

Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes
06/10/08

Location: Physical Plant Conference Room
Presiding: Dave Lococo, Kathleen Smythe
Present: Kelly Akers, Chris Barbour, Steve Cobb, George Farnsworth, Pickett Harrington, Annette Marksberry, Doug Olberding, Greg Schaber, Vanessa Strickley
Not present: Caroline Richardson, Brett Simmons and Samantha Thomeczek

Next Meetings: July 15, 7:30 a.m., Physical Plant Large Conference Room
August 19, 8:30 a.m., Physical Plant Large Conference Room

1. The first order of business was to request a volunteer for minutes. Annette Marksberry volunteered for this month.
2. The new committee member Kelly Akers was introduced following brief introductions of committee members in attendance.
3.
 - a. The Portal announcement was discussed and whether anyone had heard any feedback in reference to it. It is currently on the Portal under the Campus Wide Announcements. It will be run again in the Fall
 - b. The website will be discussed later with the subcommittee news.
 - c. The minutes from the May meeting were discussed. The only change that was seen was the correction to the date. Otherwise they were approved. It was also stated that Dan McLoughlin was contacted to see if he was interested in serving. He is over booked and will serve the group on an as needed basis.

4. Subcommittee Reports

d. **GHG emission inventory by January 2009.** As part of the last meeting, Dave showed the committee the spreadsheet. He has spoken to Dick Pulskamp who thinks that it is straight forward piece of data collection. Dick and Dave think the majority of the energy will go into collecting the transportation data because the rest is straight forward. There is no institution that is measuring mileage, air travel, etc.

Beth from UC has said that they are almost done with collecting their data. They may be a good source for us to talk to. The inventory requires that we go back a few years of old data. Physical Plant has a lot of data it just is not formatted to put directly into the spreadsheet. The subcommittee needs to meet to discuss. There is nothing currently for the subcommittee to review but there will be at the next meeting. The goal is to get a baseline of where we are today.

George is working on air travel as part of his subcommittee so there is some overlap.

e. **Institutional Action Plan by January 2010.** There are two different facets for this group. The first is to set a date. There are few institutions that have done so. Part two is the plan itself. Annette shared the spreadsheet that she and Sam have been working on. The first sheet is specific to the Jesuit schools. There are only five which have signed the Commitment including Xavier. They are

generally reluctant to set the date due to the difficulty in setting it. This is an area where Xavier could set us a part from the other Jesuit schools. There is always the date of 2050 to have 80% reduction.

Pickett added that while doing his research one theme he saw that was critical of the sustainability groups was that no target dates are being set. He is all for setting the date but believe that it needs to be an informed decision.

Steve also agreed with setting the date but would like to have a better sense of what the inventory looks like. Is it eight percent in four years or forty percent in twenty years?

It was also discussed that if we set an extreme date, the only way we could likely meet it would be to buy offsets. The other extreme would be to set it out too far that would not be able to allow us to reap any of the cost savings, etc.

The goal is to look at it to set the plan.

George is looking at travel. The plan to offset air travel should include faculty and staff. The group discussed whether student travel such as alternative breaks and study aboard should also be included. The athletics travel is also a big challenge.

Pickett suggested that there may be a way to break out the student travel. Is using whether it has credits attached to it valid. There was further group discussion around the alternative break travel which is part of our mission. It is a big part of our marketing. As George does further work on the travel, he will keep it separate but we can include it if desired later.

The question of how do we want to approach offsets for travel was raised. One way is to buy them. We can also fund projects that are local such as buying land. We could but second growth forest to use for labs and study. The offset strategy is to look at 1) cost (as cheap as possible), 2) locally and 3) academic programs such as Costa Rica and buying land there. Xavier could also sponsor efficiency improvements to the community such as loans or grants but with the focus on local improvements.

George asked if we should investigate these types of possible ideas. The group agreed that at this time, the more ideas to throw out the better. The potential payback would be great. There is also a natural synergy with the community and CBI. We could tap into it and expand on what is already in place. For example, there are homeowners who could benefit from energy improvements in their homes. We could improve the life of the community. The question was raised if we should not look to improve the efficiency at the university first. The question was asked should the limited funds be put in here at the university first. We can potentially have both with some of the low hanging fruit in the community. We could encourage people in the community to be more energy efficient. The more we connect it to the academic pursuit the stronger the case will be to do it. We should hook it to the student and faculty research.

The City of Cincinnati is starting an offset commission for the business community where they review the purchasing of offsets. Businesses have to go to the commission to buy the offsets. It is just getting started and is it possible for Xavier to get someone on the committee.

Sam has also been looking at dining services. She has begun investigation into a farm to table program. There are several steps we could take to talk to the new dining services vendor. Dave is on the transition committee for this.

There is also a Shareholder proposal for Xavier and a social investment committee. Matt O'Neal in the bursar office is willing to sit down with the committee to review the list of companies.

