

Environmental Issues Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 6th, 2012

Noon-1pm

Metolius Room, EMU

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Peg Gearhart (Chair) – Oregon Humanities Center
- Christine Thompson – Campus Planning and Real Estate (Ex Officio)
- Jennifer Ellis – Finance
- Steve Mital – Office of Sustainability (Ex Officio)
- Nathan Howard – Student
- Nick Moriaty - Student
- Christian Pich – Neuroscience
- Mahala Ray – Student
- Louisa de Heer – Student Sustainability Center (Ex Officio)

MEMBERS ABSENT

- Fred Tepfer – Campus Planning and Real Estate
- Sophie Luthin – Student
- Heather Brinton – Law
- Ramah Leith – Health Center
- Ellen Ingamells – Student
- Doug Brooke – Environmental Health and Safety (Ex Officio)
- Chris Jones – Sustainable Cities Initiative
- Meg Mattsen – Office of Stewardship
- Alan Dickman – Environmental Studies

GUESTS

- George Hecht – Campus Operations
- Stephen Ames – Office of Sustainability

MEMEBERSHIP

Peg Gearhart thanked out-going members Jennifer, Ramah, Christian, and Heather for their service to the committee. She asked those students who were interested in remaining on the committee to inform her before the end of the year. She briefly summarized the committee's activities this year.

GEORGE HECHT

George Hecht described the role of Campus Operations. The unit employs almost 300 people (including student workers) and works closely with campus planning and the office of sustainability to guide campus operations activities. George briefly described the range of projects that campus operations are leading such as the florescent-switch lighting project, the energy-monitoring dashboard, and ongoing LEED: EBOM projects. Peg invited George to come back in the fall to continue his presentation.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION PROGRESS REPORT

Stephen Ames from the University's Office of Sustainability update the committee on the University's Greenhouse Gas Emission progress report. Stephen cited factors such as diffuse sustainability initiatives around campus, the University's new green revolving loan program, and the academic sustainability curriculum and culture as major positive factors that will contribute to future GHG emissions reductions. Steve Mital presented some highlights from the 2011 Greenhouse Gas Emission Report, showing that the University's overall greenhouse gas emissions continue to follow a downward trend.

Ellen Ingamells reported on the activities on the climate justice league. This year the group has focused its energy on informing incoming students about ongoing projects that students can get involved in. She introduced the group's climate neutrality proposal and asked the committee for feedback and a statement of support. The proposal is based on a similar Oregon State University document and makes suggestions to make concrete goals for the institution to reduce.

Discussion ensued around student involvement in the University's sustainability efforts. Christine Thompson was impressed with the amount of student support and involvement in sustainability projects on campus. Since the wheels of policy turn very slowly, Steve encouraged interested students to engage in projects that are not necessarily guided by policy objectives but that still have an impact in campus sustainability.

Peg asked Steve whether the climate action plan update would pin-down five and ten year emissions reduction goals for the institution. Steve said there was some general house cleaning was necessary to update the existing climate action plan and that larger amendments like five- and ten-year plans would require a community process and significant analysis.

The final part of the discussion centered around the sustainability database on the University's Sustainable Oregon website. Christine and Louisa and asked how the database might be made more accessible to a larger audience. Steve said a student had been hired to update the database over the upcoming summer months.

FUTURE AGENDA ISSUES

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm. The meeting committee will reconvene in the fall.