



### Environmental Stewardship Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 26, 2019

8:30 a.m.

Irish Studies Library

### MINUTES

Attendees: Craig Binney, Kristi Burkholder, Deb Carpenter, Nicole Casper, Diane DeFrias, Claire Farnan '19, Kathleen Fitzgerald (Sodexo), Jessa Gagne, Dalton Griggs '21, Michelle Guiney (Waste Management), Devin Kindred, Bob MacEachern, Chanel Mazzone, Bridget Meigs, Anna Pinckney '19, Paul Ricci, Jasmine Santos '22, Cheryl Schnitzer (Chair), Juliana Walsh '22, Greg Wolfe

Excused: Bruce Boyer, Kim Cordeiro, Doreen DelMonaco, Kathy Falcone, Patrick Keaney

The meeting commenced at 8:30 a.m. and was chaired by Cheryl Schnitzer.

1. Minutes for the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as amended.
2. Earth Week – Dalton Griggs '21, representing SEA, is seeking input for Earth Week events. He explained that the point of Earth Week is to make students aware of environmental issues and to help Stonehill have a greener future. The hope is to again partner with Food Truth, SGA, Sodexo and other groups. Event ideas include selling reusable straws, campus cleanup, and volunteering at The Farm or greenhouse. A pond cleanup is also a possibility. A “dumpster dive” type event on the Shields quad, showing trash collected from a residence hall, offers a good visual impact on what could have been recycled or composted instead of ending up in a landfill. This is tentatively scheduled for April 12 at 3:30. Bridget will reach out to Dalton for further planning.
3. By-Law Changes – Craig reviewed the Committee’s by-law changes proposed by Cheryl, Craig and Deb. The changes are mainly regarding the membership of the Committee with the goal of having a greater representation of the College. Additionally, one-year terms were proposed rather than the two-year staggered terms as this is difficult to adhere to.

It was recommended that a representative from both our waste services and food services vendors be included in this membership.

A formal motion was made and approved to accept these bylaw changes (pages 3-4 of these minutes). These will be sent to the General Counsel’s office to be incorporated into Stonehill’s Ordinances.

Please note that **everyone** is welcome to attend ESC meetings, as non-voters.

4. Green 2Go Update – Usage of the green containers is up, while disposables are down – reduced by 80% from the fall 2017 semester to the fall 2018 semester. This was the goal of the program and these results are very encouraging. Unfortunately, many students are purchasing multiple green containers per semester and not returning them through the system that was created. Hopefully these are not being thrown away. We are committed to this program and will work through this obstacle.

Kathleen mentioned that UVM charges \$5 per container, which is given back at the end of the semester. This monetary incentive seems to be working well there.

It would be very useful to have someone return the containers from all residence halls as well as keep track of the purchases and returns in order to measure the program's success and to keep it working. Suggestions for managing this include having this as a student group project, rewarding students for returning stacks of green containers, creating a work study position, making it part of an LC, having weekend desk attendants handle, and creating a student "green ambassador" position, possibly paid through the Green Fund. Greg believes this is a difficult task and would work best as a paid internship carefully created and defined by faculty and Christina Burney (Career Development). The Waste Reduction Committee (including Cheryl, Michelle, Greg, Devin, Dalton, Claire, Anna, Bob, Bridget and Jasmine) will meet to discuss this idea further.

5. Textile Bin – Facilities has determined a space directly behind Boland Hall that will be ideal for the bin as it would be plowable and easily accessible. Greg will call Bay State Textiles to proceed with their program and have the bin delivered. This is a great program that will need to be advertised campus-wide. It could be tied into the Earth Week events, and a special program could be held at move-out this spring.
6. Composting – We want to keep the College's post-consumer compost out of the landfills, and Bridget believes that Black Earth would be great for this.

Cheryl explained that the Town of Sharon recently signed up with Black Earth – approximately 100 homes have opted in since last fall. They offer a great service that would benefit our campus.

There are a lot of logistics to work out. What is the cost? How would this be funded? How would it be submitted to the budget? Who would process the invoices? Greg and Bob will speak with Black Earth to get more details. Maybe we could try it out and see how it goes.

7. Sustainability, Carbon Neutrality and Benchmarking – At the Community Gathering in January, Fr. John provided an overview of the College's five-year strategic plan, listing the plan's five main initiatives. Cheryl questioned if sustainability is part of the initiatives, which it is not. Subsequently, Craig has asked Fr. Tony if he would include sustainability in the plan as Mission would be a great fit. Fr. Tony will attend the ESC meeting on March 26<sup>th</sup> to get our input, as a group, on what goals to pursue and what we hope to accomplish.

