

Minutes of the Valdosta State University Environmental Issues Committee Meeting October 3, 2013

Appointed Members in Attendance: Jason Allard (Chair), Theresa Grove (Chair-elect), Lynn Adams, Karen Noll, Sue Fuciereilli, Lavonna Lovern, Linda Most, Larry Etling, Jim Nienow, Luke Jones

Guests Candicee Childs, Elizabeth Tuttle, Amber Blocker, V.S. Douglass

Ex Officio

Ray Sable, Meredith Lancaster for Robert DeLong

Meeting called to Order 11:05a.m.

Approve Minutes of the last spring 2013: Because the minutes of the last EIC meeting in Spring 2013 were not available, there was nothing to approve.

Schedule of meetings for Fall 2013 semester: J. Allard said that he will schedule the next meeting for the 2nd or 3rd week in November. Because there were some EIC members that could not make this meeting (October 3), he was going to make sure to schedule a time so that these members could attend the next meeting. He plans to send an email out next week (week of October 7). There will be no December meeting during finals.

Establish subcommittee chairs and meeting schedules: Brad Bergstrom expressed his interest in being the chair of CBSS (via email to J. Allard). Lavonna Lovern and Karen Noll volunteered to be co-Chairs of the Energy Conservation subcommittee; Jim Nienow with assistance from Meredith Lancaster volunteered to be chair of the Recycling Sub-committee.

The roles of these sub-committees was reviewed as written in the bylaws and in the Assessment of Charges and Goals document that was distributed to members, which brought up the Traffic and Parking Planning subcommittee. Currently, this subcommittee is not active. In 2011 the EIC was waiting to see if a university parking committee was formed. The EIC should find out this year if a university committee does exist; then the EIC should get a member to be a member on the university committee. If a university committee exists, then the EIC bylaws should be changed by removing this as one of the subcommittees.

J. Allard gave everyone the opportunity to sign up for a subcommittee during the meeting or to send him an email. Every member must sign up for one subcommittee. The sub-committees should plan to meet before the next full EIC meeting in November.

Goals for the upcoming year:

1. S. Fuciereilli mentioned that the University is making a “green website” that perhaps the EIC could be included so that the university and EIC are working together.
2. The question was raised about whatever happened with the President’s Climate Council. President McKinney did sign it, so maybe the EIC should revisit this at a meeting.

3. L. Most asked about the Administrative Environment Committee and asked for clarification about its function and if there was faculty representation. M. Lancaster said that this committee was required by the USG, and its function is for the university to conduct self-audits. The University would develop plans to fix any problems identified by the self-audit, and then there would be no fines issued to the university by the EPA. T. Grove and B. Bergstrom are faculty on the Administrative Committee.
4. L. Adams mentioned that last year there was a move to protect trees and not allow students to hang banners on pine trees. L. Most said that a resolution went to the Faculty Senate, but no one knows what happened to it. EIC should track it down and also check with the President's office to see if he signed any resolution. An idea was mentioned to install poles so that students could hang banners on poles as opposed to trees so not to change the tradition of student groups hanging signs on campus. It was mentioned that palm trees could still be used to hang things, but pine trees cannot because of the damage to bark.
5. L. Most brought up a tree policy that had a list of trees that were recommended for protection. This needs to be followed up.
6. Add the placement of future solar panels to be one of the goals of the CBSS.
7. L. Adams asked whether or not recycling was occurring when all bags were thrown into one dumpster. T. Grove said the same thing is happening at Bailey. The Recycling subcommittee should determine if recycling at many buildings is actually occurring, and re-educating staff and faculty.
8. As far as the goals and charges for the upcoming year, many on the list from 2011 were on-going. Some projects that were completed were for the CBSS: replacement of tree plantings, design of bedded areas, pre-design of North Campus Health Sciences and planting around Ed Center Auditorium. All other goals that were included in the list from 2011 were ongoing for the subcommittees. See below:

EIC Subcommittee Goals

Campus Beautification and Stewardship:

- ~~Replacement tree plantings (e.g. for longleaf pines lost to ongoing attrition, within existing groves; possibly adding native midstory species in same areas).~~
- ~~Design of bedded areas around pine tree clusters in campus groves (especially where grass does not grow well) to protect trees from mower damage, and to enhance appearance.~~
- ~~Proactive involvement in pre-design of North Campus Health Sciences developments, to ensure maximum preservation of existing trees.~~
- ~~Post-construction oversight of tree re-planting around the Ed Center Auditorium.~~
- Plans for invasive species removal (e.g., Chinese Tallow tree), especially along campus creeks.
- Consideration of amendments to Tree Preservation and Maintenance Policy, prohibiting destructive sampling (e.g., coring) and placement of signs or other attachments.
- Outreach to campus units involved with current and future construction and renovation, urging use of our growing stockpile of heart-pine lumber from VSU trees, using it for flooring, paneling, furniture, etc.

Energy Conservation and Facilities:

- Work with the University administration toward full implementation of a campus-wide energy conservation program, especially as it relates to educating the campus community about the VSU's Energy Policy.
- Identify general and specific areas of concern about energy usage on campus and strategies for reducing energy consumption.
- Evaluate energy usage on campus and make recommendations for ways in which energy conservation can be attained.
- Promote the use of public transportation by VSU faculty, staff and students.
- Plan and hold the Third Annual Energy Conservation Competition.

Recycling:

- Educate the Campus Community about the VSU recycling program.
- Engage the VSU administration toward full implementation and development of the campus-wide recycling program begun during spring semester 2007.
- Plan and hold the Second Annual Recycling Contest.

Update and Request from SAVE: Ben Vieth and other SAVE members asked for a letter of support from EIC requesting that the University Foundation divest from the top 200 companies fossil fuel producing companies. There are other universities around the country that are doing this, and SAVE is pushing for VSU's Foundation to do the same. The SAVE members mentioned that they would provide the Foundation with a list of environmentally friendly companies. They are also seeking more transparency in what companies the Foundation is investing in. SAVE is planning on meeting with President McKinney in the next couple of weeks. EIC requested that SAVE put together a proposal with all the details and submit it to the EIC so that the EIC could see the details before supporting or not supporting SAVE.

Adjourned at 12:15 pm. People who wanted to tour the solar panels did so immediately after the meeting.

Update on Solar Panels: Victoria Douglass gave an introduction to the solar panels that were installed outside the library. There were some questions about lack of planning, or future planning for solar panels. The money for these solar panels was provided by end of year funds. Anyone interested could take a walk to see solar panels after meeting.