

ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 17, 2020 – 2:00pm
Zoom Meeting Protocol

Attendees – Jon Clark Teglas for Chris Kiwus, Nick Woods for Ken Miller, Mary-Ann Ibeziako, Mike Dunn for Liza Morris, Blake Bensman for Frances Keene, Denny Cochrane, Scott Kerklo, Rob Glenn, Rob Lowe, Dana Hawley, Erin Hopkins, Jamie Stein, Jack Leff, Jennylynn Johnson

Guests – John Randolph, Wendy Halsey, Jeri Baker, Nick Quint, Lowell Jessee, Daniel Webb, Patrick Hilt, Jody Booze-Daniels, Nathan King, Emily Vollmer, Eli Meyer

Opening Remarks

Meeting Agenda Approved

Meeting Minutes for October 26, 2020 Approved

Old Business

Commission on University Support Resolution 2020-21A Virginia Tech Climate Action Commitment: Update and Next Steps

On November 2, 2020, the University Council approved the Commission on University Support Resolution 2020-21A.

On November 15, 2020, Professor Emeritus John Randolph gave the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors a presentation on the Virginia Tech 2020 Climate Action Commitment Working Group's Final Report. The report recommends the university adopt a new vision and mission statement, 15 climate action goals, and potential pathways to achieve those goals. The presentation was very well received and included an engaging question and answer session.

Prior to Professor Randolph's presentation, Dr. Dwayne Pinkney (Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer) announced to the board members that this presentation was for information only. He further stated the university will prepare a financial plan to address the cost of implementation, and that the plan and a request to approve the resolution will be presented to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors at their next meeting in March 2021. Professor Randolph stated the development of the financial plan is in fact the first step of implementation.

Denny Cochrane stated that Goal #13 of the Virginia Tech 2020 Climate Action Commitment recommends a proposed governance change as follows: to rename the Energy and Sustainability Committee to become the Climate Action, Sustainability and Energy (CASE) Committee; to change the committee charge; and to create various subcommittees that may include participation beyond formal CASE membership. The committee will look at this during the spring semester.

2019-2020 Sustainability Annual Report

Denny Cochrane reported the *2019-2020 Sustainability Annual Report* was accepted by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors Buildings and Grounds Committee as a part of their consent agenda. Mr. C. T. Hill (Chair, Buildings and Grounds Committee) stated the university has made great progress in advancing campus sustainability, the report contains much useful information, and he encouraged all to read it. The report is available on the Office of Sustainability website: www.facilities.vt.edu/sustainability.

2020-2021 Green RFP Program

The deadline for proposal submission is November 20, 2020. Denny Cochrane stated the Office of Sustainability will lead a review of all proposals and those worthy of further consideration will be forwarded to the Energy and Sustainability Committee for prioritization on January 25, 2021. The committee will vote to approve the proposal priority order on February 22, 2021, and forward their recommendation to the Office of Budget and Financial Planning for review and approval in early March. The results of the 2019-2020 Student Green RFP Program continues to be on hold awaiting COVID-19 financial implications.

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS)

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) developed the STARS Program which is recognized at the national level as the premier sustainability management tool. STARS uses a voluntary, transparent and self-reporting framework to measure sustainability performance. Virginia Tech has participated in the STARS protocol for nearly a decade and uses it as the foundation of our sustainability program. Denny Cochrane reviewed the STAR protocol, the four primary categories, and the 60-70 topical areas of interest called credits. He reviewed the scoring process and the rating system. A STARS rating is good for 3 years. Virginia Tech plans a 5th STARS submission in December 2020.

New Business

Green Lab Survey

Rob Lowe provided a summary of the Green Lab Survey. The Environmental Health and Safety Office is hosted on the survey on their training platform.

Next Meeting

January 25, 2021 beginning at 2:00pm using the Zoom protocol.

Adjourn

Dana Hawley introduced a motion to adjourn, Erin Hopkins seconded the motion, and the members voted to adjourn.