



# STONEHILL COLLEGE

## **Environmental Stewardship Council Meeting**

Wednesday, October 28, 2020

1:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

### **MINUTES**

Attendees: Lucy Almberg '21, Craig Binney, Bruce Boyer, Kristi Burkholder, Christian Castriotta '22, Kim Cordeiro, John Duggan, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Jessa Gagne, Dave Griffin, Jill Gruskowski '21, Michelle Lee Guiney (Waste Management), Bridget Lawrence-Meigs, Brittany Lorgeree, Bob MacEachern, Chanel Mazzone, Fr. Tim Mouton, Deb Norton, Paul Ricci, Rob Rodgers, Andrea Romig (Photonics), Louisa Rossel '21, Cheryl Schnitzer (Chair), Greg Wolfe

The meeting commenced at 1:00 p.m. and was chaired by Prof. Cheryl Schnitzer.

#### 1. Introductions

Cheryl asked student members to introduce themselves: Andrea Romig – Photonics Program; Lucy Almberg – class of 2021, Food Truth leader; Louisa Rossel – class of 2021, SEA member, Education and Environmental Studies major; and Jill Gruskowski – call of 2021, Environmental Science major.

#### 2. Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2020, meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

#### 3. Subcommittee Updates

- Strategic Planning

Craig and Kristi reviewed the subcommittee's recent efforts. They are currently focused on how Academic Programs can increase their inclusion of sustainability. The College does continue to increase sustainability-related course offerings. The subcommittee would like to reach out beyond our Environmental majors. The group tasked with revising the General Education Program is trying to put together three separate plans by December in order to get feedback from faculty and students. At least one plan will include a design-your-major opportunity, and Kristi is advocating for a sustainability-focused Gen. Ed Program option.

Craig explained that the Strategic Planning subcommittee oversees the other subcommittees. The Academic piece is an important one, which we will remain focused on.

Greg asked about the possibility of having a Board of Trustees member from the environmental field. This could be a very important support person for our mission. Craig explained that there is a committee that helps to solicit new Trustees. They could be asked to consider that aspect when looking for new members. One-third of the BOT are members of the Holy Cross Congregation. Bridget suggested that there may already be Trustees with environmental interest. Can we reach out? Craig will look into this.

- Communications/Marketing

Chanel reviewed this group's efforts. We have met several times and are close to getting things off the ground. Colin is designing a template for emailing Green Tips. We are checking with Media Relations to ensure that we aren't stepping on anyone's toes. Our first couple of

Green Tips will include information about student environmental groups on campus and phantom power. We have also asked the Waste Reduction and Environmental Justice subcommittees to each develop a Green Tip for us. Fr. Tim has reached out to *The Summit* about getting a piece (possibly about composting) published in an upcoming issue. Our social media efforts are underway, and our handle is @sustainableskyhawks. Chanel will send a link for social media once the sites are up and running. We began to investigate the installation of signage along the Admission tour route, but this project will have to be put on hold for the semester. Craig stated that we could install two small signs in order to start that project, and Paul will assist with the installation. Greg proposed that signage be made from the lumber of the large tree that fell several years back.

- Waste Reduction

Bob reviewed the subcommittee's work. A major issue facing our efforts is the dramatic increase in trash from the Dining Commons due to the pandemic. The group would like to propose using your own silverware, reusable straws or paper straws, and reusable cups. Also, consider using your own containers for taking home restaurant leftovers and utilizing reusable shopping bags. Another big issue is the lack of proper recycling in residence halls.

Bridget asked where we stand with working with Black Earth on composting. Greg stated that when we last met, there were concerns about distribution. Facilities has to be involved in composting discussions. Bridget noted that The Farm is receiving pre-consumer waste from the Commons, Au Bon Pain, Gigi's, and My Brother's Keeper (thanks to Celia). Possibly we can work on composting with students living in Pilgrim Heights. This will require proper signage and education. It was suggested that we use green footprint decals on the floor of the Commons, leading to the compost bins.

Kathleen noted that new tableware dispensers will be used at the Hill and the Commons. These dispense one piece at a time, to avoid contamination. This will replace the need for the three-piece packet of plasticware.

Andrea asked if there is a biodegradable option. It was explained that these tend to melt at a certain temperature. Michelle added that plant-based tableware has a higher footprint than that of plastic.

Greg noted that it is still important that we try to get organics out of our waste stream. What are the obstacles that are stopping us from moving forward on this? Michelle explained that most facilities are not screening out compostable products. People are paying for this service with the best of intentions, but they usually end up in the trash.

It was asked if there is any funding available to pay for Black Earth's services for organic waste. Containers could be provided at each res. hall. Cheryl noted that Real Food and Waste Reduction subcommittees should join for discussions on composting. It was noted that currently no funding is available for this, although planning for the future should continue.

Cheryl mentioned that the MassDEP was impressed with our Green To-Go campaign and asked if there is any way they can help with our initiatives. She will reach out to see if they can help us with funding for Black Earth.

- Environmental Justice

Louisa reviewed their recent efforts. She noted that they will work on a Green Tip for the Marketing/Communications subcommittee at their next meeting. They are creating their own environmental justice Instagram page, including tips of our own. The page will highlight different social justice matters on campus such as the food pantry.

Cheryl stated that there should be consistent branding (Sustainable Skyhawk) for all communications. Chanel will check with Colin if there are any concerns with using "Skyhawk".

Cheryl also noted that all communications need to be factual and should be reviewed by at least two people.

- Real Food

Bridget reviewed the subcommittee's recent efforts. The Real Food Working Group is a bit frustrated as the numbers don't reflect the amount of work that has been done toward the College's Real Food Commitment. Going forward, they will focus on their accomplishments and not get hung up on our current % of *Real Food*. We are defining our own standards. Lucy noted an event being planned for next semester to celebrate our accomplishments with local foods and that we are moving in the right direction. They will continue to work with the Real Food Challenge for their resources.

Cheryl pointed out that all ESC members are invited to attend any subcommittee meetings, particularly where there are connected initiatives among the groups.

4. Composting Project

Andrea discussed her Photonics final project. She is creating a small compost bin using a 3D printer. It would be great if these could be distributed to residence hall rooms. These desktop-sized bins could be dumped into a larger compost bin within each residence hall.

5. Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges 2021 Edition

Deb noted that Stonehill is again included in the Princeton Review's Guide to Green Colleges. Our annual green rating (84 for 2020) is based on our Princeton Review - Green Initiatives survey submission. It was noted that of the 15 NE10 schools, only four are included in the Green Guide this year.

The meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Next meeting:

November 18 at 1:00 p.m.

**Please remember to send information about all campus wide sustainability-related initiatives to Deb in order to be captured in the next Sustainability Report.**

Submitted by Deb Norton