissions can be viewed in more detail at the end of minutes. **Thank you** to those committee members that submitted ideas and suggestions.)

## **WKU Sustainability Committee concludes that Goals for 2010 will be the following:**

- **Development of a WKU Green Tour** - *champion Helen Siewers?*
- **Creation of a Purchasing Policy** – *champion Christian Ryan-Downing*
- **Development of a Storm Water Quality Management Plan** – *champion Mark Pendley with support from Pollution Prevention subcommittee*
- **Grow the Green Fund and sponsor a guest lecture series** –*champions Nancy Givens and Christian Ryan-Downing*
- **Continued Education for Sustainability efforts** – **particularly a resolution adopted for Strategic Plan** – *champions Nancy Givens and Ken Kuehn*

*\*The AASHE STARS project will be completed as well – the Office of Sustainability will oversee this project.*

***I have taken the liberty of assigning champions to take the lead on fostering these goals. If for any reason you are unable to do this, please let me know. Please recruit stakeholders, experts, and talented and caring individuals to turn these goals into reality. Please remember to include students on all task forces or subcommittees. \*If you are one of these talented stakeholders that would like to help with any of these efforts, please contact the champion to get involved.***

### WKU Sustainability Scavenger Hunt

1. What committee member has recently purchased for his/her department rain barrels to capture water for landscape irrigation? – *Mark Pendley – EH&S*
2. What does the HRL Building Dashboard measure? – *kilowatt hours of electricity used in residence halls*
3. How much waste does main campus generate annually? How much is recycled? *3 million pounds, 9% is recycled*
4. What materials can be recycled on campus? *Plastic, paper, aluminum, glass, cardboard, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs (tubes), e-scrap (also, we are composting pre-consumer kitchen waste in Fresh Food Company and coffee grounds in Java City)*
5. How much electricity did we save in 08/09 compared with 07/08? *4 million kWh*
6. According to the Energy Policy, use of what is not permitted in university buildings? *Space heaters*
7. What committee member has recently purchased and placed a Big Belly solar trash compactor outside of DUC? *Brian Kuster*
8. Who is the Sustainability Champion for WKU Restaurant & Catering? *Meredith Tooley- Convenience Retailing & Specialty Coffee Manager*
9. How many bike racks have been placed on campus by Parking & Transportation this year? *120*
10. What is being installed in our Central Steam Plant that will help us reduce our campus carbon footprint? *Natural gas boiler*
11. How many Sustainability Committee members are LEED Accredited Professionals? How many at WKU? *Five, twelve at WKU*
12. What does LEED stand for? *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*
13. What does AASHE stand for? *Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education*
14. What does USGBC stand for? *US Green Building Council*
15. The Center for Math, Science, and Environmental Education recently changed its name to what? *The Center for Environmental Education and Sustainability*
16. Faculty and students are using what for fuel and energy on the WKU Farm? (name two sources) *animal poop, used cooking oil, and composting leaves and yard waste (heat)*
17. How do you find someone to carpool with to WKU (hint: rideshare)? *Go to the Parking and Transportation webpage and click on car-free to sign up with Alternet-rides.*
18. What sustainability commitment has the President signed? *The Talloires Declaration*

#### Goals for 2010 – Helen Siewers

I think the Sustainability Committee has much to show for the past year.

From my position in Planning, Design & Construction, I'd like to contribute in several areas:

- 1) Construction: Continue to inspect Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control measures on construction projects. All PDC project managers are certified with the City as EPSC contractors.
- 2) Transportation: Implement a \$950,000 federal earmark (thank you, Sen. McConnell) for a WKU-Community Bikeway project, with improvements along Avenue of Champions, College Heights Blvd, and Center St. Project timeline is 3 years.
- 3) Campus Tree Inventory: We collected baseline data in 2009, including GPS coordinates, species, and size of 2,000+ trees. The work will continue in 2010. We will use this as a guide to plant around 200 trees this winter.
- 4) Green Tour: Create a guide illustrating natural history and sustainable practices: the underlying geology, karst features, raingardens, native plants, rainwater harvesting, porous pavement, LEED features in new projects, etc. This could be a printed brochure like the Outdoor Sculpture Campus Tour (see [http://alumni.wku.edu/s/808/images/editor\\_documents/Campus Art Booklet.pdf](http://alumni.wku.edu/s/808/images/editor_documents/Campus%20Art%20Booklet.pdf)), or a downloadable map/guide, or both. I'll need editorial and graphic design assistance. We could augment the tour with an informational sign at each stop. Additional funds would be needed for signage.

#### Goals for Upcoming Year – Tammi Beach

Goal: Continue to educate the campus community about sustainability, through classes, workshops, lectures, campus events, student organizations, literature, email list serve, examples.....

I know speakers cost money however I found on University of Florida's sustainability website:

<http://ufsustainability.blogspot.com/2009/11/blake-mycoskie-of-toms-shoes-visits-uf.html>

Blake Mycoskie, the founder and Chief Shoe Giver of TOMS Shoes, came to speak and I think that getting current, interesting people to come to campus to speak may help to educate and get involvement from faculty, staff, and students

#### Validate a Commitment to Protect Human Health and the Environment - Mark Pendley

As a student of environmental science and stewardship, alumnus and staff employee, I have interest in continuous improvement for conservation and stewardship efforts. I am concerned with the credibility of our efforts in developing a "green" culture without an equal commitment to meet national laws and regulations created to protect our environment. Many students, faculty, staff, and alumnus have expressed to me their frustration and concern for a lack of commitment for correcting stormwater pollution on campus. I recommend we champion support for protecting human health and the natural environment by supporting the proposed stormwater quality management plan and support a 2010 implementation date.

I agree that a clear and strong commitment from our President and executive management team (Academic Council) supporting protection of our environmental resources (air, water, and land) would align support from all of our WKU stakeholders (students, faculty, staff and alumnus).

#### 3 Priorities – Nancy Givens

This past year has represented many successes in energy conservation and efficiency, transportation, grounds/landscaping practices, and general awareness of campus sustainability issues and initiatives. In the coming year, areas I would like to see given added priority are: 1) purchasing policy and practice; 2) education for sustainability across the curriculum, and 3) working to increase participation rates and donor contributions to the Green Fund. The Annual Report also needs to remain a priority - to inform internal and external constituencies and for outreach to prospective donors.

#### PCC – Sara Ferguson

I know this is a broken record at this point, but as a student I feel that it speak volumes about our environmental commitment if we could get President Ransdell to sign the President's Climate Commitment. I would love to be able to show him what goals we have already met, which goals are obtainable and what our long term goals should be. If this is unsuccessful, I would like to toss around the idea of him signing *some* kind of commitment- something that says I'm committed to being a model university, continuing to support and fund green initiatives, and have an open ear to students. Whenever I speak to other student leaders from other campuses they seem very surprised when I tell them we have not been successful in having him sign the commitment, and I would like to see this change before I graduate.

#### Jennifer Tougas

From PTS perspective on sustainability, we're still moving towards beefing up the alternative transportation program. I don't know what shape that will take. So, perhaps "finish planning for TDM" will be a good goal from my area.

#### Cristin Lanham

I would like the PP subcommittee to make progress towards a purchasing policy and a stormwater awareness initiative to accompany our management plan.