

## UF Sustainability Committee – Minutes

10/20/2022, 12:30-2:30pm

Virtual Zoom meeting

### **Attendance**

**Members:** Ariel Pomputius, Meredith Beaupre, Jeff Boissoneault, Angie Brown, Jodi Chase, Nancy Clark, John Duncan, Hélène Huet, Flora Iff-Noel, Elizabeth McAlister, Jessica-Jen Stonecipher, Leslie Thiel, Matt Williams, Stephan Willias

**Excused:** Jessica Sheffield, Sofia Buonanno, Mariela Pajuelo Rubina

**Absent:** Sidney Ruedas

**Guests/Non-Members:** Liz Storn, Jacob Adams

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:31 PM by **Ariel Pomputius**, chair.

### **Approval of Minutes**

**John Duncan** moved to approve the minutes from September 15, 2022. The motion was seconded by **Nancy Clark**.

### **Old Business**

#### *Central Energy Plant*

The Infrastructure Council has been discussing & putting together a series of questions from faculty senate to be asked about the central energy plant. The University still awaiting bids – expected next week if the timeline has not changed again. **Matt Williams** will provide an update when he learns more.

**Izzy McAlister** asked if the Central Energy Plant was discussed in the forums for the President nominee? **Matt** replied that the only thing slightly related was about the neutrality date of 2025, which Dr. Sasse responded to championing the role of innovation.

#### *Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Criteria in UF Investing*

**Ariel** reported that the Budget Council was reluctant to move the forward because of the State Legislature's approval of a resolution to bar the state's pension fund from considering ESG factors when making investment decisions. They referred the recommendation to the Infrastructure Council, which sent it back to the Budget Council.

**Matt** noted that this is a national issue and shared the following article from the International Endowments Network

([https://www.intentionalendowments.org/investors\\_push\\_back\\_on\\_anti\\_esg\\_political\\_attacks](https://www.intentionalendowments.org/investors_push_back_on_anti_esg_political_attacks))

**Ariel** asked if there is a next step that the Sustainability Committee could take? **Matt** suggested that the Sustainability Committee could suggest that Human Resources expand the sustainability offerings in the contract portfolios for retirement accounts. Matt, however, wasn't sure who to talk to about this.

### **New Business**

*Campus Bicycle Programming with Jacob Adams, UF Campus Bicycle Program Coordinator*

**Jacob** presented information about bicycling programming on campus. His presentation is attached. Two timely items of note are:

- 1) the free [Love to Ride Florida Challenge](#) running from October 21 through the end of November. You can join the University of Florida – GNV team or create your own.
- 2) Lights and Helmet giveaway on November 10 from 3-5 at Turlington Plaza in cooperation with UFPD

A discussion was held about some of the items that Jacob discussed including the idea suggested by **Jessica-Jean Stonecipher** about offering discounts at local bike shops. **Jacob** replied that while that is an idea not currently pursued, it had previously been done with the Gator Gears bike rental launch and no one took advantage of the offers. It was suggested that something could be included in the Gator Perks offerings. **Ariel** asked how the Sustainability Committee can support bicycle programming on campus. **Jacob** replied that while there isn't much to contribute at the moment for specific programs, participation in events and communication with colleagues and students who are interested in key to expanding bicycling on campus.

*Sustainability Pledge/Opt In*

**Jessica-Jean** asked if there was a way to have students opt-in to sustainability actions? Such as a pledge? **Matt** discussed the Green Cord Challenge run by Gators Going Green (Student Government Agency) with assistance from the Office of Sustainability. In the Green Cord Challenge, students earn points for different actions. <https://sustainable.ufl.edu/campus-initiatives/academics-research/green-gator-graduation-cord-challenge/>. He noted that previously there was a sustainability graduation pledge; however, it was hard to keep track of and didn't engage students while they were at UF. It was suggested that the Sustainability Committee may be able to work with Gators Going Green on the Green Cord criteria, messaging and promotion. It was also suggested that incorporating Quest could be useful. **Les Thiel** noted that Sustainability Studies has students engaged in group projects, and would be interested in learning of any ideas that the Committee has of projects that could work towards Green Cords or increasing impact. **Matt** finally noted that there are sustainability questions in the OIRA questionnaire, but we have not analyzed the responses.

*Sustainable Transportation with the Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee (PATAC), Scott Washburn, Chair*

**Scott** presented an overview of PATAC. He noted that if the Sustainability Committee and PATAC work together, it would give additional weight to any issues. The Committee discussed with Scott ideas for reducing motor vehicles traffic on campus and making both biking and walking safer. **Matt** noted that campus has a few separated bike lanes, and approximately 99% of roads on campus have bike lanes. He also noted that bike education encourages cyclists to take the entire lane, especially if the bike lane is inadequate. The following article was shared about the bicycle and pedestrian zone on campus: <https://www.alligator.org/article/2021/06/uf-auto-free-zone>.

**Ariel** asked how we can collaborate with PATAC to help reduce the University's carbon footprint in line with the Climate Action Plan. **Scott** mentioned the idea of different parking prices based on vehicle emissions but noted that Scott Fox was concerned about the logistics of implementing this idea. The Sustainability Committee has been most concerned about the reduction of frequency of the buses and bicycle safety and accessibility. **Scott** also said that it has been too easy for scooter riders to drive short distances to classes and the initiative to create "super scooter lots" has lost some momentum. **Ariel** will go to PATAC November meeting to discuss areas of collaboration.

After Scott left the meeting, **Ariel** asked for any ideas for collaboration? The idea of incentives for not driving, such as the University of Kentucky does, was brought up.

**Updates from the Global Conference on Sustainability in Higher Education (GCSHE) – Liz Storn** reminded the committee that the virtual conference has begun, and registrations are still available. If you send Liz an email, she will give you instructions on how to register. There are live and on-demand sessions, all of which are available to watch through end of December.

The Office of Sustainability is considering ways to engage the community around the conference going forward.

### **Office of Sustainability Updates**

**Matt** provided a summary of high priority projects:

- Currently waiting for bids to be submitted on the Central Energy Plant (now the Thermal Production Facility). OoS is involved with the communications side of the project
- Working with upper-level administration to review and approve the Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- There is a resurgence of interest in Electric Vehicles (EVs) and EV charging  
We still have a goal of 10% of fleet EVs by 2025

**Ariel** asked if there is a recommended list of EVs? **Matt** replied that Procurement has an approved vehicle list that includes a variety of EVs vetted for a range of vehicle types. **Jodi Chase** mentioned that Business Affairs Technical Services (BATS) has developed a website for departments to better see their fleet with data from Asset Management and Motor Pool. This allows for a comparison of electric vs non-electric vehicles.

**Matt** mentioned that there are E-bike fleet vehicles options – such as the E-bikes and trailer being used by Facilities Services.

- Chartwells is up and running as the dining provider and working to hire their Sustainability Manager.
- Conservation Area Land Management (CALM) plan updates are progressing. The task force is working on outlines for the areas

### **Roundtable updates**

**Izzy** noted that the dining coupons provided by the University last week had to be printed, which doesn't meet our campus sustainability goals. **Jodi** replied that decisions about the coupons were very late, so that was the best option.

**Flora** wondered – What does the Office of Sustainability plan to do regarding approval of the CAP and the timeline with the incoming president and the CAP? **Matt** replied that we are actively working to answer that question, and we're waiting for higher level approval. **Matt** noted that we are moving forward with the framework for implementation structure regardless of any formal approval, given that many action items are currently moving forward.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

**Flora** motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:22pm. **Izzy** seconded the motion.