**UF Sustainability Committee – Minutes**

**Date:** February 20, 2025
**Time:** 12:30-2:30 PM
**Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting

**Attendance**

**Members:** Andrew Zimmerman, Craig Moneypenny, Zoe Richter, Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig, John Duncan, Austin Britton, Carmen Bruno, Jeanne Ewert, Matt Williams, Mariela Pajuelo, Jessica-Jean Stonecipher, Jessica Sheffield, Dustin Stephany, Leslie Thiele

**Excused:** Angie Brown, Flora Iff-Noel, Kristin Joys

**Absent:** Jiangxiao Qiu

**Guests/Non-Members:** Kaylee August, Maddie Kowalewski, Tim Martin

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:32 PM by **Jessica Sheffield**.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Carmen Bruno** moved to approve the minutes from the January 16, 2025, meeting. **Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig** seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Campus Dining Presentation**

**Jessica Sheffield** introduced **Maddie Kowalewski** from Campus Dining, who presented on sustainability initiatives and programs. **Maddie** began by showcasing the Campus Dining website, highlighting the events page and sustainability scorecards. She explained that their purchasing policy prioritizes local, seasonal, and sustainable food, with a focus on sourcing from within Florida. **Maddie** discussed the sustainability scorecards, noting improvements in several areas from 2023 to 2024. She highlighted their local spend, mentioning that over $40,000 was spent on local produce in the fall of 2024, with Trader Hills Farm being their biggest partner. **Maddie** also talked about waste reduction efforts, including the Waste Not program, which tracks food waste in four areas on campus, and the OZZI box program, a reusable container initiative for to-go meals.

During the Q&A session, **Jeanne Ewert** inquired about increasing plant-based food options, to which **Maddie** responded that the Rooted station at Broward Dining offers vegan meals. **Andrew Zimmerman** asked about the availability of the presentation and the use of OZZI boxes for leftovers. **Maddie** clarified that the presentation could be shared and explained the limitations of the OZZI box program. **Jessica-Jean Stonecipher** and **Mariela Pajuelo** asked about student engagement and factors influencing plate waste, respectively. **Maddie** described the Project Clean Plate initiative and the various factors contributing to plate waste, emphasizing the importance of student mindfulness.

**Tim Martin - Urban Forester/Arborist Position Presentation**

**Jessica Sheffield** introduced **Tim Martin**, who presented the need for an urban forester/arborist position at the university. **Tim** emphasized the importance of trees as infrastructure and the lack of a full-time staff member dedicated to overseeing campus trees and forests. He discussed the qualifications and potential responsibilities of the position, including leading an urban tree inventory, consulting on hazard trees, and ensuring compliance with management plans and regulations. **Tim** mentioned that the university previously had an urban forester position, which was eliminated during the recession and never reinstated. He highlighted the need for a holistic perspective on managing urban forests and the importance of having someone dedicated to this role.

During the Q&A session, **Andrew Zimmerman** asked about the current arborists and their roles. **Tim** clarified that while there are arborists who maintain trees, there is no full-time oversight person focused on policy-level management. **Craig Moneypenny** inquired about alternative avenues for approval, and **Matt Williams** explained the current reporting structure and potential changes. The committee expressed support for the idea and discussed potential next steps, including bringing the issue to the Faculty Senate and exploring other avenues for approval and funding.

**Approve Committee’s Proposed Changes to the Committee Description from Senate Bylaws**

**Jessica Sheffield** brought the proposed changes to the committee description from the Senate Bylaws back for a vote. **Matt Williams** reviewed the discussion and edits made in the previous meeting. **Andrew Zimmerman** motioned to vote on the proposed changes, and **Carmen Bruno** seconded the motion. The committee voted to approve the changes and send them to the Constitution Committee for further approval.

**Upcoming Meetings**

**Jessica Sheffield** reminded the committee that the March meeting was moved to March 27th to allow time for Champions for Change nominations, which are due by March 14th. She also mentioned that the April meeting would include a tour of Malachowsky Hall and would be a hybrid meeting with both in-person and Zoom options.

**Office of Sustainability Updates**

**Matt Williams** provided several updates from the Office of Sustainability. He encouraged members to nominate individuals or groups for the Champions for Change Awards, noting that only three nominations had been received so far, which is typical for this time of year. **Matt** shared insights from the National Higher Education Climate Summit, hosted by Second Nature and the Intentional Endowments Network. He discussed the challenges and progress in sustainability efforts, highlighting the focus on saving infrastructure from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the importance of decarbonization goals over carbon neutrality. **Matt** also mentioned the Climate Communications Summit, hosted by the Florida Climate Institute and the College of Journalism, which featured a keynote speaker advocating for making climate neutrality apolitical. The speaker emphasized the need for trusted advisors from both conservative and liberal voices to communicate effectively about climate change.

**Roundtable Discussion**

**Andrew Zimmerman** led the discussion on revisiting the information sharing document for departments. He proposed condensing the document to make it more concise and relevant for department chairs. The committee discussed the logistics of distributing the document and agreed to continue working on it, with a focus on making it visually appealing and easy to read. **Carmen Bruno** suggested collaborating with the Office of Sustainability and creating a visually appealing format, such as a rack card or infographic. **Matt Williams** noted the staffing limitations in the Office of Sustainability and emphasized the need for the committee to take charge of the project. The committee decided to send the document link to all members for further edits and to explore distribution methods, including reaching out to the Faculty Senate for contact information.

**Carmen Bruno** also shared information about an upcoming Food Recovery Forum hosted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Southern Waste Information Exchange, highlighting Dr. Ann Wilkie's participation and the focus on anaerobic digestion and composting.

**Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM following a motion by **Andrew Zimmerman**, seconded by **Carmen Bruno**.