

UF Sustainability Committee - Minutes

1/20/2022, 12:30-2:30

Virtual Zoom meeting

Attendees:

Members: Ariel Pomputius, Andrew Zimmerman, Jeff Boissoneault, Matt Williams, Leslie Thiele, Flora Iff-Noel, Allen Masters, Meredith Beaupre, Cindy Craig, Jodi Chase, Nancy Clark, John Duncan, H  l  ne Huet

Excused: Jessica-Jean Stonecipher, Leah Locascio, Elizabeth McAlister, Kristin Joys

Guests/Non-Members: Liz Storn, Kaylee August, Jeremiah McInnis, Scott Fox

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 12:30 (**Ariel Pomputius**, Chair)

Approval of Minutes

Andrew Zimmerman moved to approve the minutes from December 16, 2021. The motion was seconded by **Nancy Clark**.

Sustainable Transportation discussion with Scott Fox and Jeremiah McInnis, [UF Transportation and Parking Services](#)

Scott and **Jeremiah** started by stating that the elimination of SOV trips has been a guiding principle for UF TAPS efforts

They also noted that they are working on a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for UF which will consolidate all the transportation discussions into one place.

Jeremiah presented the following highlights of TAPS' Alternative Transportation work:

Micromobility (electric scooters) – TAPS/UF has partnered with City of Gainesville on the pilot program RTS Express Routes 150/151

- Haile Plantation (150) – very productive, averaging 400 riders/week during COVID
 - o Grand Slam success!
- Duck Pond (151) –planned, but on hold pending funding
 - o **Ariel:** Is there a way that Sust Comm can advocate for funding for this route?
 - **Scott** will reach out to Sust Comm if there's a way to
 - Note that in 2020, due to pandemic, TAPS experienced a loss of \$5.7 million (refunds, no parking pass)
 - Got \$3.8million in Federal CARES money
 - o Have a lot of very exciting initiatives, but just don't have the funding. This is true across the state based on the way that higher education Transportation and Parking services are funded.
 - Also note that parking revenue is not back to normal – parking decal sales are at about 85% - so that's about \$3 million in revenues TAPS is not getting
 - o **Ariel** also noted that by reducing the number of cars coming to campus, also reducing TAPS' funding
 - **Scott** also noted that we must be paying off the debt for Parking Garages 14 & 13, plus operating costs. They are deferring work, leaving positions open, etc.
- **Scott** noted that the Express routes are only express in that they don't stop at every location, but there aren't dedicated express lanes on the roads
- The cost is approximately \$75/hr for each route
- There are also more route needs for students, request for service to Lake Wauberg

- Currently, can't even find the drivers needed to sustain RTS – about 40 vacant positions
- When funding is better, TAPS has some exciting ideas to roll out!

Duke Energy Direct Efficiency Program – working with Duke Energy to replace parking garages 2 & 5 with LED bulbs. This is a no-upfront cost project where Duke will be paid back through the cost savings.

EV Charging – have 12 fast charging stations (~\$35k + maintenance) & also working on plans to install more AC outlets in the garages (~\$ few hundred) – they are doing this in Garage 14 right now.

- Goal is that the spots would be used by faculty/staff during the day, and then be used by fleet vehicles at night

UF Vanpool Program

- Working with “Commute with Enterprise” to bring vanpooling to UF – late 2022 or early 2023
 - o Will be for groups of 8-15 people living 20 or more miles from campus for Enterprise-leased vehicles
 - o Enterprise maintains & insures the vehicle; each vanpool person pays monthly cost
 - o Currently in the process of mapping areas and is under review by senior leadership and not yet approved. Once they have the mapping of concentrations of faculty/staff, they'll start reaching out.
 - o Cost will depend on how many people in the vanpool. Generally not more than ~\$100/person/month
 - o **Ariel** asked whether there would be designated parking? **Scott** said that they are considering doing something for vanpool similar to carpool – the spaces are reserved for vanpool/carpool until 9:30

Campus Connector Shuttle Service

- Free walk-on shuttle service with 2 routes – both serve Garage 14 & then other areas on campus
 - o <https://taps.ufl.edu/alternative-transportation/campus-connector/>
 - Also DoubleMap Bus Tracker (Google Play & iTunes App Store)
 - o Comes by each stop every 15-20 minutes
 - o Note that parking in campus core will become scarcer and Administration is expecting more people to park in Garage 14
 - Campus Connector directly designed to service that lot
 - o One of the biggest challenges (beyond COVID) are the road closures which severely impact the routes and ridership

RTS Electric buses

- RTS has 8 electric buses – 3 are fully electric, 5 hybrid. Each bus costs \$1million

Tower Road Park & Ride

- Goal is to develop a parking lot on Tower Road south of SW 8th Ave to be a pickup point for Route 150
 - o On hold due to funding issues

Ariel – how can our committee help?

- **Scott** – funding the purchases the lion's share of funding is student \$ (~\$14.5million/year)
 - o Students aren't always interested in the most sustainable option, but are excited about the most convenient (e.g. Uber/Lyft/Safe Rides)
 - Committee could help remind students about the fiscal efficiency & sustainability of looking at other options
 - TAPS will be hiring a transportation consultant and doing another study to look at creative ways to bring our transportation programs into new era
 - There are concerns about the new pedestrian-only zone on Newell/Union
 - he goal is to determine how to reimagine transportation on campus

Flora Iff-Noel asked about Secure Bike parking and any plans for creating new locations beyond Garage 14?

