

Sustainability Council Meeting Minutes November 15, 2005

Present:

Council Members: Karen Arabas, Joe Bowersox, Sue Koger, Kiri Nelson, Jennifer Roney, Elizabeth Siebert, Nathan Sivers-Boyce, Susan Smith

Campus Members: Constance Adler, Susan Chiappella, Jodi Lowes, Janelle Duyck, Lisa Frost, Ellie, Sam Hall, Dean Wentworth.

Center for Sustainable Communities Proposal:

Joe relayed to the Council that the Commission for Excellence has received 27 proposals for Centers of Excellence. All of the proposals will be available for viewing online after Noon on Tuesday, November 15th at: www.willamette.edu/centers/commission. The Commission has categorized the proposals into 3 groups and will have open discussions regarding the proposals on Tuesday, November 22nd from 3:00 – 5:00 pm and on Monday, December 5th from 3:00 – 5:00 pm. A third open discussion will be held in the Spring of 2006 (TBA) for the 3rd group of proposals. The Center for Sustainable Communities will be discussed during the December 5th session. The Commission strongly urges those involved with the proposals to attend all 3 sessions, but especially the session in which your proposal will be discussed. Joe would like to see a large show of support on December 5th for the Sustainable Communities proposal and hoped those that were available could be on hand that day.

The nature of the centers is up in the air. The purpose of the discussion sessions is to foster brainstorming and bring together those with similarities to help with overlap and possibly merge proposals. There is nothing in the Commission's mandate that states how many Centers will be decided upon/created. Most likely the Commission will recommend somewhere between 4-6 Centers. The Commission will send their recommendations to President Pelton in April.

A question was raised as to whether there is money in the WU budget to create these Centers and if so, where would it come from? It is a very rough estimate that a Center for Sustainable Communities would ideally need at minimum \$100,000 – \$200,000 annually to start offering some of the programs we would like to see conducted by the center. Of course, we could scale up or down. The Capital Campaign money could be used but the general understanding is that it is already reserved for other projects. Separate funding would be necessary.

Sam Hall, is involved with the Sustainable Fairview Association which has been successful in getting the former site of Fairview Hospital rezoned and master planned. The north 30 acres of the site have been sold to a group called Sustainable Investments.

The project will be overseen by the Sustainable Fairview Association and will create a new housing development (no storm systems, only swales, and zero carbon housing). The remaining 245 acres have not yet been sold but they are close to a deal on the land. Part of the sale is a creation of a non-profit “institute/center” for education. It may be possible to partner with WU on the Sustainable Communities Center, or for the project to provide some of the financial support for some of the Center’s programs. Sam suggested that 2-3 Carson-type projects and other student grant opportunities could be supported rather soon. We will follow up on this.

Short Range Objectives:

Joe asked the Council to think of some short-term projects that the Council would like to undertake. The Council debated several ideas including a Clean Energy Campaign, student grant projects, a student co-op (environmentally focused dorm that’s self sustainable, meal planning, cooking, cleaning all done internally, WISH would be the 1st choice for such a dorm and Shepard would be 2nd choice), and an energy reduction/efficiency campaign.

Budget:

The Council has approximately \$5000 on hand which needs to be used by the end of the fiscal year in June. Joe asked how we would like to use that money: bring speakers to campus? Workshops? Other?

The Council felt a Energy/Waste reduction campaign would be a good idea to pursue at this time. It would involve awareness of waste reduction (food containers, paper towels), energy conservation and use reduction. The Council discussed the installation of motion sensor lights which are easy to retrofit and would provide quick results in energy reduction. There are several areas on campus that need to be lit for safety and security, but not everywhere and not inside buildings/unused classrooms. Other ideas for the campaign included having President Pelton send out an email to faculty and staff urging simple energy saving tips, developing a bookmark, sticker or other promotional item for Opening Days reminding students about saving energy, turning off lights, using Tupperware or other reusable food containers, and/or creating pamphlets on public transportation so students are more conscientious and understand WU’s commitment to sustainability from their first days on campus. A working group was developed and they will design a campaign and make purchases with funding provided by the Council. (Elizabeth, Sue, Jodi, Constance, and Kiery will begin working on the ideas).

Sustainability in the Classroom:

Scott Pike would like to attend a workshop for Infusing Sustainability into the Classroom at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. The workshop is scheduled for early January and Scott has family in Atlanta. He will not need housing or transportation but wondered if

the Council would be willing to fund his airfare and registration. The Council agreed it was a worthwhile endeavor and will pledge \$700 toward airfare and registration costs.

Clean Cars Letter:

OSPIRG (Oregon State Public Interest Research Group) sent a copy of their Clean Cars letter to Karen, Joe, and some other folks asking if the Council would be interested in signing it as a group, on behalf of the university, or passing it on to faculty. The letter is addressed to and will be sent to Governor Kulongoski urging him to ensure the adoption of the Clean Cars program in its entirety. Questions were raised as to whether or not it would appear as though we were speaking on behalf of the university, whether or not we wanted to be involved in legislative issues (are there any restrictions, in the Faculty handbook, preventing individual faculty members from signing legislature on behalf of the university?), and if the letter was time-sensitive.

The Council debated these questions and decided not to sign or send the letter at this time. Information about OSPIRG and the letter would be included in the next Sustainability newsletter and people could investigate it on their own and choose to sign the letter if they so desired. This would allow the information to be disseminated without any sort of WU endorsement about it. The topic of community engagement will be added to the next SC agenda.

Holiday Get-Together:

The idea of a holiday get together for the Council and other sustainability folks was raised. Everyone has worked hard this year and a holiday gathering would be a nice chance to come together and celebrate all the good work the Council has done.

Meetings Next Semester:

Sustainability Council Meetings will remain on Tuesdays at 11:30 next semester. We will continue to meet in Cat Cavern Dining Room 1.

The Sustainability Council will not meet next Tuesday (November 22nd).

The next Sustainability Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 29th at 11:30 am in Cat Cavern Dining Room 1.