

## **Environmental Issues Committee**

November 23, 2009

1 PM

Owyhee Room, EMU

### **Members in attendance:**

Zach Stark-MacMillan, Dan Rottenberg, Mark Reed, Terrie Scharfer, Kris, Amelie Rousseau, Christine Thompson, Wes Thompson, Peg Gearhart, Fred Tepfer, Mark Nystrom, Kay Coots, Jill Forcier, Mary Wood, Steve Mital, Art Farley, Deborah Exton

Mark Reed has stated that the minutes should be more detailed. There was a discussion and it was agreed that we look further into the matter but that in the mean time the minutes should be more detailed. Mark Nystrom (minute taker) mentioned we should be making a voice recording of the meetings in order to help out the amateur minute taker.

Mark Reed motioned that we approve the minutes. Terrie Scharfer seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Art Farley opened the discussion of the CAP.**

Steve Mital gave background on the CAP process:

- Presentations—there have been over 10 presentations to the University community
- Forum—there is an online forum where community members can make comments.
- Revisions in the CAP are ongoing.
- There is a mid-December due date for the second draft.
- The Office of Sustainability hopes to have president's approval by the January deadline.

Steve Mital went on to discuss the emissions overview:

- 60% in powering and lighting our buildings.
  - 47% heating
  - 13% electricity
- 31% from air travel. Data is from existing data collection systems. We need to improve our data collection process. For example, air travel emissions are converted from dollars spent to miles traveled.
- 10%--commute and fleet travel

Steve Mital commented that there could be “easily a 5% swing due to changes in data collection, not due to growth or changes, just because we change our methods.” This was in regards to our emissions overview.

Steve Mital then presented the committee the mitigation strategies put forth by McKinstry

- Proxy buildings were chosen and analyzed...this data was then extrapolated out to the whole campus. This is how the number on cost, strategies, etc were developed.
- \$28 M with a 18 year payback with a reduction of 20%
- \$65 M biofuel conversion in CPS should reduce CO2 emissions. Steve gave a switch grass example of a zero- or low-emission source of reducing Scope I and Scope II.
- Reduce travel through video-based conferences.
- \$1 M to purchase carbon offsets to deal with the remaining emissions.
- We are not in this alone. “Decarbonization” is occurring all around us. For example, the airline industry is reducing its emissions. Hybrid engines in cars is another example where we don't

have to change behavior but we will still reduce emissions.

- Steve then discussed the OUS renewable energy plan (see attached.)
- Be an early adopter and change behaviors.
- Discussion on growth...a nearly 10% projected sq ft of growth.

Fred Tepfer asked about how emissions are reported. Is it tons/student? He commented that we can't say that we can't grow because the students will just go somewhere else. There is no net gain.

Steve Mital responded that we report tons/student, tons/sqft, and tons/year. He also pointed out that discussions on growth should focus on the type of growth (students, campus footprint, etc.)

Fred Tefer pointed out that more efficient use of classrooms would reduce our emissions.

Steve added that maybe we need to set a standard of "zero net carbon" on the new buildings.

Steve went on to say behavior change can be significant in reducing our GHG emissions. Additionally the plan needs to have significant opportunities for students to be engaged in the future of the plan. President Lariviere says we need to engage the students more and have education opportunities associated with the CAP.

Mary Wood said that Steve Mital is a carbon-accounting and carbon reducing strategy expert and we need to create a curriculum to produce more people like Steve...that they would be a great demand in the future.

Art Farley posed this question to the committee: Whose behavior? Students? Faculty? Administrations?

Steve Mital reminded us we have to deal with what we can measure. We need to focus on the data. He suggested that we may need an increase in the budget for energy use and other monitoring.

**A discussion followed centered on energy use in the buildings.**

Fred Tepfer mentioned that buildings are monitored for energy use and we know how much is from housing, athletics, and other categories.

Kay Coots discussed the misperception that students don't always believe the heat used in their room matters to the University's energy use.