- **Scott** and **Jeremiah** replied that there's a locked, covered area in Garage 14 with space for 48 bikes and have ~35 people signed up for the program.
 - o They are interested in creating more areas – there was the opportunity with the new garage to add this feature which is easier than retrofitting existing garages
- Flora** also was curious why the E-Scooters are only available 6am-10pm?
This was a decision made by the City for several reasons:
- o In general, the worst behavior and bad decisions tends to happen after 10pm
 - o Also need time for the vendors to be able to rebalance the scooters
 - o **Jeremiah** said that City does not track faculty/staff vs students
 - 15-20% of rides are considered campus rides
 - Anecdotally mostly students

Hélène Huet wondered whether there have been any talks about making people pay to use the bus?

- **Scott** noted that RTS is “fare free” but is subsidized. By providing it fare free, it removes a perceived barrier to riding the bus. Additionally, paying a fare would generate revenue, but only for RTS
 - Not having a fare allows us to remind students that they have paid for access on RTS

Andy Zimmerman wondered if there could be a moratorium on building any new parking lots/garages?

- **Scott** replied that 24,000 parking spaces is the current service level, and since he's been here, TAPS has only built replacement parking, not “new” parking
 - o We are continuing to lose surface parking lots
 - o Additionally, we have an agreement with the City & County – Campus Development Agreement – that caps the number of spaces we can have on campus. If we had way more parking spots, we'd shut down the city road network
 - We're currently over the cap

Andy followed up wondering if the number of parking passes capped?

- **Scott** replied no. But we have thousands of empty spaces every day. However they may not be where you want them

John Duncan wondered if there was any intention by City to actually make express lanes for the bus?

- **Scott** replied that the conversations have had happened, but there is a reluctance to give up the right of way (ROW)

Ariel also wondered about getting light rail?

- **Scott** noted that there are still ROW issues.
 - o **Matt Williams** also replied that many of our roads are also designated as State roads, and FDOT has to be involved (and are reluctant to remove lanes on the state network)

Discussion

Matt suggested that the Sustainability Committee consider some of the questions that will be posed by the Transportation consultant and think about potential solutions:

- o What are the barriers that prevent you from accessing alternative transportation?
- o What could be considered a “hot spot” for faculty/staff if RTS was to develop a new route?
- o How far would you be willing to walk to a bus stop?

Jodi Chase asked if there could be a telecommuting policies for those that are able to ppl don't have to come to campus at all

- **Matt** noted that it's been a decision from HR in the past, but could be revisited in the CAP Transportation section
- **Hélène** wondered if they might be willing to reconsider due to the pandemic and new ways for employees to work remotely. She also wondered if the new HR VP would be willing to reconsider?

Ariel mentioned that there have been discussions in Budget Council about “how expensive parking passes are”, and she has a new appreciation for all that the parking passes fund.

- **Matt** noted that UF's parking fees are still lower than all our peer Universities (UGA, Georgia Tech). FSU doesn't have a parking cost and colleagues there call it the “wild west” of parking

Flora wondered how can we make UF give more funding to Transportation?

- **Matt** explained that the way that public universities are managed, TAPS is expected to fund themselves – so they don't get state funding and UF administration can't allocate funding to TAPS

Hélène wondered if an action item could be to talk to development office to get donors to donate to transportation initiatives?

- **Jeff Boissoneault** and **Flora** support this idea.

Old Business

ESG Resolution - Budget council has not yet met to discuss the resolution

CEP resolution

- It is before the Faculty Senate today
- Will be presented by Infrastructure Council
 - Was well-received by Infrastructure Council & Faculty Senate Steering Committee

Vice Chair

New Business

Nominations open through January 31 for Faculty Senate positions <http://senate.ufl.edu/committees--councils/> https://ufl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eJQjZ2tAYr9LJb0

- Univ Committees/Councils Open house is Friday, January 28, 11:30-12:30

University Committees and Councils Virtual Open House

Join the university committee chairs to have your questions answered about [shared governance opportunities and the nomination process](#)

Friday Jan 28, 11:30 – 12:30

[Join via Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 917 2518 3053 | Passcode: 801029 | Dial: 301 715 8592

- **Andy Zimmerman, Cindy Craig, and Kristin Joys** rotate off at the end of the term.

Office of Sustainability Updates

- Currently working on refinement of strategies and actions for the **Climate Action Plan**
- [CAP Lunch & Learn](#) Thursday, January 27
- Champions for Change: <https://sustainable.ufl.edu/news-events/champions-for-change-awards/>
 - Opens for nominations in February and the Sustainability Committee will vote in March
 - We are planning on doing an in-person award ceremony this year – TBD

Roundtable updates

- Reitz Union hired new senior director from USF/St Pete – was over the student green energy fund at USF
- Libraries Green Team put out newsletter – Climate Change exhibit & resources available in the library
- **Jeff** and **Andy** have been doing tree plantings at the Ashton Biological Preserve with [We Are Neutral](#) – they still need [volunteers](#)

Meeting Adjourned

Jeff Boissoneault motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:01pm. **Hélène Huet** seconded the motion.