

## **Sustainability Committee Minutes**

27 February 2009

Attending: Eric Wagner, Linda McDougall, Hannah Jones (invited guest), Carr Everbach (agenda), Rebecca Ringle, Nicholas Buttino (Notes), Kelsey Hatzel

Announcements:

SusCom email is now live at [suscom@swarthmore.edu](mailto:suscom@swarthmore.edu). This email will go to SusCom members and is distinct from sustainability suggestions ([greenbox@swarthmore.edu](mailto:greenbox@swarthmore.edu)).

Swarthmore Borough, representing four local municipalities, has been awarded PA grant for greenhouse gas inventory. Carr will work with two Temple University consultants and 2 Swarthmore students to calculate annual greenhouse gas emissions and propose a reduction "action plan." By the conclusion of the grant, Carr would like to put information on SusCom website in an ongoing basis so that greenhouse emissions of College and municipalities can be tracked over time.

Going over final drafts of letters (see appended) – add another l to Linda's last name; add H.G. to website list and letter to President Chopp

Liz Heagle has left SusCom, Arboretum cannot spare another staff member. Jeff Jabco has been asked to send someone from grounds

We are still an Ad Hoc committee; we should request COFP to be a standing committee in a formal letter.

Organizational Issues

How should we organize SusCom committee structure for next year?

Should we have official areas of representation (e.g., is it important to have a representative from grounds/arboretum? Dining services? Alumni?) For student members, should we have requested groups represented (e.g., EarthLust or GoodFood)? Need to offer guidelines of numbers of people from certain areas (not rigid) but allow COFP flexibility should opportunities arise or people be unable to serve. Eric will put together a draft proposal for COFP.

There are other College committees that operate on an agreement/consensus model. We are not a policy-making committee – should we be? We only make recommendations to other entities (president, CEP, the College community)

Should we have procedural votes under formal rules (such as Roberts Rules of Order) with majority wins but dissenting opinions articulated in the minutes?

If we do take formal votes, representation of constituencies becomes more important, attendance of SusCom members at meetings more critical (majority of votes cast of attendees with no absentee balloting). However, the result of any votes

is still a non-binding recommendation to the College President. Eventually, SusCom may be given more clout, so we want to establish good practices now. Formal voting could make things more efficient, conclude discussion and move on. "For Action" announcement must be made 2 meetings in advance, like faculty meetings.

Carr made an announcement at the faculty lunch concerning GreenMarch (see attached flyer).

Suscom is supportive of GreenMarch but declines to endorse officially because we as a committee must be sure to make recommendations based on facts, and there is much advocacy and speculation in GreenMarch ideas. Best aspect is experimentation and finding out what works for people; SusCom should actively solicit feedback on GreenMarch initiatives and use as experimental data for future recommendations.

Athletics has made a policy to turn off lights on stadium if unused for half an hour and more. Eric has idea for putting solar energy project on field house, but Ralph has said that it is still not cost-effective. Solar hot water (on dorms) is much more efficient.

Note that there are also reasons to do things for reasons other than just pure carbon efficiency: leadership, psychology and publicity (however, need to be careful not to greenwash).

SusCom can request feedback from departments, ask each department for a liaison or "Sustainability Captain."

Art History department recycles readings, but the History Department does not; still waiting for response from English and Political Science

ITS has asked us to determine if laptops are better for the environment than desktops are. They use less power, but we do not know about batteries. How do we find out this information? Need experienced, connected Sustainability Director. This issue is a good example of information/service SusCom can provide to the College community.

Carr will deliver keynote speech on Sustainability for about 35 minutes at this year's All Staff Meeting on Tuesday, March 17 – LPAC Cinema 1:30-3:00 – (moved from April so that Al Bloom and Sue Welsh can attend). Carr would like much dialogue, not just straight lecture, increase engagement; opportunity may not come again for a few years. Carr will emphasize conservation and efficient use of resources rather than extra expenditures on behalf of the environment (e.g., saving resources saves money and saves jobs – explain gently). Explain importance of sustainability/efficiency as helpful for everybody; necessary to have positive outlook, upbeat presentation.

Looking at Greenbox suggestions: Rebecca has been posting the greenbox suggestions on the SusCom website; need to update and respond to recent

suggestions. Idea to form sub-committee that reviews and responds to greenbox items. Sub-committee can then give brief reports to full committee. 2-3 people would be good number for Greenbox Subcommittee.

AICUP energy management initiative: AICUP was trying to get 20 colleges to sign-up, but they got only 11 (including Swarthmore). Still unclear of fate of this initiative: Will it kill the project or just make it smaller? Ask Ralph for update next meeting.

Discussion of requests to have SusCom meetings open to the public. We have always been open to inviting people to talk to us, and groups can self-invite. We do not have specific plan, but we will designate some meetings in advance as open and see if that system works for us. Discuss and decide upon which meetings will be advertised as "open" at our next meeting.

Next meeting: Monday, March 16, 2009, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm in the Lang Center's Keith Room. Carr will give his All-Staff presentation the next day, so reviewing his speech will be a main item of business.

Attachments below:



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To President-Designate Rebecca S. Chopp:

The Sustainability Committee is absolutely thrilled that you have accepted the leadership of Swarthmore College. As a young committee, we seek your guidance in how best we can support the sustainable use of resources; educate faculty, students, and staff about sustainability; and contribute solutions through innovation and example. We invite you to examine our website, still a work in progress, at <http://www.swarthmore.edu/suscom.xml>.

Our first efforts included bringing a number of sustainability experts to campus (Oberlin's David Orr and two alums who are sustainability directors, one for the University of California system, the other for the city of Philadelphia), and inviting a broad representation of College stakeholders to our meetings to apprise us of efforts already underway and of possible future best practices. This year, we have solicited suggestions from community members via a physical, email, and website location called the GreenBox; these suggestions are posted on our website along with comments from the Committee about implementation. We also have begun making recommendations to the Administration and the larger community, prioritizing low-cost actions, but we look forward to guidance from you about how to integrate these recommendations within the framework of priorities you identify for the College.

Welcome aboard this wonderful adventure we call Swarthmore!

The Sustainability Committee

- \* Amanda Bayer, Associate Professor of Economics
- \* Nicholas Buttino '09
- \* Joy Charlton, Executive Director of the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility, Professor of Sociology
- \* H.G. Chissell '96, Alumni representative
- \* Maurice Eldridge '61, Vice President, College and Community Relations
- \* Carr Everbach, Professor of Engineering (Committee Co-Chair)
- \* Kelsey Hatzell '09
- \* Nadine Kolowrat, Associate Director of Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations
- \* Linda McDougall, Director of Dining Services
- \* Arthur McGarity, Professor of Engineering
- \* Rebecca Ringle '11, Lang Center Intern/Sustainability Liaison
- \* Michael Roswell '11
- \* Ralph Thayer, Director of Maintenance (Committee Co-Chair)
- \* Eric Wagner, Head Men's Soccer Coach

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To Earthlust and Green Advisors:

The Sustainability Committee congratulates you on your GreenMARCH initiative and applauds its spirit of innovation and discovery. We would like to support this effort by helping to inform the Swarthmore community, by actively soliciting feedback from groups or individuals about elements that work particularly well (or fail to), and by measuring (where possible) the resource-saving consequences of participants' actions. Only by making different choices will people learn what works best for them, and for our institution, with regards to environmental sustainability.

Thank you so much for all your hard work and good thinking.

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