Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2016
10:30 am, Lang Center Keith Room

Scheduling
• Still looking for a time that works for the most number of people this semester
  o None of the student committee members are available at this time

Expand or contract size of group?
• Willingness of members to do work may matter more than the size of the group
• SusCom may have more work if the carbon charge gets enacted

Carbon Charge Updates
• Current proposal suggests a 1% levy on all departmental budget
  o Money will not be coming from the endowment
  o Will the Scott Arboretum be levied?
• Change in name from ‘tax’ to ‘charge’
• Urge to get things done by the mid-February Board meeting
  o In order to get the Carbon Charge into next year’s fiscal budget
  o Board not likely to reject the proposal
    ▪ Positive Board discussions in December
• The Carbon Charge was presented at the senior staff retreat in the past few days
  o Val and Greg support it; no one else in the group opposed
• Faculty meeting later today
  o What’s the goal here given that the faulty don’t have decision-making power on this?
    ▪ To say we have support of the academic departments?
• Structure of the Carbon Charge will likely change in subsequent years
  o The idea going forward is to truly tie the tax to actual behaviors
• How do we make sure that this committee is involved with decisions on structuring?
  o Faculty will likely want to know who decides who spends the money

Sustainability Director Introduction: Aurora Winslade
• Aurora is focusing on learning about the community, meeting people
• She’s also familiarizing herself with the many areas that sustainability at Swarthmore touches on, such as:
  o Lots of building, construction committees
  o Lot of conversations about waste
    ▪ New buildings, composting that GAs do, waste stream, etc.
  o Learning about energy
  o Learning about landscape, and expanding the Framework to include it
  o Sustainable procurement
  o Meeting with Dining Services about food systems
  o Wants to talk/learn more about water & transportation
• She is working immediately on:
  o Sustainability Framework implementation & accountability
Integrating her role with the Green Advisors program
Facilitating Carbon Charge conversations
She is also starting to plan what’s coming up next in the short-term
Office of Sustainability open house for February
  Could be framed as a SusCom open house
  SusCom should sponsor
Possibly planning a larger-scale campus event for March
Also hoping to organize a senior staff sustainability retreat for June
She notes a series of upcoming sustainability-themed conferences that she, Melissa, GAs, and/or other faculty & staff are going to:
  Northeast Campus Sustainability Consortium (NECSC) at Wellesley at the end of March/beginning of April
  Smart & Sustainable Campuses Conference in Baltimore in early April
  PA Power Dialog in Harrisburg in early April
  Student Sustainability Symposium at Chatham in early April
  Upcoming proposal deadline for AASHE in Baltimore next fall
  Could Swarthmore be a sponsor?
  Thinking of organizing a panel on carbon pricing with peer schools
Aurora wants to see students much more engaged in policy creation/recommendation process
  For example, students could conduct a major analysis of the campus waste stream
  She and Betsy are discussing some sort of year-long fellowship program for academic credit
    They are looking for faculty in different departments who might sponsor directed readings, with some small financing for both faculty & students
      But would the course credits go toward students’ majors? Might be tricky to achieve this
    Faculty in SusCom agree that 6-8 hrs is the most the students can commit to paid RAships, but students can spend a lot more time on coursework for credit
    Most departments have some sort of structure for directed readings, it’s more a matter of taking advantage of existing systems instead of bothering the Registrar about creating a new course altogether
      Suggestion: schmooze individual departments and let them reach out to students on their own

Borough’s Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Open House: Report Back
Open House meeting included Swarthmore residents, members of similar committees in other communities, College folks – all sharing what’s been going on and thinking about how we might be able to better collaborate
The EAC includes four local communities working together on some environmental projects
  Sustaining their park areas
  Water management
Real grassroots work in our community
  Great that the College is getting involved
• Sheila used to serve on the Council
  o They used to really want to have a College member sit on the Council
  o Had some trouble maintaining a person
  o Makes a lot of sense for Aurora to now serve on the Council

Upcoming Pennsylvania Environmental Resource Consortium (PERC) Event
• Melissa will be speaking about Transition Town Media at an upcoming PERC event
  focused on college-community partnerships
  o Geared toward GHG inventories & climate action plans
  o Goal is to strategize to meet the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
    call for further higher ed engagement with local policymaking

Green Initiatives Fund Proposals

Shower Heads Updates
• 4 showerheads in each locker room currently
• All locker room shower heads will eventually be changed, including by Ware pool
  o Eventually need to know exactly how many were changed and the effect
  o We need to get information out to the campus community
• We don’t have showers individually metered, so it’s hard to get a sense of usage
  o Engineering project? Sociological interviews project?
• Should have Shane Loeffler, the proposal’s author, come in later to report back to
  SusCom
• Need to keep talking about the revolving fund aspect of this proposal

Good Food Fence Updates
• Subcommittee met with Jess Karol, the proposal’s author, to further discuss goals,
  budget, and timeline
  o The group will be meeting with a contractor soon
    ▪ Jess and another student have already met with him

End time 11:40

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Tier