

Sustainability Council minutes, October 17, 2014

Attendance: Noted at 16

- Two Energy Technology students (Keelan Okazaki and Seth Cope) came to talk about their HVAC project for their sophomore-level Design and Rapid Prototyping class. There are a total of 4 students in the group.
 - Their project this school year is to look at ways the HVAC on campus could potentially be improved.
 - The project was intentionally vague at first; they are doing a lot of background research and interviews to determine the issues on campus. They are interviewing people both on and off campus, such as OPPD and Trane. *If you are interested in talking to the students about HVAC issues you see in your area, please contact either of these students or Mary Duda.*
 - A lot of the equipment is out of date or not properly insulated
 - Next semester is about more concrete solutions, while this semester is to gain an understanding of how it works.
 - They are looking a bit at behavior change, but have realized they are constrained by resources; people are scarce to work on things on campus.
 - The group is invited to return next semester to fill us in on what they learned and where the project is headed next.
- Last month, the group talked about box lunches and how the boxes are not recycled. A member of the Wellness Council shared their “Healthy Dining Guide”, which suggests buying lunch buffet-style instead of in the boxes. This reduces both packaging waste and food waste, as people can take as much as they want.
 - http://www.creighton.edu/fileadmin/user/health/wellness-council/docs/HD_Dining_Guide_2014.pdf
- Scott Maas from Skutt Student Center attended the meeting to discuss recycling, etc., since we had discussed this at the last meeting, especially the fact that there is no way to recycle the box lunches. It turns out that recycling in Skutt and Harper is a complex issue for several reasons.
 - He pointed out that Skutt and Sodexo are separate, but he can speak to some of the issues
 - There is no upcharge for china service (as opposed to the plasticware) in Skutt/Harper, but only if it is an “attended” function, as opposed to “drop-off service”.
 - In some instances, due to fire codes, there is not enough space in the rooms for recycling bins or even trash cans, depending on the number of people in the room.
 - They are currently looking at different options for the trash and recycling bins.
 - Pepsi’s recycling bins are only for cans/bottles. Pepsi has had close to all of their loads from those bins rejected for not being clean. The only places with clean recycling are the Dream Machines.

- Based on what the Skutt staff is seeing, it doesn't appear that recycling is a priority to the people using the space; there is generally a lot of food and other trash in the recycling bins, even (and especially!) when the recycling bin is right next to the trash can.
- There is no room to keep the large, rolling totes that Facilities uses. They would almost need a dedicated recycling dumpster behind the building, or have daily pickup of recycling, to accommodate the amount of material they have.
- Skutt is switching to biodegradable corn-based plasticware in the spring
 - Same price as plastic
 - While it can't be composted currently, it does have the advantage of being made from a renewable resource
- They are aware of the Styrofoam at Mein Bowl in Skutt and that you automatically get this type of container whether you are eating-in or taking it to-go. They are working with the subcontractor on this.
- Green Ribbon Schools:
 - Sara Cooper is the new Director of Science Education at the Nebraska Department of Education. She had this to say in response to our questions about how the application process works:
 - "In response to your question regarding the number of postsecondary institutions sent to the federal level, each state is only allowed to send forward one postsecondary nominee. For the past six years, I worked in the Environmental Studies Program at UNL so I am very interested in seeing what can be done to grow the ED Green Ribbon Schools Program and I encourage your institution to apply. I think it would be very beneficial to develop some collaborations and perhaps even some state sponsored competitions among our postsecondary institutions as a challenge to become even 'greener'. Any suggestions you have would be appreciated. "
 - We can work with her as opportunities arise. Council decided to continue to look at the application; perhaps we can rework some of the information needed for other surveys, etc.?
- St. Francis Day Celebration: October 3
 - Mass at noon, St. John's Church. Thank you to Dick Hauser, SJ, for an excellent homily.
 - Lunch following, Lower St. John's. Locally sourced soups, bread, pickles. Thank you to Barbara Dilly, PhD, for heading that up.
 - Thank you to our sponsors:
 - Facilities Management
 - Wellness Council
 - Vice Provost for Mission and Ministry
 - Collaborative Ministry
 - Sodexo
 - Creighton Center for Service and Justice

- Campus Ministry
- Local food producers
- Sustainability Awards
 - Thank you to everyone who submitted a nomination; we had a good pool to choose from
 - Thank you to the selection committee: Bill Hamilton, Margo Minnich, and Ryan Wishart.
 - Winners:
 - Michael Cherney, Spirit of St. Francis Award: “Mike Cherney is the architect of the energy program on campus that brought to Creighton the largest solar energy installation in Nebraska. But more important than the infrastructure is the academic program that Mike brought into being.” “ In the last year, Mike has revised the curriculum, based on feedback from the initial student cohorts as well as from industry partners. He has also helped pursue additional funding from OPPD to expand the alternative energy education opportunities at Creighton.” “Dr. Cherney has played a very important role in inspiring me to live out my values and faith in my teaching of environmental sustainability and social equity.”
 - Theresa Hawley, Community Partner Award: “For the past two summers, Theresa has been the point person for Creighton’s Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) partnership with Wenninghoff Farms. This program brings fresh, locally grown produce to members of the Creighton community by delivering them to campus; this is a tremendous opportunity to live a little more simply, contribute less to carbon emissions, and eat more healthy food. Theresa embodied the ACT portion of the St. Francis Pledge by working to bring this program to campus.”
 - Other nominees: Jay Leighter, Andy Waltke
- Visit from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum with Tree Tour and tree planting, October 3. This is due to our affiliation as a Landscape Steward Site that promotes healthy and sustainable green spaces.
 - Got good exposure for the university; 3 members of the Landscape shop answered questions about the grounds and the university in general. Approximately 2 dozen people from around the state visited.
- Discussion of leftover food in dining halls, Skutt, etc.
 - Is it a liability issue? Is it an ownership issue? At some schools, the food vendor owns the food no matter what happens to it afterwards.
 - Can it be donated?
 - Can we have a chapter of Campus Kitchens, which donates unused food to shelters, etc.? One used to exist, but the program died off when the student running it graduated
 - At other locations, Sodexo has partnered with a group that donates food. Need to look at that, since the agreements are already in place.
 - Can the food be composted?

- Places to contact that have composting: City Sprouts, Big Muddy Urban Farm, No More Empty Pots
- Can we have a full-time paid sustainability coordinator?
 - A lot more could be done with a dedicated staff member
 - Make it so that it is someone's responsibility and not a burden on everybody
 - Difficulty is how to pay someone to do this, since the university is currently cutting costs and staff members.
 - It is possible that this position could save money for the university, especially if engaged in energy-saving measures
 - At Oregon, the students voted to increase their fees; this paid the sustainability coordinator for several years.
 - Would need a business case for this.
- Creighton Students Union (CSU) is looking at a bike-rental (or check-out) program

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Next meeting is November 20, 2014 in Eppley 119.