

ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 23, 2021 – 2:00pm
Zoom Meeting Protocol

Attendees: Paul Winistorfer, Nick Woods for Ken Miller, Mary-Ann Ibeziako, Mike Dunn for Liza Morris, Blake Bensman for Frances Keene, Denny Cochrane, Scott Kerklo, Rob Glenn, Erin Hopkins, Brandon Burkey, Jennylynn Johnson

Absent: Rob Lowe, Jon Clark Teglas for Chris Kiwus, Jamie Stein, Robert Weiss, Elena Lind, Matthew Eick, LaTawnya Burleson, Jack Leff

Guests: John Randolph, Nick Quint, Steve Durfee, Lowell Jessee, Eli Meyer, Patrick Hilt, Jody Booze-Daniels, Nathan King, Emily Vollmer, Michael Bell, Teresa Sweeney

Chair Denny Cochrane called the Energy and Sustainability Committee (E&SC) meeting to order at 2:00pm. A quorum was present. Welcome remarks were made.

Adoption of Agenda. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

Approval of the February 22, Meeting Minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the previous meeting held on February 22, 2021. The motion carried.

Old Business:

Virginia Tech 2020 Climate Action Commitment- Financial Analysis and Approval by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors: Professor Emeritus John Randolph gave a detailed presentation showcasing the results of the Financial Analysis of the Virginia Tech 2020 Climate Action Commitment to the members of the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors. Costs addressed includes the big ticket items such as the solar options, energy efficiency, staffing and offsets. Big savings are accrued when looking at the net present value out to FY 2050. Professor Randolph concluded the analysis shows we are not breaking the bank, we can do this within our budget, and we need no immediate funds. Progress will be reported to the Board annually in the *Virginia Tech Sustainability Annual Report*, and formal reviews milestones will be conducted in 2025 and 2030. The Virginia Tech Board of Visitors unanimously approved the Virginia Tech 2020 Climate Action Commitment. This defining moment in the history of the Virginia Tech Sustainability Program sets our course for the next decade and for our university becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Members to receive a copy of Professor Randolph's presentation slides.

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) Update: Chair Denny Cochrane announced that on March 18, 2021, Virginia Tech received its third consecutive STARS Gold Rating with a final score of 72.78 points. This point total represents the highest our university has ever recorded, and places us #1 for all institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia and in the Atlantic Coast Conference. The Association for the Advancement in Higher Education developed the STARS Protocol in 2010 and it is recognized at the national and international levels as the premier management tool to measure sustainability progress. STARS

version 2.2 was very challenging with scoring criteria enhanced and some new credits added. A number of our close competitors saw a decline in their total points, yet we increased. STARS involved over 60 responsible parties providing data and information for topical areas (called credits) in academics, engagement, operations and planning & administration.

2019-2020 Green RFP Status: Chair Denny Cochrane reported the Office of Budget and Financial Planning continues to keep this program on hold pending a review of the COVID-19 financial impact on university operations. He remains optimistic we will have the results soon.

2020-2021 Green RFP Update: Chair Denny Cochrane, Nathan King, Nick Quint from the E&SC, along with Jim Hillman Director of Facilities Finance, will present the 2020-2021 Green RFP Program to the Office of Budget and Financial Planning on March 24. He again stated his appreciation to our subcommittee for providing a detailed review of the select student proposals and placing them in a recommended priority order which the E&SC eagerly approved.

Earth Week 2021 Update: The Office of Sustainability Coordinator Emily Vollmer reviewed the planning process being used for Virginia Tech's Earth Week 2021 Program. Earth Week 2021 will take place during the period April 18-24, it will have daily themes, and it will feature both virtual and some in-person events. The Office of Sustainability, in partnership with the student group Environmental Coalition, is planning the schedule. Together they hosted Planning Forums on February 1 & 2, March 1 & 2, and March 22 & 23 with about 25 students from 19 different student organizations attending. The schedule will be finalized on or about April 2 and so far will feature over 30 events.

Climate Action Commitment Survey: PhD Candidate Jack Leff seeks to prepare a short document (one-pager or so) that addresses the key components of the VT 2020 CAC. He and members of the Graduate Student Assembly are working to prepare a survey for the university community, and a separate survey for the general public, to seek their input on what is most important to them. Due to a change in our meeting date Mr. Leff was not able to present his update at this time, however, he will be afforded time to do so at the April 26, 2021 meeting.

New Business:

Office of Sustainability Student Internship Program, AY 2021-2022: The Office of Sustainability Program Manager Nathan King announced we are taking applications for the Office of Sustainability Student Internship Program for next year and that to date we have about 20 applicants. He is the contact person and encouraged members and guests to reach out to students to apply at the following website:

<https://www.facilities.vt.edu/sustainability/sustainability-programs/energy-and-sustainability-internship-program.html>

Open Discussion: None.

Announcements: The next E&SC meeting will be held on April 26, 2021, at 2:00pm using the Zoom protocol. This will be our final meeting for academic year 2020-2021.

Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried at 3:00pm