

Sustainability Committee Meeting Notes November 28, 2011

Present: Dan Svedarsky, Rich Connell, Greg Benoit, Linda Kingery, Ken Myers, and Elizabeth Tollefson

Agenda:

1. Update on Sustainability and Energy matters.

Energy: Campus is still getting a handle on campus energy use. We have 10 buildings with smart meters. This information comes back to our Web site via Otter Tail Power, but as yet, we still do not have a real grasp of what our energy consumption is.

Working toward an energy dashboard in the student center. Awareness helps us use less energy—if it is out of sight it is out of mind.

New residence halls are causing us to widen our carbon footprint. The new residence hall will be heated similarly to Evergreen Hall but will have heat pump/PTAC combo units. We might ask how we supply these units of electricity as a means to saving energy. Decisions made will exacerbate our peak and most of our use for these buildings is during the colder seasons of the year.

Connell explained that campus is ready to embark on a study of the heating plant. This study needs to take place on the Crookston campus and be as open and transparent as possible. All options are on the table for consideration. \$100,000 study to explore our options. Burns-McDonnell will be conducting the study and we need to be prepared to give input.

Svedarsky has submitted a \$5,000 grant proposal to CERTS to evaluate biofuel additions to or in place of, coal in our boiler. Dr. Steve Benson (a chemical engineer at the University of North Dakota) worked on a similar study there. Keith Mykelseh continues to work on information regarding biomass supplies in NW Minnesota. Concurrently evaluating the supply of various biofuels has to go along with demand analysis.

Ken Myers brought up short-term ways for us to get behind energy saving. How are we involving the campus in our efforts? What small things can we be doing? How well are we doing currently? How can we increase our working together? It is important to do the large things like infra-structure modifications and retrofits as well as the small things where individuals feel they are making a difference.

We all need to live by example and create a culture that buys into saving energy and living that way. It will take work on everyone's part to change behavior.

Local foods update from Kingery:

Awareness is first and then helping establish farmers markets and other ways for access. Sodexo has specific procurement specifications. They serve the Morris campus and they also have a healthy eating grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield. There is a co-op partners' warehouse in St. Paul and they have been approved by Sodexo. They also transport things right past campus on their way to Amazing Grains in Grand Forks from a stop in McIntosh.

Kingery told about the sustainability student gathering of U of M students prior to the UMACS (Upper Midwest Association for College Sustainability) conference in September at the Morris campus. Students talked about procurement challenges and they were surprisingly well informed. A law student is taking a look at procurement policies and will report on what is learned. This is done through the U of M law clinic. This study will be useful beyond the University for other institutions such as hospitals and K-12 institutions. Implications are cost-driven and administrators do not always understand the complexities of the food service part of their institution. This complexity keeps growing and thus causing segment specialization.

Students are interested in the *edible landscapes*. UMD has implemented gardens which are self-operated and used by the campus community. UMC launched the Wangari Maathai Memorial Orchard on campus by planting a Honeycrisp apple tree on 21 October. Oberlin College in Ohio has a dandy orchard that provides fruit for the campus community. **If food is grown on the campus grounds, it may be an exception and can be used by dining services.**

Michael Crow, President of Arizona State University and one of the organizers of the Association of College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, **notes that colleges contribute around 3 % or so of the total greenhouse gases but, we are educating 100% of the future's leaders.** If we want students to take these issues seriously, when we do something or we do nothing we are serving as a powerful model.

Recycling: We are facing a recycling challenge in the near future since Polk County Environmental Services is discontinuing the recycling and sorting that is done by the ODC. What can UMC do to maintain the behavior change that has already occurred with regard to recycling? There are some recycling containers on the north side of campus that have not been used in five years and we have a truck suitable for hauling them. Is it possible for us to do some sorting and/or hauling to some place to recycle?

Kingery encouraged a visit to the Fosston facility. She also raised the question about the use of plastic bottles on campus since aluminum is turned right back into aluminum cans and that is not the case with plastic. What about aluminum only?

Benoit has been coordinating recycling for some time on campus including things like copper, iron, and aluminum as well as composting also.

The campus community needs to recycle at our desks or we can lose the opportunity for the recycling.

Svedarsky encouraged the group to take a look at the U of MN, Morris web site on recycling efforts and how visible it is. Connell suggested sending Benoit to Morris to visit and learn from them.

Recycling is one of the most visible and participatory activities in sustainability

After we get a better understanding of the local recycling situation on campus and what makes sense logistically, we need to invite Jon Steiner, the county waste management person to talk to us about their waste management/recycling in the future. We want to be part of the solution.

