

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
 - 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
 - Money will not be coming from the endowment
 - Will the Scott Arboretum be levied?
- Change in name from 'tax' to 'charge'
- Urge to get things done by the mid-February Board meeting
 - In order to get the Carbon Charge into next year's fiscal budget
 - 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
 - Val and Greg support it; no one else in the group opposed
- Faculty meeting later today
 - What's the goal here given that the faculty 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
 - 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?
 - 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:
 - Lots of building, construction committees
 - Lot of conversations about waste
 - New buildings, composting that GAs do, waste stream, etc.
 - Learning about energy
 - Learning about landscape, and expanding the Framework to include it
 - Sustainable procurement
 - Meeting with Dining Services about food systems
 - Wants to talk/learn more about water & transportation
- She is working immediately on:
 - 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
 - They used to really want to have a College member sit on the Council
 - Had some trouble maintaining a person
 - 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
 - Geared toward GHG inventories & climate action plans
 - 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
 - Eventually need to know exactly how many were changed and the effect
 - 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
 - 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
 - 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