Cheryl recently distributed an article on carbon neutrality at Amherst College (pages 5-6 of these minutes). For Stonehill to work toward reducing our carbon footprint, we would need to set a benchmark and be able to measure our progress toward meeting our goals. Greg stated that the best and easiest thing we can do is to stop eating meat.

Craig stated that we do not have to re-create, we already have the goals from Stonehill's 2012-2018 Sustainability Plan. Although this plan has concluded, we will distribute to all via email for your information and to possibly resurrect parts of that Plan.

8. Green Events – The 2019 FINE Summit that Bridget is participating in has developed an action plan for making sustainable decisions throughout the event's planning process, serving local foods and minimizing waste by using reusable materials and composting. Kathleen stated that this is always an option for Stonehill events but can be cost prohibitive for the group hosting the event.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

**Environmental Stewardship Council**  
**Proposed Bylaw Changes – February 26, 2019**  
(Proposed changes are in blue)

**Committee Charge**

**Reporting:**

- The Environmental Stewardship Council will serve in an advisory capacity to the Associate Vice President for Finance and Operations.
- This is a sub-committee of the Stonehill College Planning Committee.

**Mission & Purpose:**

- The mission of the Committee is to foster proactive environmentally sustainable policies, approaches, and practices by the campus community, consistent with Stonehill's mission, guiding principles, and student learning goals and outcomes.
- The Environmental Stewardship Council shall:
  - Develop and maintain a plan of environmentally sustainable goals, objectives, and action plans based on approved policies and practices and consistent with the College's mission, guiding principles, and policies;
  - Formulate, review, and recommend environmentally sustainable and fiscally sound policies and practices.
  - Define instructional space on campus that must remain in its natural state for teaching and research purposes.
  - Promote environmentally conscious activities on and off campus.

**Meetings:**

- The Environmental Stewardship Council shall meet ~~at least twice a semester.~~ **monthly whenever possible.**
- Committee meetings will be scheduled such that ~~all~~ **most** members can attend. (As is standard for small committees, the quorum is met when a majority of members are present. However, the Committee shall attempt full participation at all meetings.)
- The agenda will be distributed to all Committee members ~~one week~~ prior to each scheduled meeting.
- Guests are welcome to attend as non-voting visitors.

**Membership:**

- ~~• Composition of the Committee will be as follows:~~
  - ~~○ Three Faculty Members shall be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs from a pool of interested candidates. Chairperson will be selected from the faculty appointments.~~
  - ~~○ Nine Staff Members shall be appointed by the Division Heads from a pool of interested candidates. Mission, Academic Affairs, Enrollment & Marketing and Executive have one member. Finance and Student Affairs (one from Res Life and one other) have two members.~~
  - ~~○ Three student members, the President of Students for Environmental Action (or his/her representative when necessary). As the President is often a senior, an~~

~~underclass SEA member will attend also (as a non-voting member) to facilitate successful leadership transition within the student group.~~

- Composition of the Committee’s voting members, beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year:

	<b>Division</b>	<b>Member Department or Position</b>	<b>Appointed by</b>
1	Academic Affairs	Faculty member (ESC Chairperson)	Vice President for Academic Affairs
1	Academic Affairs	Faculty member	Vice President for Academic Affairs
1	Academic Affairs	Faculty member/Farm Manager	Vice President for Academic Affairs
1	Academic Affairs	any staff member	Vice President for Academic Affairs
1	Academic Affairs	Library staff member	Director of the MacPháidín Library
1	Advancement	any staff member	Vice President for Advancement
1	Executive	Marketing staff member	Director of Marketing
1	Executive	Campus Ministry staff member	Director of Campus Ministry
1	Finance	Facilities staff member	Vice President for Finance
1	Finance	Purchasing staff member	Vice President for Finance
1	Finance	any staff member	Vice President for Finance
1	Finance	Information Tech. staff member	Chief Information Officer
1	Finance	Energy Manager	
1	General Counsel	Human Resources staff member	Director of Human Resources
1	Student Affairs	any staff member	Vice President for Student Affairs
1	Student Affairs	Residence Life staff member	Director of Residence Life
1	Student Affairs	Athletics staff member	Director of Athletics
1	Student	Student Government Assoc. (SGA) member	SGA President
1	Student	Students for Environmental Action (SEA) President or representative (senior)	SEA President
1	Student	SEA member (underclassman)	SEA President
1	Student	Residence Hall Association (RHA) representative	Director of Residence Life
1	Student	any student	Farm Manager or Env. Faculty
1	Student	any student	Farm Manager or Env. Faculty
1	External Vendor	solid waste services representative	Director of Facilities
1	External Vendor	food services representative	Director of Purchasing
25			

- ~~Terms of members will be 2-year terms. Initial appointments will include 1 and 2 year staggered terms.~~
- Voting members will be appointed each academic year.

