

Energy and Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2011
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Presidents Board Room, Burruss Hall

Present: Heidi McCoy (for Sherwood Wilson), Melinda West (for Dwight Shelton), John Bush (for Lynn Eichhorn), Denny Cochrane, Elena Dulys, Bruce Ferguson, Rob Lowe, Richard Hirsh (for John Randolph), Becky Saylor, Tom Tucker, Paul Winistorfer, Kapil Panchal, Spencer Riddle, and Kara Dodson.

Absent: Mike Coleman, Madeline Schreiber, Mintai Kim, Nancy McGehee, Fred Selby, and Lauren Miller.

Guests: John Beach, Debby Freed, David Gibbs, Angie De Soto, Alyssa Halle, Rial Tombes, Samantha Day, Ryan Ward, Matthew Monteverde, and Andy Alden (Virginia Tech Transportation Institute).

Call Meeting to Order and Welcome Guests

Acting Chair Denny Cochrane called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Agenda

The Committee approved the agenda as proposed.

Approval of the February 28, 2011 Minutes

Draft minutes from the February 28, 2011 meeting were presented and approved by the Committee. (Note: At that meeting it was discovered that the “Future Meetings” section of the draft minutes for the January 28, 2011 meeting had made reference to Academic Year 2009-2010 when it should have read Academic Year 2010-2011. Chair Fred Selby corrected that error, and any similar errors made in previous approved minutes from the 2010 fall semester).

Old Business

1) 2010-2011 Request for Proposal for Student Organization Sustainability Initiatives (Green RFP) Update

Denny Cochrane was pleased to report the university has approved and funded the five Green RFP proposals that were advanced by the Energy and Sustainability Committee. The results were presented in a Memorandum from Mr. M. Dwight Shelton, Jr. (Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer), subject: “Proposals for Student Organization Sustainability Initiatives (Green RFP), dated March 15, 2011 (see E&SC 032111 Attachment 1 – “Green RFP Approval.pdf”). Proposals receiving full funding included the following: 10 Bike Racks submitted by the Environmental Coalition (EC), 5 additional Bike Racks submitted by the Student Government Association, 10 Mixed Paper Recycling Containers submitted by the EC, and the Irrigation System for the Smithfield Plantation Garden Project submitted by the Sustainable Food Corps. In addition, the university approved using a matching funds approach for the Virginia Power Shift Conference Project submitted by the EC. The Office of Energy and Sustainability

will serve as the liaison between the university and student organizations in the implementation of projects. Funds are to be provided now with the goal of advancing implementation for the four fully funded projects this fiscal year. This information was well received by the Committee.

2) Revision 2 to University Policy 5505: “Campus Energy, Water, and Waste Reduction”

The Vice President for Administrative Services Dr. Sherwood G. Wilson approved Revision 2 to University Policy 5505: “Campus Energy, Water, and Waste Reduction” on February 28, 2011. Denny Cochrane stated the policy has been placed in the “Administration” portion of the Virginia Tech website under “University Policies.” In order to communicate this to the campus community, he is working with University Relations to prepare an announcement for placement in the VT News Daily Email and the student weekly version.

3) RecycleMania 2011 “Get in the Game” Update

Denny Cochrane informed the Committee members that the scoring phase of RecycleMania 2011 is nearing completion. It concludes on April 2. Results continue to show Virginia Tech to be doing well amongst colleges and universities in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and remaining in the middle of the pack amongst Atlantic Coast Conference counterparts. Food service organic waste (composting) and waste minimization continue to be real strengths followed by mixed paper and cardboard. To date Virginia Tech has recycled a total of 179,700 pounds of material during the competition.

4) Sustainability Student Intern Program Update

Angie De Soto updated the Committee on continued progress with the Office of Energy and Sustainability (OES) Student Intern Program. The internship program is progressing nicely, although there have definitely been delays in the original timelines. The best practices document team has been invited to present their findings to the EPA in Washington, DC on April 27th. In regards to the program expansion, a grant has been identified that perfectly aligns with the program’s mission. Angie is working with Dr. John Randolph to prepare both the grant application and a program proposal to submit to Dr. Daniel Wubah, Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education.

