

ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 26, 2021 – 2:00pm
Zoom Meeting Protocol

Attendees: Paul Winistorfer, Jon Clark Teglas for Chris Kiwus Nick Woods for Ken Miller, Mary-Ann Ibeziako, Mike Dunn for Liza Morris, Denny Cochrane, Matt Hagy for Rob Glenn, Rob Lowe, Robert Weiss, Elena Lind, Erin Hopkins, Jamie Stein, Jack Leff, Brandon Burkey, and Vineela Eppe

Absent: Matthew Eick, Scott Kerklo, Blake Bensman for Francis Keene, LaTawnya Burlison, Jennylynn Johnson

Guests: John Randolph, Sean McGinnis, Wendy Halsey, Jeri Baker, Nick Quint, Steve Durfee, Lowell Jessee, Gerard Folio, Peter Corday, Eli Meyer, Patrick Hilt, Clint Steger for Jody Booze-Daniels, Nathan King, Emily Vollmer, Michael Bell, Teresa Sweeney, April Myers

Chair Denny Cochrane called the Energy and Sustainability Committee (E&SC) meeting to order at 2:10 pm. 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 March 23, Meeting Minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the previous meeting held on March 23, 2021. The motion carried.

Old Business:

Virginia Tech 2020 Climate Action Commitment Implementation – First Steps: Professor Emeritus John Randolph summarized recent events and introduced the members to the next steps in the implementation process. The VTCAC Financial Analysis was successfully presented to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors at their meeting on March 22. Associate Professor Sean McGinnis and students in his Green Engineering Program magnificently prepared the 2019 Virginia Tech Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Assessment Report which was included in our recent STARS submission. Mary-Ann Ibeziako to become the Assistant Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer and she will focus on the CAC physical goals 1-9. Professor Randolph to become the Senior Fellow for Climate Action and will focus on CAC non-physical goals 10-13. The initial CAC Implementation Team will include Mary-Ann Ibeziako, Professor Randolph, Denny Cochrane, Kim Briele, Steve Durfee, Rob Glenn, Nathan King, Emily Vollmer, Assistant Professor Todd Schnek, and others. We will create a CAC Progress Dashboard and Progress Metrics, and a “Moving Forward” Work Plan. First Steps include developing CAC Metrics for the Virginia Tech Strategic Plan Dashboard, preparing and submitting an FY 22 Budget Request, partnering with the Virginia Tech Foundation regarding leased building efficiency and solar projects, identifying a Phase 1 Solar siting and RFP, and preparing and distributing a Climate Action Living Laboratory faculty survey to gauge interest. Professor Randolph and Assistant Professor Todd Schenk met with Provost earlier this morning

and received very positive feedback and direction. Members to receive a copy of Professor Randolph's presentation slides.

Virginia Tech STARS Gold Rating – How to Access Data and Information: Emily Vollmer (Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Sustainability) demonstrated how members can access Virginia Tech's latest STARS using this link: (<https://reports.aashe.org/institutions/virginia-tech-va/report/2021-02-18/>). An alternate approach is by clicking on "Reports" on our office's website. Our score is available at the top of the page and is further broken down by category directly below, looking at Academics, Engagement, Operations, Planning and Administration, and Innovation and Leadership. The full list of credits is available on the left hand side and you can click on any of those to access the narrative, reported numbers, attached files, and related notes and links for each credit.

Earth Week 2021 Highlights: The Office of Sustainability just finished celebrating Earth Week (April 18-24) with 43 events run by more than 30 student, university, and community partners. 21 events were in-person and included things like yoga, the Blacksburg Farmers Market, and walks along the Huckleberry Trail. 22 events were online, including panel discussions and Q&As, educational presentations on water conservation and food waste, trivia, and documentary screenings. Our office even held a weeklong food drive for The Giving Tree in Christiansburg. See the Food Drive video by Tyler Harris: <https://youtu.be/hWIGo90S4Tw>. Earth Day 2021 included a panel discussion on our new Climate Action Commitment approved by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors on March 22, 2021. See the recording of "An Inside Look at Virginia Tech's New Climate Action Commitment": <https://youtu.be/7zO019022rk>.

Multi-Modal Transit Facility (MMTF): Michael Dunn (Transportation Planner, Office of University Planning) began the presentation with an overview of the project and site location. One of the goals of the project is to reduce the bus activity in front of Burruss Hall and shift it behind Burruss Hall along Perry Street. The project consists of two bus loops with one located to the east side of the Perry Street Parking Garage and one on the west side. A two story building will provide office space for the Alternative Transportation Office and Blacksburg Transit operations. The intersection of Stanger and Perry Streets will have a one-lane roundabout. The project is very unique in that the Town of Blacksburg will own the building and Virginia Tech will maintain the building. Nick Quint (Transportation Network Manager and Interim Director of Fleet Services) provided project highlights from the user perspective. Finally, Gerard Folio (Virginia Tech MMTF Project Manager) addressed the project scope, technical aspects of the project and the timeline for construction. This project is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion in March 2023. It includes the installation of two Electric Vehicle Charging Stations inside the lower level near the south entrance of the Perry Street Parking Garage. Members to receive a copy of the MMTF presentation slides.

Green RFP Update: Chair Denny Cochrane reported the Office of Budget and Financial Planning (OBFP) has not released the 2019-2020 Green RFP Program which has been on hold for some time while the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic is under review. The 2020-2021 Green RFP Program was presented to OBFP for consideration on March 24, 2021.

Mr. Cochrane has received questions on a few proposals and responses have been submitted. We are awaiting the results of both programs and we continue to be optimistic with the outcome.

GSA Climate Action Survey: Jack Leff reviewed the highlights of the two surveys he and the Graduate Student Assembly are preparing regarding the Virginia Tech Climate Action Commitment. The first survey will be distributed to our campus sustainability professionals. The second survey is for the general public, and it will serve both as an educational opportunity for the VTCAC and to gauge their sustainability interests.

New Business:

Energy and Sustainability Committee Future: As we look to academic year 2021-2022 Chair Cochrane reminded members that the VT 2020 CAC Working Group recommended the university consider changing the name of the committee to become the “Climate Action Sustainability and Energy (CASE) Committee” to better reflect its purpose and mission. The recommendation included revising the charge and membership roster. All of this will require University Council approval, and this will likely be a main agenda item for the E&SC next fall.

Acknowledgements: Chair Denny Cochrane concluded the meeting by noting the many accomplishments that the committee and its members did this year, and he recognized the members who will complete their tour of duty at the end of this semester. He announced this will be his final meeting as Chair of the Energy and Sustainability Committee, and that he will be retiring this summer.

Announcements: This will be our final meeting for academic year 2020-2021. Draft meeting minutes to be forwarded to members for an electronic vote to approve.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.