

## **Campus Sustainability Committee Meeting Auxiliary Services**

**Date:** Nov. 29, 2016

**Location:** Fresh Food Company

**Time:** noon to 2 p.m.

**Attendees:** Melissa Halstead, Gabriel Durham, Kristina Michel, Jeanne LaMontagne, Mackenzie Wysong, Esmeralda Valdez, Jeff Feng, Nikhil Schneider, Stephanie Coates, Eve Esch, Emily Merrell, Kristin Wintersteen

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

- a. Melissa Halstead, sustainability coordinator for the Office of Sustainability, kicked off the meeting by introducing herself to the committee and suggesting all members identify a sustainability-related “low-hanging fruit” initiatives.
- b. Committee members then went around the table and introduced themselves.
- c. Some “low-hanging fruits” identified included increasing student and faculty/staff awareness campaigns, green team programs for students and faculty/staff, funding for LEED certification, walk to Energy Research Park initiative with expanded bike trails, bike program, interdisciplinary projects/collaboration, waste diversion for outdoor events, recycling, composting of food waste, partnering with COAST, improved pedestrian access around the edges of campus, particularly crossing Cullen Blvd.

#### **II. Updates from the Office of Sustainability**

- a. The Campus Sustainability Policy was approved in June 2016. Sustainability Task Force officially transitioned to Campus Sustainability Committee. See [MAPP 14.01.01](#) for more information.
- b. UH Parking COAST program
  - i. Began in the fall of 2016.
  - ii. Provides incentives for UH students, faculty and staff who carpool or utilize alternative and sustainability options (METRO, walking, biking, etc.) to get to campus
  - iii. See <http://www.uh.edu/af-auxiliary-services/parking/transportation-options/COAST/> for more information.
- c. Campus bike rack cleanup
  - i. Campus bike rack cleanup project is nearly complete.
- d. Student Center sustainability initiatives
  - i. Eve Esch provided summary of ongoing sustainability initiatives at the Student Center.

- ii. Developed sustainability committee of staff who work in Student Centers and students from Student Center Policy Board. Meets monthly. Developed action items/programs to implement in Student Centers.
  - iii. Implemented recycling in Student Center. Added 80 new recycling bins, launched education/awareness campaign of recycling program, training for staff. Recycle rollout in October.
  - iv. Established sustainability lunch and learn series. Every other month, presents topics about sustainable practices, including bringing water bottles to campus, office supply ordering, etc.
  - v. #SCSustain campaign where those who commit to being sustainable can receive reusable cutlery. Also, those who take pictures of themselves using water refill stations in buildings or using reusable cutlery and post them on social media, they can win a Starbucks gift card.
  - vi. Sustainability will be Division of Student Affairs assessment project for the year.
  - vii. Sustainability marketing campaign.
  - viii. Composting of used Keurig coffee grounds in offices of Student Center buildings. Grounds are donated to the Campus Community Garden for pest control and compost.
- e. Ink and toner recycling
- i. Tejas Office Products has ink and toner recycling program. Will pick up used ink and toner cartridges when delivering new ones. Offices can also drop off used ink and toner cartridges to Office of Sustainability for recycling.
- f. Graduate Research award and presentation at AASHE
- i. Joanne Ma and student team received AASHE award for campus water conservation research project. Joanne Ma attended AASHE conference in October to accept award on behalf of team.
  - ii. For more information, see <http://www.uh.edu/af/news/press-releases/pr-aashe-award.htm>.
- g. Mentioned upcoming Sustainability Meetup on Wednesday, Nov. 30.
- i. Esch suggested rotating time frames to accommodate staff and faculty schedules.
- h. Mentioned upcoming TRACS Summit Conference March 5-7 at Texas A&M Commerce.

### **III. Review of Sustainability Committee Bylaws**

- a. Members agreed to provide feedback and comments about bylaws to Melissa Halstead by the end of the week.

### **IV. Ongoing Projects**

- a. Signage at Shasta's Prairie and Community Garden

- i. Mentioned volunteer maintenance event at Shasta's Prairie on Oct. 28.
  - ii. Developing signage for Shasta's Prairie and Community Garden to be implemented soon. Signage will have educational component, mentioning organic gardening practices, food deserts, where produce is donated, etc.
- b. Increasing recycling at residence halls
  - i. Students have been emailing Office of Sustainability about making recycling bins more accessible at residence halls.
  - ii. Mackenzie Wysong brought up concerns about adding a recycling bin to Bayou Oaks and that students might use it for trash, contaminating the recyclables. Housing is looking into purchasing external containers to be installed on one side of the property to test and see if students use it for recycling.
  - iii. Melissa Halstead brought up Cullen Oaks and the fact that they do not have a recycling program. Hoping to utilize student support to persuade management company to implement a program.
  - iv. Esmeralda Valdez suggested Melissa Halstead attend next Student Housing and Residential Life Committee meeting to address and discuss Cullen Oaks recycling.
  - v. Committee members discussed the possibility of implementing sustainability requirements in future business contracts.
- c. Houston B-Cycle proposal
  - i. Conversations with Houston B-Cycle are ongoing.
- d. Online database of UH sustainability researchers
  - i. Kristin Wintersteen provided an update about the online database of UH sustainability researchers. Project stalled after Sarah Kelly's departure from UH. Wintersteen asked for ideas about how to continue it.
  - ii. Division of Research will be utilizing a new research database, Peoplesoft Grants, in 2017. Old database, RD2K, will be phased out as research projects within that database end.
  - iii. Goal is to include a "sustainability" keyword to better find sustainability-related research projects to encourage collaboration between colleges/departments.
- e. Sustainability standards to FP&C design guidelines
  - i. Jeanne LaMontagne provided an update to project to implement sustainability standards to FP&C design guidelines. She mentioned concerns that there is a disconnect between establishing guidelines and implementing them/informing appropriate people to implement them. Brought up the Tree Care Plan as an example. LaMontagne suggested formalizing a committee and having that committee set up/refine guidelines/policies.

- ii. LaMontagne also mentioned there may be an opportunity to connect with system campuses and discuss their sustainability efforts. She suggested there may be opportunities for collaboration.
- iii. Gabriel Durham mentioned that reporting on recycling practices in buildings is part of STARS requirements.
- iv. UH STARS report is available at <https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-houston-university-park-tx/report/2015-11-23/>

**V. Open Forum**

- a. Members discussed the idea of establishing a UH sustainability listserv.
- b. Collaborating with other UH campuses regarding sustainability initiatives.

**VI. Next Meeting**

- a. TBA
- b. Melissa will send out a doodle poll before scheduling next committee meeting. The committee agreed next meeting to be in February.