

UF Sustainability Committee – Minutes

4/20/2023, 12:30-2:30pm

Virtual Zoom meeting

Attendance

Members: Ariel Pomputius, Angie Brown, Nancy Clark, John Duncan, Flora Iff-Noel, Mariela Pajuelo Rubina, Matt Williams, Stephan Willias, Leslie Thiel

Excused: Jeff Boissoneault, Meredith Beaupre, Jessica Sheffield, Sofia Buonanno, Sidney Ruedas, H el ene Huet, Jodi Chase, Jessica-Jen Stonecipher

Guests/Non-Members: Liz Storn, Rachel Mandell, Kaylee August, Scarlet Seymour, Ashley Grassano, Matt Mueller

Call to Order

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

Approval of Minutes

Angie Brown moved to approve the minutes from March 16, 2023. The motion was seconded by **John Duncan**.

Old Business

Champions for Change - award ceremony last Tuesday, 4/18/23

Ariel said the C4C event was wonderful and the food was delicious. **Ariel** mentioned that it was great to see everyone in person. **Ariel** mentioned that name tags would be great for next years Champions for Change Award Ceremony.

Chair for Sustainability Committee for next year (2023/2024)

Ariel mentioned that this is her last meeting and the spot for the Chair is still vacant. A lot of the committee members are busy and there are no members at this time interested in being the Chair. **Matt Williams** mentioned that the committee has left the nomination open until August.

New Business

Scarlet Seymour is a new member to the committee. She works in the Energy and Engineering department in Facilities Services. The sustainability committee did round table introductions for Scarlet to know the committee members.

Dining and Sustainability

Matt Mueller updated the committee on the current goals for sustainability in terms of dining.

- Guide Chartwells to align goals with UF.
- Annual operating plan outlined in the signed contract.
- Post doc position within IFAS. Measure, monitor, and verify KPI reporting.

Maddie Kowalewski is the new Sustainability Manager for Chartwells and will support the sustainability initiatives.

Flora Iff-Noel asked about recent changes with local restaurants and increasing local coffee shops/restaurants. **Matt M.** said that they would have 33% local vendors and would partner with local coffee shops to switch some of the Starbucks to local or regional vendors. The goal is to have variety across retail locations with local products (local produce and meats). **Flora** would like to have more than 33% local. **Matt M.** mentioned that we need the sales from other investments to help support the local initiatives. When they move a vendor out, they always try to find local or regional retail options.

Ariel wanted to discuss the paper products used in dining and their biodegradability. Is Chartwells moving towards using more compostable materials? **Matt M.** mentioned that COVID changed the supply chain but it is opening back up. They are pushing towards using compostable materials in the retail locations. National brand agreements will sometimes not allow compostable materials we use on campus. The goal is to strive towards utilizing compostable materials. **Kaylee August** noted that all of the paper products used by Palm and Pine for the Champions for Change awards ceremony were compostable at the base level.

Scarlet asked about reducing waste. **Matt M.** talked about a presentation to FSAC about the counties Zero Waste Goals. Dining halls do not have a lot of post consumer waste. Catering does have some room for growth and they are looking to partner with the Food Recovery Network. Dining is working to measure their KPIs to find gaps and room for growth.

Ariel mentioned partnerships with IFAS. **Matt M.** noted that composting is on campus but partnerships with IFAS to utilize for animal feed is uncertain. Additional infrastructure is needed to equip farmers with the things they need to store and repurpose food for animal feed. **Matt M.** would like to have a food hub located centrally in Gainesville to drop food off for the community to utilize.

Flora asked about compost locations and how composting works on campus. Where does Krishna lunch composting go? Does Palm and Pine catering only have compostable options? **Matt M.** mentioned the dining halls compost all post consumer foods and use china or compostable materials. China and brand standards depend on the retail location, but some vendors will not allow using china. The strategy is to move the brands to use the Ozzie boxes. **Liz Storn** said that Krishna lunch composting is gathered by Facilities Services and Watson Construction is utilized for composting.

Matt M. mentioned the meal plan prices are 30% less than our peer universities and noted that meal plan users are important to dining. Webpage for dining plans: <https://dineoncampus.com/uf/>. **Matt M.** mentioned that they want to have data to back the information provided. Additionally, faculty and staff meal plans allow faculty and staff to eat in the dining halls and the Arradondo Cafe. Fried chicken Thursday was also highlighted.

Ariel asked if there is any way the committee can support Matt M. and dining at UF. **Matt M.** would like to have a Freight Farm - shipping container farm <https://www.freightfarms.com/education>. This could provide fresh produce and reduce the costs of greens. **Matt M.** said they are very open to new ideas when it comes to sustainability. There are a lot of goals across Gainesville. How can UF collaborate with stakeholders to gather ideas and integrate them into the dining program while understanding constraints. **Matt M.** wants to be cutting edge and become a leader in sustainability. He mentioned

FSAC's interest in food insecurity and connecting zero waste to help address the needs of campus. **Matt M.** said that Illinois Tech would do a Lunch & Learn to speak on a topic with all local ingredients. At the Lunch & Learn, the first 75 people would receive a free ticket to try local foods. The food was sold at cost to allow more individuals to try dining.

Matt W. mentioned that given the time of the sustainability committee meeting. We could have lunch in the dining hall and receive a tour of the on campus dining facilities.

Ariel agreed that field trips would be great.

Office of Sustainability Updates

Kaylee mentioned the Office of Sustainability is doing an Instagram take-over for Florida Fresh Dining - Chartwells where they will talk about sustainability in dining. Dining has other sustainability-related events going on next week as well.

Additionally, 68 undergraduates earned Green Cords this year. This is up 25 from last year.

Liz shared the Earth Week Events from UF OoS newsletter:

- UF Health Campus Earth Day 4/21, 9-4
- Earth Day at Cuscowilla, 4/22, 9-12
- Unlitter x OAC invasive Invasive Species Removal

Mariela Pajuelo spoke on the McCarty Woods Restoration Team Earth Day Celebration April 22nd. The first 50 volunteers will receive a T-shirt.: <https://biodiversity.research.ufl.edu/mccarty-woods-restoration.html>

Matt W. encouraged committee members to read the Alligator articles touching on climate change.

Roundtable Updates

Angie Brown learned that her office would be taking over the GatorPerks programs for faculty and staff. They want to recruit sustainability opportunities.

Ariel mentioned the library green teams have a number of events they are doing.

Ariel thanked all of the committee members rolling off this year.

- Ariel Pomputius
- Helene Huet
- Meredith Beaupre
- Jeff Boissoneault
- Jessica-Jean Stonecipher
- Sidney Ruedas
- Sofia Buonanno

Meeting Adjourned

John motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:46 pm. **Nancy Clark** seconded the motion.