

Environmental Issues Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 9, 2012

Noon-1pm

Metolius Room, EMU

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Peg Gearhart (Chair) – Oregon Humanities Center
- Christine Thompson – Campus Planning and Real Estate (Ex Officio)
- Meg Mattsen – Office of Stewardship
- Alan Dickman – Environmental Studies
- Jennifer Ellis – Finance
- Nathan Howard – Student
- Christian Pich – Neuroscience
- Chris Jones – Sustainable Cities Initiative
- Ellen Inagmells – Student
- Louisa de Heer – Student Sustainability Center (Ex Officio)
- Steve Mital – Office of Sustainability (Ex Officio)
- Fred Tepfer – Campus Planning and Real Estate

MEMBERS ABSENT

- Sophie Luthin – Student
- Heather Brinton – Law
- Ramah Leith – Health Center
- Doug Brooke – Environmental Health and Safety (Ex Officio)

GUESTS

- Stephen Ames – Office of Sustainability
- Andrew Louw – Office of Sustainability
- Rick Glover – Chemistry Graduate Student
- Ed Elliott – Chemistry Graduate Student

DECISIONS TAKEN

- The February meeting minutes were approved.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

GREEN CUSTODIAL PRODUCTS PRESENTATION

Rick Glover and Ed Elliott presented their progress on a collaborative project between the UO Facility Services Department and the Chemistry Department. The facilities department contacted chemistry graduate students to assess the environmental sustainability of their cleaning products.

The chemistry students are evaluating the green cleaning products by analyzing material safety data sheets (MSDS), health effects on individuals using the products, and cost and effectiveness. By rating a level of concern for each of the ingredients of the cleaning products, they are going above and beyond the LEED green purchasing requirements. They are trying to create a system that establishes the risk of a given product and provides a framework to inform the university's purchasing policies and guidelines. The students are reaching out to the committee for assistance in crafting the list of prohibited chemicals in a way that produces a tool that can be effective in the future.

The committee suggested creating a tiered list of chemicals that need special permission to use in a framework similar to one used in the Integrated Pest Management program. The committee suggested that the students create a section of their list that explains why the products are dangerous, thus making the list more useful for future users to modify. The committee also suggested that the students start thinking about sharing their system with other universities across the country as a model for purchasing green cleaning supplies.

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY ANIMATED VIDEO

Steve Mital introduced a project the Office of Sustainability is working on to bring the UO's carbon emissions and efforts to mitigate them to the attention of the campus community in an accessible manor. The video will be available on the campus energy dashboard and educate community members both in the UO community and beyond. After watching the video, the committee suggested including a final slide that directs the viewer to further resources on this topic. Committee members suggested ways to improve the audio quality. The committee discussed the merit of adding an introduction to the context behind the University's signing of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. The committee suggested an additional strategy for reducing air travel emissions: reducing travel.

FUTURE AGENDA ISSUES

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm. The Spring term meeting will be scheduled online next week.