5) Earth Week 2011 Planning Update

Rial Tombes, the Environment Coalition’s Project Manager for Earth Week 2011, gave an excellent update. She presented the current schedule of planned activities for the April 18 through April 22 week-long event (see “E&SC 032111 Attachment 2 – Earth Week 2011 Schedule.docx”) and confirmed each day’s specific themes as follows: Monday – “Sustainable Food”; Tuesday – “Alternative Transportation”; Wednesday – “Education/Awareness”; Thursday – “Think Global, Act Local”; and Friday – “Earth Day.” Rial also informed the Committee that on Friday, the 2011 Relay for Life of Virginia Tech will be held on the drillfield. Elena Dulys reminded the committee of Thursday’s 6:00 PM Earth Day Meal sponsored by Dining Services to be served in the D2 dining center. Dean Dr. Paul Winistorfer has invited the Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources to participate in

Earth Week 2011 activities and is awaiting his response. A tree planting will be held on Thursday, April 21, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Slusher Wing behind Dietrick Dining Hall (see "E&SC 032111 Attachment 3 – Arbor Day Tree Planting Flyer.pdf").

New Business

1) Ytoss? 2011

The YMCA at Virginia Tech, Virginia Tech Recycling, and many other university and community activities will once again join together to participate in Ytoss? 2011. This event occurs during Student Move-Out and is scheduled for the period May 7-12. The goal of this very popular program is to capture no longer needed, but reusable items from students living on campus before the items are discarded in a trash receptacle. Reusable items are stored during the summer and resold at a substantial discount to students just prior to the beginning of the fall semester. This is a very practical way to keep reusable items out of the landfill. Last year Ytoss? 2010 collected nearly 10 tons of reusable items. Ms. LeeAnn Reich (Director of Volunteer Outreach for the YMCA at Virginia Tech), and Sheel Patel (one of the two Ytoss? 2011 Student Co-Directors), have agreed to present the Committee with an overview of the Ytoss? 2011 program at its next meeting.

2) Open Discussion

Beyond Coal – Samantha Day reported how that the students of Beyond Coal are looking for a new direction in contributing a student voice on Energy and Sustainability to the Administration at Virginia Tech. She informed the Committee of a recent meeting held between four Beyond Coal students (Sam Day, Kara Dodson, Matt Monteverde, Sharon Williams) and Dr. Sherwood Wilson, Mr. Fred Selby, Mr. Michael Coleman, and Mr. Larry Hincker, where the possibility of a Student Sub-Committee to the Energy and Sustainability Committee was briefly discussed. The students of Beyond Coal have discussed the idea further, and are drafting an informal proposal for a "Renewable Energy and Efficiency Sub-Committee", where students involved could do research on different energy items outlined by the Energy and Sustainability Committee, conduct outreach efforts to the students and university community on energy conservation, and provide student opinions on energy-related decisions and discussions. They look forward to further discussions with members of the Committee to explore this new realm of student involvement in sustainability at Virginia Tech. Contact Samantha Day (sam08@vt.edu) with any questions, comments, or suggestions.

Website Portal - Angie De Soto provided a brief update on the VT Campus Sustainability Portal project. The portal will function as a central database of sustainability-related initiatives and as a communication tool, not as a replacement for individual project/program websites and will streamline information from individual activities with summary paragraphs and hyperlinks to the particular activity's website (for more detailed information) or contact information if a website does not exist. By making that summary information more accessible, and in one location, the portal will bring more traffic to those initiatives websites and attention to all of the great activities that already exist. Efforts are currently underway to identify and include information on as many

sustainability-related activities on campus as possible. The Vice President for Administrative Service's (VPAS) Office is in full support of this initiative, and is working with the Office of Energy and Sustainability to communicate its importance across campus leadership.

Electronic Recycling - Bruce Ferguson asked if Environmental Health and Safety Services (EHHS) plans to have an electronic e-waste event such as the partnering event with Apple Computer a few years ago. Rob Lowe said a similar program was not planned, but that his office is working with the Women's Center and the Blacksburg Downtown Merchants on an e-waste event on a much smaller scale. Rob reviewed some of the services EHSS provides to include battery recycling.

Future Meetings

The final scheduled meeting for Academic Year 2010-2011 will be held on April 25, 2011 in the Presidents Board Room, 210 Burruss Hall, beginning at 2:00 pm.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned.