



Environmental Stewardship Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendees: Craig Binney, Bruce Boyer, Kristi Burkholder, Christian Castriotta '22, John Duggan, Kathleen Fitzgerald (Sodexo), Jessa Gagne, Michelle Lee Guiney (Waste Management), Gina Herosian '23, Bridget Lawrence-Meigs, Bob MacEachern, Fr. Tim Mouton, Deb Norton, Paul Ricci, Andrea Romig (Photonics), Cheryl Schnitzer (Chair), Colin Spencer, Juliana Walsh '22, Greg Wolfe

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

1. **Meeting Minutes**

The February 23, 2021, meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

2. **Campus-Wide Earth Day/Month Events**

Dining Services will be offering an all local meal during the week of April 18. More information will be provided as the date nears. Greg noted that the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge will be taking place in April. The ESC will send an email to the community noting all Earth Day events that are being planned. Additionally, Juliana will include this info in the RHA Newsletter's campus events section.

3. **Choose2Reuse App**

Cheryl expects to receive a response soon regarding our \$5000 Mass DEP microgrant application. Kathleen confirmed that the College currently spends approximately \$6000 per week on single-use containers. Kathleen also explained that Dean College has attempted to use china in their dining venue without much success. Currently, students do not feel comfortable with it. Michelle will share a link to a seminar scheduled for April 6 at 3:00pm about getting back to using reusables, and addressing safety and hygiene concerns. Greg, Craig, and Cheryl plan to attend. However, with very few students eating meals in the Commons, and the increased number of positive COVID-19 cases on campus, Stonehill students will not be asked to use china right now.

It has not been decided whether reusable to-go containers can be used again in August as there are many factors to be considered, including the cost of the containers for all our dining venues. It was asked if students could receive further education on recycling the disposable containers. Unfortunately, the food-stained containers can contaminate the recycling stream.

Cheryl noted that three of the four classes this upcoming fall have never used the Green2Go container system. She hopes to roll out the new Choose2Reuse system in the fall, although there are concerns that there could be glitches with the system initially that would need to be addressed. It was suggested that Choose2Reuse begin as a pilot program on a voluntary basis this summer and fall, and roll it out campus-wide in January. Bob noted that RAs could assist with

explaining the system to students, and it could also be included on the RHA Instagram site. Fr. Tim offered to include Choose2Reuse in the First Year Experience classes. Colin helps to design the freshmen orientation materials, and can include Choose2Reuse in the dining services section.

There was discussion about needing volunteers to place QR code stickers on the new to-go containers. Possibly, SURE students can do this over the summer, in their spare time. Greg noted that there are many decisions to be made prior to ordering the containers (2500-5000).

Professor Dugan’s computer science students are working hard to complete the app by the end of the semester, and two students will be available to assist with the app throughout the summer and fall.

4. 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge

The Stonehill Community will be invited to participate in the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge beginning on April 5. Those who sign up for the program will receive a daily “prompt” email that is related to an aspect of racial equity. These prompts are meant to help you learn, reflect and act against racism. Food Solutions New England, the sponsor of the program, provides great resources at <https://foodsolutionsne.org/racial-equity-challenge-resources>. For more information and to register, go to <https://foodsolutionsne.org/21-day-racial-equity-habit-building-challenge>.

Next year, Greg hopes to have group participation (student, faculty, departmental), which would support the College’s efforts around DEI.

5. Leave No Trace Behind: Student Move-Out

Greg had distributed an email suggesting an end-of-year initiative to decrease the amount of useful stuff put into the waste stream as students pack up their belongings. Many items can instead go to the campus textile bin, can be recycled, or can be reused by My Brother’s Keeper. This will take a lot of resources to organize, particularly from Residence Life and Facilities.

6. Subcommittee Updates

- Strategic Planning – This group is organizing bullet points of the other sub-committees’ long-term goals.

Kristi provided an update on the GenEd program revision. A yet-to-be-hired Associate Provost will lead the revision, so the task force is currently on hold. It is unknown if the new hire will use the task force’s prior work, potentially incorporating sustainability into the program. The search committee is currently being formed.

Jessa provided an update on the energy savings the College experienced due to our extended work-from-home period this winter. The electricity savings is the equivalent of a 40-day blackout.

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4	January Update: Energy/Water Update: We went through buildings turning thermostats down, shutting storms, locking windows, and taking note of leaky water fi		
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5	MARCH UTILITY CONSUMPTION UPDATE - usage compared to last year		
7	Natural Gas --- July 1st - March 9th --- 38,500 therms --- 10%		
3	Oil --- July 1st - March 29th --- 4,593 gallons --- 17.6%		
3	Water --- July 1st - Dec 31st --- 4.5 million gallons --- 40%		
0	Electricity --- July 1st - March 9th --- 1.3 million kWh --- 15%		
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- Communications/Marketing – This group did not meet this month. They distributed two Green Tips in March.
- Waste Reduction – They did not meet this month but will provide an update at our April meeting.
- Environmental Justice – No update was provided.
- Real Food – The Real Food Working Group met yesterday. Kristi has agreed to be the group’s supervisor upon Bridget’s departure from the College. The group is no longer calculating for the Real Food Challenge but have gathered a lot of useful data. They are working on developing a new food option called “ACE Approved”. They are still determining the criteria for Ace Approved, e.g., healthy, non-GMO, local, etc. The group intends to post ACE Approved food information on the Sustainability webpage, accessed via QR codes on signage in the Commons, which will guide students to more sustainable dining options.

7. Other Business

There was discussion on inviting Black Earth back to the April 27 ESC meeting to discuss how they can help us with composting. Concerns with composting include a lack of facilities, labor, and funding. Those expressing interest include Gina, Cheryl, Andrea, Bridget, and Kristi. In addition to Facilities, Residence Life would need to be involved with the discussion. Greg will reach out to his contact at Black Earth.

Governor Baker just signed a Climate Change Bill to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It was noted that the new legislation reduces the threshold of organic waste from one ton to one-half ton per week at institutions such as Stonehill.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Next meeting:

April 27 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