By DUSTY CHRISTENSEN

Staff Writer

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AMHERST — Amherst College has announced it plans to become “carbon neutral” by 2030, transitioning campus energy infrastructure away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy.

The college’s plan calls for the use of electric heat pumps and geothermal energy sources to power campus buildings. The announcement of the plan comes almost four years after the college’s board of trustees approved a Statement on Sustainability and Investment Policy, which called for moving toward carbon neutrality, among other proposals. However, the plan does not include divesting from oil and gas holdings.

In a statement, college President Carolyn “Biddy” Martin said the plan comes as current research, including from the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, says the world has around a decade to reduce carbon emissions to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change.

“The trustees share the conviction that the college must address the threat of climate change, both by intensifying our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint and by ensuring that we can continue to provide students with the best available education, one that prepares them to lead in the urgent work that must be done on a larger scale,” Martin said.

Carbon neutrality does not necessarily mean that the college will reach zero carbon emissions. Rather, it means producing net zero emissions by offsetting whatever fossil fuels are burned.

After Amherst College’s board of trustees approved its Statement on Sustainability and Investment Policy in 2015, a task force of students, staff and faculty began working to come up with a road map for carbon neutrality.

“The announcement today has been a long time coming,” said Laura Draucker, the college’s director of sustainability and a member of that task force.

Most of Amherst College’s emissions come from the heating and cooling of buildings, so the plan largely focuses on how to power those buildings without burning fossil fuels. Currently, for example, buildings are heated by steam that is created by burning natural gas. But under the college’s new proposal, the college would rely on geothermal energy and renewable electricity to power the system.

At a certain point underground, the water temperature is pretty constant at around 50 degrees, Draucker explained. A geothermal system would bring that water up to the building, and would heat or cool it with heat pumps powered by renewable electricity.

Last April, Amherst and several other colleges, including Hampshire and Smith, joined together to purchase electricity from a solar power facility in Farmington, Maine. Amherst will be purchasing 10,000 megawatt hours of renewable energy as part of the partnership, which accounts for around half of its current annual electricity use.

Amherst College already has experience with geothermal energy. At the Inn on Boltwood in downtown Amherst, which Amherst College owns, water is pumped from a well and used for heating and cooling.

“Similar to what happened with the inn, we would need to dig wells,” Draucker said of implementing a similar system on campus. “We’re not sure exactly where they’ll go yet.”

Draucker said the college hopes that energy-efficiency improvements and retrofits to buildings will eliminate the need for fossil fuels completely. But if there is still some need for combustion technology — on the winter’s coldest days, for example — Draucker said the college would need to replace those fossil fuels with biogas or consider offsets.

It is unclear what those offsets would look like, though in its announcement Tuesday the board of trustees said the college would not rely on the purchase of carbon offsets — a controversial method of reaching carbon neutrality that involves paying others to remove or sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

Many of the specific details of the plan will be worked out as the college moves forward. An advisory committee will be created to help work toward implementing the Climate Action Plan, and Draucker said the college will look to engage students throughout the process.

Elsewhere in the Pioneer Valley, Hampshire College has already announced plans to make its campus “climate neutral” by 2022, and Smith College has announced similar plans for 2030. The University of Massachusetts Amherst previously signed on to becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

Draucker said that Amherst College may have been slower to announce its own plan, but she hopes alumni and students can be proud of what the college has decided to do.

In his letter to the campus community announcing the decision, trustees Chairman Andrew Nussbaum said the college looks forward to engaging alumni and students as the plan moves forward.

“The financial costs of the Climate Action Plan will be substantial, but they will also be manageable with the support of our entire community and careful financial and budgetary decisions that allow us to pursue this important work alongside other key priorities,” Nussbaum said. “The plan represents a necessary investment in the future not just of our college but the world our graduates will inhabit.”

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