

MINUTES
Sustainability Committee
Tuesday, October 27, 2009
3:30, STC Board Room

Present: Susan Briggs, Bob Campbell, Brett Christian, Jim Efta, Chris Guttenberg, Cathi Love, Jeff Nelson, Dorothy Seymour

Absent: Joe Brandon, Heather Brooks, Beth Davis, Ricki Jones, Jack Kirkley, Mark Krank

Carbon Inventory

Jim reminded the committee that our Carbon Inventory was completed last December and is posted on the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) website. The commuter survey was not included at that time, but Chris worked on this last spring and we will integrate it into our next Carbon Inventory, which is due September 2010. Fuel burned by motor pool vehicles and air miles traveled are also to be included in the Carbon Calculator. We hope to conduct the commuting survey at the beginning of Fall Semester 2010 as an attachment to the vehicle registration card when people are obtaining parking decals.

Carbon Neutrality Plan

A Carbon Neutrality Action Plan, which includes what the university plans to do to reduce fossil fuel carbon amounts, is required by January 15, 2010. The objective is to get as close as possible to “carbon neutral”, which means the university is not adding net carbon to the atmosphere. Chris is working on this report. He said we need to determine whether our goal is to be “carbon neutral” or “carbon free”. It will need to be an evolving, ever changing plan, including determining strategies for commuting, etc.

Jim said we need to set a suggested goal to reduce our fossil fuel for the next five years. He doesn't know if either UMW or UM can become carbon neutral; we would have to purchase carbon offsets to achieve that. UMW's carbon offsets for the biomass wood-fired boiler were sold to the Climate Trust for the next 15 years, so we are unable to utilize any carbon offsets generated by the biomass boiler. We are looking at the feasibility of adding the SUB, Chancellor's House, rental properties to the biomass system. The current heating, lighting, and window renovations to Main Hall, and the projects in Block Hall and the PE Complex should make a big difference, also.

Bob suggested changing out the current lighting lamps in the campus entrance signs to less expensive and more energy efficient lamps. Jim will get contact information for the company doing the signs from Kent Ord, and will then talk to the company about the possibility of using different lighting.

Because we previously had insufficient information to insert in the carbon calculator (such as miles flown will be inaccurate), we need to base our carbon neutrality plan on what comes out of the carbon calculator this next time. These plans tend to be inconsistent among the universities regarding how extensive they are and what is being included.

Chris suggested possibly calling it a Carbon Output Reduction Plan (instead of Neutrality Action Plan).

Jim and Chris will put together some figures in the next couple of weeks on a suggested percentage reduction to be presented to the Chancellor. Susan stressed the importance of deciding soon whether we do a carbon neutral plan or a carbon reduction plan as the report is due soon and on which carbon inventory we are using. A reduction percentage has to be based from figures inserted in our carbon inventory.

While in this process, we also should quantify the 20 by 10 of Governor Schweitzer. Jim said that if we can defer reporting until toward the end of spring 2010, we'll have all figures in the calculator for the past two years.

Recycling

The campus recycling campaign is student driven and student sustained and there are a lot of students interested in helping to recycle. In conjunction with Eli at Dining Services and the Campus Corps Director, they will be analyzing compost collection from waste in the cafeteria production room for the next month. If the compost could be used as fertilizer, that's a carbon offset. That group will develop a composting plan and present it to the Campus Development Committee for possible sites to use for storing the compost materials

Next Meeting: Early December 2009