

## **Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes**

September 7, 2015

4:30 pm, Lang Center Keith Room

**In attendance:** Adina Spertus-Melhus, Carr Everbach, Deb Kardon-Brown, Eric Wagner, H.G. Chissell, Maurice Eldridge, Melissa Tier (notetaker), Ralph Thayer, Rebecca Griest, Sheila Magee, Tao Wang,

### **Introductions**

Welcome to SusCom, and let's introduce everyone here today and their role outside of SusCom

H.G. is starting a new position, so has more flexibility this year to make meetings

### **Review of 2014 Main Points**

Things seem to be really moving forward with sustainability at College, what with the search for a new Director, a new full-time position of Coordinator, and more

Four main points:

1. Communication about sustainability, on campus and beyond
  - a. i.e., staff meetings to review sustainability initiatives, waste management, etc.
2. We are a sounding board for the Sustainability Director
  - a. The Director & Coordinator are devoted full-time to considerations of sustainability, but receive high amounts of support from this committee
3. Oversee sustainability efforts that are occurring on campus
  - a. Should continue to define this role this year
4. We are advocates for new or continuing initiatives
  - a. i.e., overseeing the Green Initiatives Fund

Three pillars of the creation of this group:

1. Low hanging fruit – things that are easy to do and/or cost relatively little money
2. Advocating for and helping push major projects – things that we don't have the budget for, but can help support
3. Curricular impact – what can we do to make the curriculum on campus reflect the need for education on and information about sustainability
  - a. Committee has not yet addressed this directly
  - b. There is the ENVIS committee which somewhat addresses this. How can we best work in tangent with this committee? Need to maintain connections.

Other updates since last May:

- Carr & Eric met with Val briefly over the summer
  - o Val stated that sustainability is a top priority for her and her administration
    - She wants to hear from the Director regularly to learn

- She will be crafting a College mission with regard to sustainability
  - Val has asked to meet with Melissa regularly this semester, so SusCom should help develop the agendas for those meetings. Overall, what is the relationship between the Office of Sustainability & SusCom?
  - A lot of this structure is still in development. A priority is communication – especially to make sure that students are aware of the goings-on of this committee
- What are the student groups this year?
  - Still in the works, Nathan may be a point person for that

### **Search for Sustainability Director**

- There are currently 7 semi-finalists, 2-3 will be brought to campus for full interviews
  - There will be community opportunities to meet the finalists
- Really strong candidates, in part because of how much more developed our own program is now
- Timeline: hoping to have the final interviews mid-September, to bring someone on campus by the end of this semester if possible

### **Setting up meetings**

Email Eric if you haven't already!

### **Other Items?**

Internal carbon tax proposal sent to President's Office

This committee should review the proposal and help flesh it out

Started as a reading group over the summer, and then members started to really get interested in doing more direct research on an internal tax at Swarthmore. A modest proposal was sent out just a week or so ago.

In the next meeting or two of the committee, we should plan to meet with the faculty/staff involved with the proposal

Can we learn more about internal carbon taxes, esp. the one at Yale?

We should also read the proposal itself

Tao should work on getting relevant info to this committee

Let's talk some about ideas for the coming year?

- Creating a more vibrant bridge to the alum community
  - Creating a speaker series? Possibly similar to the Cooper series?
- Revitalize sustainability-theme to LAX conference
  - If that can't be done, then the possibility of creating a conference focused on sustainability
  - Earth Day or another weekend to focus on sustainability?
- Site visits
  - Use LinkedIn sustainability group

- Externship component (& jobs)
- Greenschools consortium
  - PERC call for posters
    - Carr → PA groups, so very helpful to make those contacts/connections. We need to stay highly involved. Should we host a conference??
- Thought leadership and engagement
- H.G. & Melissa connect about managing the LinkedIn site
  - Could this be connected to Garnet Go Green?

The College is in the process of starting a lot of new building projects this year, and we are supposed to be committed to maintaining sustainable design

BEP was way over budget, so we need to be wary about loss of sustainability gains

Also plans for Inn, NPPR, swing space, and geothermal wells

We need to review Inn information in particular within this committee

We should invite Cindy Urick, the new Purchasing and Contracts manager, to meet with us

We should review the Sustainability Framework

Proposal to talk about the Framework at our next meeting

Connections to the faculty lunch series?

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Respectfully submitted, Melissa Tier