



STONEHILL COLLEGE

Environmental Stewardship Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

1:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendees: Craig Binney, Kristi Burkholder, Felicia Cafua '22, Christian Castriotta '22, Kim Cordeiro, Kathleen Fitzgerald (Sodexo), Jessa Gagne, Dave Griffin, Michelle Lee Guiney (Waste Management), Bridget Lawrence-Meigs, Brittany Lorgeree, Bob MacEachern, Chanel Mazzone, Fr. Tim Mouton, Deb Norton, Paul Ricci, 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. Meeting Minutes

The November 18, 2020, meeting minutes were approved as amended.

2. Reduction of Energy and Waste Consumption

Jessa reviewed the energy reductions that are expected over this extended work-from-home period. Based around those limited staff members who will remain on campus (Admission, Athletics, Testing Center, Facilities), Jessa will be able to reduce thermostat set points from 62 degrees down to 50 degrees in most buildings. Most water heaters will be shut off. We will ensure that all windows are closed and locked, and any dripping faucets and running toilets found will be repaired. Those remaining in residence halls will be provided with space heaters. We anticipate drastic savings.

Jessa was asked if commuting is calculated into the energy savings expectations. She explained that this is focused on utilities only.

Craig noted that Senior Leadership chose not to close the campus last winter, and we are fortunate to be able to do so this year.

3. Subcommittee Updates

- Strategic Planning – As this group serves as an umbrella for the other subcommittees, it would be great to have drafts of the other subcommittees' goals.

The two main goals we are working on are including sustainability in the Academic Curriculum and Energy Reduction initiatives.

Craig noted that he and Greg reached out to Doug Smith about the idea of seeking an environmentally minded Trustee on the Board. Craig will follow up.

- Communications/Marketing – Several “green tip” emails have been sent to students and staff. We are working on the idea of placing signage along the Admission tour route to highlight our solar installations, the permaculture garden, and composting.

Cheryl mentioned the Mass DEP’s interest in Res. Life’s Halloween tip that was distributed this fall. Now that we have a connection, it would be great to be featured in their newsletter.

- Waste Reduction – Recycling and trash pickups are on hold during this extended work-from-home period, which will be another large savings.

Cheryl discussed the idea of working with USEFULL, renting their QR-coded stainless containers. The College would pay \$0.25 for each container usage, but we wouldn’t have to buy other containers. We can apply for a Mass DEP grant to get this program off the ground.

Concerns were expressed about students renting them several times per day and being charged. It was noted that the containers are free to students, and they will only be charged if they are returned late (after two days). The student fees are a concern that we can’t take lightly; students will have to provide their credit card information in order to take part in this program. The key to this program’s success is student buy-in.

Michelle Lee noted that our main goal is to reduce our carbon footprint. The plastic green to-go containers must be used a certain number of times to be carbon neutral or beneficial. Likewise, the stainless containers would have to be used or it defeats the purpose.

It would be too costly to fit our green containers with QR codes. There is also the reverse vending option, but it was determined that it wouldn’t fit our needs.

It was suggested that we apply for the DEP grant to strengthen our own program. Cheryl stated that we can try but they are really looking for organizations to work with a program like USEFULL’s. The nice piece about their program is that we would be renting. If things didn’t work out, we could just return the containers and be done. Cheryl will ask for a rep from USEFULL to present to us at January’s ESC meeting.

- Environmental Justice – The group is developing a green tip for the Communications/Marketing group as well as one for their own distribution. They are looking into different platforms such as the Res. Life newsletter, SEA Instagram and the TV screen in Shields. They are organizing monthly topics for the spring semester.

Cheryl suggested that Christian (SGA rep) invite other SGA members to attend January’s ESC meeting. Feel free to forward ESC meeting invitations to others.

- Real Food – no updates at this time.

4. Other Business

- There was discussion surrounding our use of well water, and it was suggested that we find out more about our aquifers (How long they take to recharge, etc.). Kristi will reach out to her contact, a specialist on local water resources, to hopefully join us at February’s ESC meeting. Sue Mooney and Rob Rodgers may also have contacts for the policy side of the discussion. Craig noted that we are seeking scientists – not activists.
- Andrea Romig of the Photonics program has completed her 3D printed desktop compost bin project. She will share her PowerPoint presentation. The next step is to seek patenting.

- Greg will be reaching out to those who are interested in helping to bring the *21 Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge* to Stonehill in April. The Challenge focuses on diversity, inclusion and sustainability over a 3-week period. A volunteer group will be needed to spread the word throughout campus.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Next meeting: January 26, 2021, at 1:00 via Zoom.

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