- f. **Tangible actions by January 2010.** Chris spoke to Mary Paula at NKU about their UPass program. It began with a shuttle to a nearby nursing home that they had bought for parking. It then transitioned to Tank. It cost the university twenty five thousand for last year. They estimate it will be

roughly seven hundred and fifty more this coming year. The cost is built into their budget. It is available to students, faculty and staff seven days a week, twenty four hours a day. They are currently working on implementing card swipe on the Tank buses. They have a reciprocal agreement with Metro for their Ohio residents. They are also creating a car pool parking lot that is closer to the university. They will be tracking the impact it has.

UC has done the same basic program. It costs them roughly one hundred fifty thousand dollars a year which is half funded by administration and the other half by fees. They did a six week pilot with roughly four thousand rides provided the first week. By the last week of the pilot, there were twelve thousand rides provided.

Xavier met with the Metro folks last year who recommended a two month pilot. The problem is our location. There are not many routes directly here. There is the potential to shuttle people to their stops. There is also the potential to talk to Metro about stations with the Quad development. UC got shelters as part of their negotiations with Metro. These are a big benefit. The group also discussed ride share or car pooling. Metro tracked the pilot with UC. There is not a lot of incentive for student to not get into their cars and drive. The population at Xavier that would benefit a lot is the international student group. The group also discussed the potential of asking Metro to increase the frequency of their routes. Sometimes asking for changes to routes will result in opposition from traditional riders. Xavier could then shuttle the students to the routes. This is a good time to implement with gas prices.

Kelly will explore adult students and how they would potentially use these services.

The group discussed that there would have to be group activities to get students to use the bus. The subcommittee will write up their concerns, the issues and potential impacts to the student groups. Pickett suggested that we attempt to get the average student commuter footprint. On the Tank website, there is a way to calculate your personal usage. The website is:

<http://www.tankbus.org/index.asp?id=1003&subid=2056>

The group discussed bikes on campus and how they can be encouraged. There needs to be showers available as well as bike racks. The group discussed a potential “shower only pass” for O’Conner or Physical Plant where there are showers. This subcommittee will look into where there may be showers for bikers to use.

The subcommittee discussed a car sharing program Zip Car. The user can rent an insured car by the hour. It is known they have hybrids but the group was unsure if they have electric cars.

g. Funding. Pickett had a handout for the members that list some of the many sources for funding. The work horse of this process is determining the cost savings along with the ROI. One potential is a performance contract where you get a portion of what the group is able to save. Another option is the revolving loan fund which is a pool of money that could be loaned out to the various departments. They then use it to fund initiatives such as replacing all the light bulbs with low energy. There are many government and utility incentives with Cincinnati having some local ones. There are also private grants or loans with low interest. Some universities have had the students assess themselves a tax for sustainability.

Pickett stated that the team needs to determine what we are going to do which will determine where we could likely get the funds. He also discussed when there are partnering with others like we are doing with Corporex the question is who gets the credits for the green initiatives. He also stated that there are a lot of materials available on funding sustainability. Initially, most folks focus on cost savings. After the initial savings, you have to get creative to continue savings.

The question was asked if there is anything that stands out immediately. The construction does because of the current development.

- h. **Communications.** Greg gave us the wireframe for the website last meeting. He will sit down with Maggie Ridder in the coming weeks. If there are any additional feedbacks or thoughts, please let Greg know. The site will be flexible so that it is able to grow and develop. Greg also stated how video is a good way to show items. Deb Del Valle is doing a lot of videos lately. There will also be a blurb about the committee in the next Xavier newsletter.

5. **Other Updates**

- a. Webinar – there is one presented by APPA (Association of Physical Plant Administrators) on Wednesday June 18th at 1:00 PM. It would be a good idea for others besides Dave to join.
- b. Interns – Santa Clara uses five interns to help with their sustainability. There is some money from the President for committee needs. We need to get a sense of what the work will be prior to us making a request. There are Environmental Fellows according to Brent Blair. These are housed in the Environmental Studies area. It may be a good idea to have one for next fall.
- c. Subcommittee deliverables for net meeting
 - i. GHG will meet and sort through deliverables.
 - ii. Action plan will also meet and begin drafting a more formal plan based on findings to date.
 - iii. Tangible actions group will also meet to come up with the pros and cons. They will then write up the challenges for the Metro program. They will also complete an inventory of showers on campus.
 - iv. Funding – Pickett is going to meet with Margaret O’Gorman. He would also like to meet with Kathleen and Dave.
 - v. Communications group will work on the web site.
- d. Shared Group Folder – Dave asked if everyone was able to access it. Everyone who has tried is able to access with no issue.
- e. Schedule of Fall Meetings
 - July 15th at 7:30 AM
 - August 19th at 8:30 AM
 - September 9th at 1:00 PM
 - October 14th at 1:00 PM
 - November 11th at 1:00 PM
 - December 9th at 1:00 PM