Fred Tepfer suggested that the faculty could have their buildings set down to 58 if everyone was leaving for the holidays.

Kay Coots highlighted the problems associated with setting heating low creates (parents call and complain and it takes a long time to heat up the building.)

Mary Wood suggested that perhaps we can we send out a memo to the staff informing them of the choices they have in setting the building temperature.

Fred Tepfer pointed out that it's difficult because the heat is set building by building rather than room by room. He added that we need a process to let end users set their own destiny for their carbon footprints.

Art Farley asked about whether the building's temperature settings are becoming automated.

Fred Tepfer and Kay Coots responded that they are to a certain degree.

**Steve Mital asked the committee: What does the EIC want to do? Draft a memo?**

Zach Stark-MacMillan suggested we use the listserv but Art pointed out that our next meeting is after the cut off for the draft comments.

Mark Reed suggested that we should either support or not support the report.

Fred Tepfer pointed out that the language is really weak on the air travel. There is room for stronger language. The EIC should go after the air travel.

**A discussion followed on what is included in the CAP.**

Zach Stark-MacMillan stated that he is concerned with biofuels and offsetting and ultimately the CAP only spells out what we *could do* versus what we *should do*.

Christine Thompson said that we should strengthen the implementation part of the report. We need to at note the importance of the next step. We need to make sure that we can't let this get lost on a shelf.

Christine Thompson pointed out that the CAP is an excellent step in the right direction. But we need to work more towards implementation.

Steve Mital quoted the CAP report from UW. "This is a plan to plan." If we put out too binding of a document no one would sign off on it. The document is supposed to be flexible so that people can move in the best way forward. But by signing this they are agreeing to move to the next step.

Christine Thompson explained that there will be a number of other plans from different parts of the campus community spelling out what they plan to do.

Zach Stark-MacMillan stated there is already a strong commitment to zero emissions and there is no real "plan" in the CAP to move forward.

Christine Thompson pointed out if the future goals are strongly enough stated all the other plans from UO would have to be updated to fill the requirements of the CAP.

**Art Farley shifted the focus to goals. He asked: Are we all happy with the goals?**

Steve Mital admitted that our goals are "lukewarm" and our goals are weak up front and require a lot of action in the future.

Mary Wood and Fred Tepfer agreed this could be dangerous.

Zach Stark-MacMillan stated a concern over the proposal that UO leave the OUS system and potentially lose access to the alternative energy plan.

Mary Wood stated we need to put more investments up front. We need to pattern our goals after the

other campuses and have more aggressive emission reduction goals. We additionally need to make a statement about air travel. She pointed out that its not against our University mission to change our air travel behaviors.

Christine Thompson referenced a chart on page 14 of the CAP 1.0 draft that discusses the UOs control over emissions. She stated that we need to move air travel from low control to high control.

**Art Farley posed the question: should we restate our goals? Make them more aggressive? What unit should we state them in? Emissions per student? Per sq. ft.?**

Fred Tepfer stated he like expressing goals in per student basis. It takes out the growth out of the equation and Steve Mital agreed.

Dan Rottenberg said he would like to see a green fee for students. OSU, Portland State, Southern Oregon all collect these to use for offsetting and student initiatives.

Zach Stark-MacMillan asked if we could propose a revolving loan fund.

Steve Mital explained that he supports setting one up since we do not have one. The business affairs office is supporting it and Steve will reinforce that support.

**Fred Tepfer made a motion endorse the Climate Action Plan with the following notes:**

1. Recommending more aggressive emissions goals
2. More emphasis on behavior, education and personal responsibility
3. More aggressive approach to air travel and others
4. Establish Student green fund
5. More concrete commitment to investment and implementation. (added during discussion, suggested by Christine Thompson)

Christine Thompson seconded the motion.

A vote was held and there was **unanimous support of the endorsement.**

Mary Wood suggested that could we have a petition for the faculty sign to support our commitment to the CAP. Art Farley agreed to write up a memo and circulate it to the committee.

Art Farley stated that the minutes were excellent.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 PM.