

## Sustainability Council

January 27, 2009

SEM II A1107; 3 pm to 5 pm

### Meeting Minutes

The following members were present:

John Pumilio, Paul Smith, Matt Griffin, Rich Davis, Kathleen Haskett, Halli Winstead, Natalie Pyrooz, Sharon Goodman, Nancy Parkes, Travis Skinner, Scott Morgan, Rick Reichert, Jeremy Epstein, and Ken Tabbutt

### Graduation Pledge

Matthew Griffin presented us with an opportunity to implement a Graduation Pledge for graduating seniors; that they can pledge to 'consider social and environmental consequences' in jobs they choose. The pledge is an opportunity for graduating students to state their values commitment as they enter the workforce. The pledge is a national initiative and a purely voluntary commitment. Students choosing to make the pledge would receive a wallet size pledge card, a cap ribbon for graduation, and a pledge plaque or inclusion in an endurable list on campus.

The council decided to start the pledge now and work out the details in the process.

### RecycleMania and other upcoming events

Halli Winstead presented information about Recycle Mania, which has started and runs through Mar 28<sup>th</sup>. We have designated volunteer coordinators dispersed between RAD, Dining services and campus compost, and the Offices. One focus of Recycle Mania will be to work on food portion awareness at the Greenery by talking to students during meal times; current estimates of the total food waste sent to compost is around 9000 lbs of food per week. Recycle Mania volunteers will also be providing students and Evergreen community members with greater education on recycling. Recycle Mania coordinators are looking into creating a student recycling center, as well. They hope to conduct campus waste audits in March and to pump up community awareness and involvement on campus during this event. Council members were encouraged to refer to the new RecycleMania web page, accessible through the Sustainability site.

### National Teach In

Scott Morgan discussed plans for the National Teach In on Global Warming. The Office of Sustainability will be taking a small group of students to South Puget Sound Community College and to Rochester High School on February 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss sustainable projects and action steps taken at Evergreen.

### Council Meeting re-schedule

We discussed the possibility of changing the Council meeting time to perhaps Tuesday's from 1 – 3 or Friday afternoons. No decision for an altered time has been made yet.

### Diversity Council - common reading!

John handed out copies of chapter's 1 & 4 of Van Jones' book, The Green Collar Economy, and asked everyone to please read them in preparation for a future seminar with the Diversity Council.

### Sustainability Awards

Nancy Parkes presented the idea of defining high profile awards for staff, faculty, and students engaged in advancing sustainability. She pointed out that we should have set criteria for nominees and that nominations should be solicited from the entire college community. We discussed who should give it out, when, and where as a group. Nancy is currently soliciting input on criteria, and who the awards should come from. There was general agreement that candidates should be nominated by other community members, with no allowance for self nomination, or nomination by the Council. This can help build awareness throughout the community. We felt that the award should be something substantial that can be resume building. Rich suggested it be awarded at Graduation. John suggested it be awarded on Campus Sustainability day, during Campus sustainability month. Nancy feels that Graduation will have greater, expanded, and more meaningful impact. She would like for all council members to forward any ideas or feedback to her.

### Workgroup updates

Rich Davis presented the Energy Systems workgroup update. They are working on rescheduling their group meetings to fit schedule changes. Their current focus is on Biomass gasification, efficiency at Tacoma Campus, and helping with the climate action plan. Biomass payback appears to be about 15 yrs based upon recent research and study. Campus energy efficiency is being driven in part by the budget crisis; campus conservation is a cost savings strategy. They believe that this may help create a change in cultural norms, towards a conservative, low energy use normal attitude from which we only increase our usage by consensus. The Tacoma campus actions are temporarily stalled through lack of meeting and consensus time.

Kathleen Haskett presented the Waste Reduction/Sustainable Purchasing workgroup update. The workgroup's Fall goals were to increase compostable waste and participate in RecycleMania. They have added compostable/recyclable/trash signage in the Greenery and RAD. Their compostable goal has been met. They were also hoping to develop an e-waste policy, but have temporarily stalled due to lack of meeting time. They are currently highly focused on RecycleMania. Their draft of a sustainable purchasing policy is being organized and will be submitted soon. The costs of sustainable purchasing procedures has been questioned and analyzed. It is not more expensive; it is actually a little less expensive at this time.

Sharon Goodman presented the Sustainable Food Practices working group update. They are still working on a sustainable purchasing decision tree. They are also working on defining the goals of the Sustainable Food Purchasing workgroup and looking for models of a sustainable purchasing decision tree.

Travis Skinner presented the Alternative Transportation work group update. They are attempting to collect mapping data of faculty/staff residences to facilitate definition of viable alternative transportation strategies for that group. There is, however, some question about the availability and use of that data that the group is still considering.

### Green Energy Credits

Justin Kushik of Renewable Choice presented the Council with an update on Renewable Energy Credits (REC's). Renewable Choice has recently acquired credits in a region where the carbon impact of the credits will be greater than do the credits currently being purchased by the College. Justin has presented to the Clean Energy Committee to inform their decisions when purchasing REC's for the college and is presenting this information to the Council for our education.

Renewable Choice is a private business from Colorado, in business since 2001. They provide green power options to utility customers. The Washington State Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), mandated by the Governor, requires large utilities to be generating 15% of their energy from renewable sources by 2020. This mandate is part of what is driving the green energy credit market, along with voluntary customer involvement and activity towards renewable energy. Renewable Energy Credits can be applied anywhere in the country. So by sourcing from a region without a strongly developed renewable energy system we create long term impacts to improve green energy in that area. REC's are third party certified by GreenE. Renewable Choice is a broker, marketing REC's and carbon offsets.

(Nancy commented that, conversely, if we purchase locally, we keep jobs here and improve our regional power network and can export that energy capacity outward. John noted that we need to also consider particulate matter, and poor air quality produced elsewhere which is then carried into our breathing air. Justin responded that California cannot currently purchase Renewable Energy Credits from out of state, unless the energy produced is subsequently transmitted into the state, but they are considering removing that limitation on purchasing out of state REC's)

This brief exchange pointed out critical uncertainties: Where is the impact? Which should we choose; to support local energy production or collaborate in a national action?

Renewable Choice has recently sourced REC's from Langdon Wind Energy center in North Dakota, which has an output of 159 Megawatts. Some EPA Climate Leaders are adopting the strategy of purchasing REC's in areas where it has a greater impact on carbon reduction, so the total offset value is actually less costly than purchasing from a region where it has less impact. REC's from Langdon could cost 20 – 40% less than Evergreen's current REC portfolio.