

University Sustainability Committee – Presidents Conference Room

1/21/2016 – 2:00 p.m.

In attendance:

Dr. Kim Littlefield
Alexander Moylan
Justin Roberts
Dr. Glen Borchert
Dr. Doug Marshal
Dr. Krista Harrell
Sara Boccardo
Victor Cohen

Todd Culp
Madison Tuttle (Angela McGaugh's proxy)
Cecelia Martin
Jerry Purvis
Kelly Rushing
Catherine Buttrey
Ravi Rajenda (guest)

Computer Recycling

Dr. Borchert re-opened the discussion on recycling/repurposing discarded University computers and hardware.

- Currently, discarded computers and hardware are taken to surplus and sold in bundles at a minimal cost to the consumer, or scrapped.
- As stated previously, Dr. Borchert believes that an option is to repurpose these computers to Goodwill.
- Ms. Boccardo stated that while Goodwill can at least recycle the material, the capability of Goodwill to repurpose the computers and hardware must be explored further.
 - Ms. Boccardo will seek input from John Will, Donation Acquisition Manager at Goodwill Easter Seals.
- Justin Roberts reported that CIS students could possibly help via Dr. Tom Johnsten.
- Dr. Littlefield will investigate if computers can leave the University with hard drives intact by speaking with Chris Cannon, Executive Director of Information Technology.

Bin Stickers and Pilot Recycling Program

Todd Culp announced that previously discussed bin stickers are no longer being pursued. Instead, the president wants recycling to be standardized across campus, first starting with a pilot program encompassing three buildings; Shelby Hall, the Administration building, and the Communications building.

- Three different options are being explored for bins to primarily be placed in the hallways within these buildings.
 - Separate buildings could emulate the style of a multi-stream bin by using three separate, less-expensive bins for paper, aluminum, and plastic.
 - Individual offices may also be outfitted with bins, possibly smaller in design to occupy less space, yet still offer employees an opportunity to recycle.
- Todd also reported that his department will possibly have a brand new truck at their disposal in the future, complete with sustainability branding, to assist Goodwill in transporting recyclable material as the emphasis on recycling continues to grow on campus.

USAPD Incident at on-campus Recycling Center

Todd Culp briefly re-opened discussion on the incident that took place at the end of last semester at the Recycling Center.

- Todd reaffirmed that once materials are dropped off to that location, that they then become University property and cannot be removed again.
- Members of the group also came to a consensus that additional signage near the Recycling Center, not only directing students to the exact location, but also to emphasize that the area will serve as solely a drop-off should be considered.

Review of Charges

Dr. Littlefield tabled the review of charges until February's meeting; at which, she'll be able to provide the entire committee with a copy of the charges.

Spring Sustainability Conference

Discussion on this topic was tabled until February's meeting. Currently, some members believe the committee should focus on stabilizing and taking stock of current efforts before hosting a sustainability-focused conference.

Mitchell Center Recycling

Victor Cohen reported that recycling in the Mitchell Center includes the recovery of the following materials: cardboard, batteries, plastic, and aluminum cans.

Grant Proposal for the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)

Ms. Boccardo announced that she is currently seeking funding through a grant proposal aimed at ADEM.

- If funded, Goodwill plans to purchase trailers to assist in recycling efforts, especially with Ladd Peebles stadium in mind.
- A letter of support is needed by 1/29/2016.

Webpage Updates/Ideas

Ms. Kelly Rushing opened discussion on the newly-released USA Sustainability webpage. Of particular note were several ideas that involved adding content to the page, thusly enhancing its effectiveness among page visitors.

- A priority, as far as the page is concerned, should involve adding more educational pieces, such as graphs, descriptions as to what can and can't be recycled, what can and can't be composted, videos etc.
 - Videos could cover topics like how to use the PepsiCo Dream Machine, in addition to a video that could present an overview of the Food Bayou Community Garden.
- A news page could be developed and featured as its own tab.
 - This page could contain write-ups of sustainability-related events as well as information chronicling the steps the committee has taken to help USA become more environmentally conscious and sustainable.
 - Recent events to cover include the Recycling Frenzy competition that concluded last semester, and future contests too.

- Developing a way to display the month-to-month collection data at the Recycling Center and through the PepsiCo Dream Machine would be positive for the page as well.
- Ms. Rushing and Mr. Rajendra emphasized the need for a strong social media presence, one that represents the entire University, perhaps focused on Twitter and Facebook.
- Members interested in developing content for the webpage, or have ideas as to how it can grow further, should contact Ms. Rushing.

SGA Ideas

Mr. Rajendra and Ms. Buttrey broached several topics that may be worth exploring in regards to student engagement and education on sustainability on campus.

- One idea involves a trash audit – a large scale demonstration on campus of how much “garbage” is instead recyclable.
 - A smaller scale audit was hosted by the Student Sustainability Council last spring.
 - Possible location may include the Student Center amphitheater.
 - Time/date is unlikely to be set in stone due to weather, but possible dates may revolve around the middle of the semester.
 - The nature of the idea lends itself to viral-marketing and, in a sense, could go on without an announcement and take people on campus by surprise.
- A second idea involves bring Bonnie Monteleone, Director of Science, Research and Academic Partnerships for Plastic Ocean Project, Inc., to campus.
 - According to the Plastic Ocean Project’s website, Monteleone is “*a researcher who has collected plastic marine samples globally including 4 of the 5 gyres, the Caribbean, and has extended this work to a desert lake.*”
 - The Student Center can feature sustainability-inspired artwork, including one of Monteleone’s pieces which have typically been comprised of the plastic she encounters on her travels.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:04 p.m.

Next meeting will be on February 18th at 2:00 p.m.