Benoit suggested the possibility of a policy for contractors who come on campus with regard to recycling. This policy would come from Facilities and Operations. In the past, there hasn't been anything like this and it could be a good way for the campus to make sure construction waste is minimized and recycled.

2. How does the larger Sustainability Committee relate to the Campus Assembly Sustainability Committee? (There is a lot to do, sustainability is very broad, and everyone with an interest, needs to have an opportunity to get involved.)

Sustainability Committee now reports as a regular committee of the Campus Assembly. Members include students Kate Holmquist and Jen Rasmussen along with Ken Myers, Brian Dingmann, Dan Svedarsky, someone from Residential Life, Rich Connell from Facilities and Operations.

Ken Myers is taking on additional responsibilities as the Registrar and suggested that **Brian Dingman chair the overall committee. Brian can then call committee meetings; perhaps on a monthly basis.**

The various working groups from the largest campus committee can still continue to function and report to the campus assembly sustainability committee for reporting at Campus Assembly meetings.

3. Update the membership list for working groups.

The following are suggested to chair working groups with the following members (other suggestions welcome):

Sustainability Working Groups:

Water and landscape management. **Dan Svedarsky**, Chair. Eric Castle, Greg Benoit, Katy Smith, Kristie Walker, Shaun Berens.

Curriculum. **Paul Aakre and Katy Smith**, Co-Chairs. Oxana Wieland, Marsha Odom, Jim Shaar, Kim Gillette, Rob Proulx, and Dan Svedarsky

Recycling and waste management. **Peter Phaiah and Rich Connell**, Co-Chairs. , Lisa Loegering, Tom Feiro, Jean Collins.

Operations and energy. **Rich Connell**, Chair. Dan Svedarsky, Ken Johnson and Jon Fabre (Otter Tail Power Company), Rob Stoe (UMC Staff), Kent Freberg, Rusty Remick (UMC staff), Jason Brantner (NW ROC), Ben Williams, and Doug Langer (UMC staff) (Ex Officio: Jerome Malmquist)

Communications and outreach. **Amber Evans-Dailey and Liz Tollefson**, Co-Chairs; Rachel McCoppin; Andrew Svec, Rachel Lundbohn, Carly Mirwaldt, Ben Williams, Linda Kingery, and Cindy Kuismi (Otter Tail Power Company).

Local foods. **Linda Kingery**, Chair. Peter Phaiah, Sheila Carleton (student) Terry Nennich, Deb Zak, Sharon Stewart, Ken Meyers, Sue Jacobson, and Doug Pedrick (Sodexo).

Crookston Students for Sustainable Development (CSSD) **Ben Williams**, Chair. Lauren Snively, Jenny Rasmussen, Mitch Tjossem, Sheila Carleton, Beth Walters, Chris Anderson, Kate Holmquist, Jen Rasmussen.

Sustainability Research: David Demuth, Chair. Katy Smith, Dan Svedarsky.

4. What next?

CSSD meets today at 2 p.m.

Beth Walters asked about the proposed Mini-grant program. Svedarsky indicated that engineering calculations were in error and UMC is not saving as much energy as we once thought; therefore the mini-grant program from the Re-Direct fund will be minimal. However, the UROC program is alive and well and is often undersubscribed.

Beth will be checking with Ben Sullivan on the status of the Campus Sustainability Survey and follow-through with implementation details after visiting with Steve Hannah.

Sustainability Story potentials: *

- The bicycle monitoring unit at the end of the bike path by the football field is ready for installation. Svedarsky will draft article.
- **Where our water comes from.** A bulletin board around the water fountain near the Center for Sustainability is almost ready. It has been crafted from construction refuse to tell the story of the origin of water and the importance of refilling water bottles. Svedarsky and Williams will draft.
- **“It all adds up”** – an overview story of how large and small initiatives are all important in accomplishing the larger goals of sustainability. Author? Ken Myers?
- **Recycling status.** Jeanie Jones and Ben Williams.
- **The importance of consumer choice in sustainability.** Sean Berens.
- **Overview of biodiesel use on campus.** (To be done later after more things develop.) Peter Phaiah, Ben Williams, Paul Aakre.

*All drafts will be routed to Liz Tollefson for review and media distribution. Carly Mirwaldt, a communications major, will be happy to assist on article construction. Rough drafts/outlines of most of these could be developed before the break.

Notes compiled by Liz Tollefson and Dan Svedarsky