

Sustainability Committee Meeting

November 19, 2020

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Committee Business

- Sandy called the meeting to order. Since no new members were present, we didn't have any introductions.
 - For the minutes for the previous meeting, Raghu motioned to accept them and Bruce seconded. The minutes were accepted by all present members.
 - Social Media: Just a reminder to like/follow us on Facebook and Instagram @sustainable_UNTHSC. Please tell others in your work and school circles as well.
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Announcements

- Subsidized Transit Pass Update: We were able to secure flexible purchasing options for both employees and students. Students receive a much larger discount on annual and monthly passes than employees. We were not able to do a scaling system for employees, but we can revisit this next year. Directions for purchasing a pass can be found on our website: <https://www.unthsc.edu/operations/sustainability/transportation/> or flyer: <https://www.unthsc.edu/operations/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021-Subsidized-HSC-Transit-Passes.pdf>
 - City of Fort Worth Award: The HSC Community Garden won the City of Fort Worth Award for Innovation in the Land Redevelopment Category! We were awarded at a virtual ceremony on November 4th.
 - Article in GreenSourceDFW: Betsy Friauf (former HSC employee, garden coordinator, and Sustainability Committee member) wrote a first person account of the HSC Community Garden to highlight the award. The article will be published on the site soon. If you're interested in getting these newsletters, visit greensourcedfw.org. It's a great way to stay informed with sustainability at a regional level.
 - Fort Worth Recycled Day: Fort Worth is hosting a series of events for Recycles Day. Full details can be found here: www.eventbrite.com/e/fort-worth-recycles-day-2020-tickets-125194270433
 - Possible Solar Project: Sandy gave an update to the committee that we are considering a solar project on a small scale. We have a surplus in the sustainability budget that we are wanting to use. However, solar is expensive, and the return on investment does not always make sense from a purely financial view because of how cheap we get our electricity. She will keep everyone updated on the progress. Derek asked how long it had been since we considered it, and it probably has been over 10 years. It's possible that it makes more sense now with technology advances.
 - Sustainability in the Campus Labs Update: We are moving forward with the freezer monitors, and they will get installed first of December. The Emergency freezers are on hold waiting on funding from the Division of Research, and we still plan to put out the Best Practice Brochure by the end of the year. `
 - Partnership with Welman Project: We are working on a partnership with this local nonprofit that gives used items to teachers. This is a great organization that focuses on upcycling, reuse, and providing supplies for teachers.
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Subcommittee Updates

- Please let Sandy know what subcommittee(s) you would like to serve on for this term. Participation on a subcommittee is not mandatory but strongly encouraged.
- HSC Community Garden – Celina gave a garden update. We have donated over 300 lbs of food this year and are the recipients of an award (see above).
- LEAP Subcommittee – No update. We'll meet in January.
- Education Subcommittee – We met in November, and Lorraine and Ellie will be co-chairs. Our purpose is to provide sustainability education to our HSC community as well as the larger Fort Worth Community such as in K-12 classrooms. There is an opportunity with FWISD in April. If there's a way we should be outreaching to students, let us know. Some students gave us contacts for the Facebook pages. We also discussed topic ideas for Earth Day.

MINUTES

- Earth Day Planning – Kim and Brittney will be co-chairs (possibly one more). We'll be doing a virtual platform April 12th through 26 (possibly through the 30th). There will be a giveaway for completing steps. We'll have live, scheduled sessions, on-demand videos, a plant-based eating challenge, and other opportunities such as e-waste recycling. If you have topic ideas, let Sandy know. We discussed some in the meeting, and those have been added to the Earth Day Notes such as with natural cleaners, raising kids the sustainable way, food delivery service tips, etc.).
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Sustainability Definition Discussion

- Last meeting when we were talking about defining "sustainability", a question was asked if we ever discuss moving away from "sustainability" to something like "regenerative practices". Since we did not have adequate time to discuss it then, we discussed it at this meeting.
 - We talked about the definition of sustainability that HSC Sustainability and how we describe it for campus which is:
 - Sustainability is all about operating in ways today that enable future generations to have the same (or better) opportunities than we have today. It is the "continued protection of human health and the environment while fostering economic prosperity and societal well-being" (Fiskel et al. 2012). Sustainability has 3 pillars of the environment, society and economy. We are focused primarily on the environmental component of sustainability although the social and economic components are woven throughout our initiatives and all that we do. As stated by the EPA, "everything that we need for our survival and well-being, depends either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment". We hold true to the desire our students expressed back in 2010 when they voted in a fee to fund more environmental improvements on campus. We do partner with other departments and organizations on campus to fully work towards sustainability in all its components.
 - We then talked about "regenerative practice" which is the state of being regenerated or restored. It's largely used in the agriculture space but is moving into other fields.
 - Rather than changing completely from sustainability, we talked about adding some bullet points under the definition to further explain how we work towards regeneration within sustainability. We talked about incorporating "regenerative practice" since sustainability can be seen in very broad terms. We'll continue the conversation as time goes by so we stay relevant and true to our mission and goals.
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Comments & Suggestions

- Derek asked about how sustainable practices are incorporated in larger campus projects. For example, the Library Courtyard has a lot of concrete with trees being removed. Why did it not incorporate more green space? We briefly talked about messaging as a group (really being student-led) to senior leadership and Dr. Williams. We did talk about asking the details first before any sort of formal request.
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Housekeeping

Meeting Adjourned at 1:00 pm. The next meeting will be in January (time and date TBD).