Sustainability Charter Committee

October 16, 2018

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

**Room 301, Communications Center**

(Office of Sustainability)

MEMBERS/LIAISONS PRESENT: Eden Dewald, Patrick Johanns, Matthieu Biger, Blake Rupe, Barbara Eckstein, Tony Senio, Julia Krist, Emily Manders, Ioannis Koutsonikolis, Stratis Giannakouros

OTHERS PRESENT: Heather Sander, Brian Thompson, Shaun Vecera, Don Guckert

Ex Officio: Beth

Guest: Glen Mowery

The committee addressed the 2020 Sustainability goals in detail, asking what work needs to be done in the remaining 800 days of that pledge.

Glen Mowery provided information about those goals pertaining to energy production and management: details on the goal to get off coal by 2025 and data on the turn toward less containment of energy use in the last two years than had been achieved in previous years of the pledge period.

Beth explained the disconnect between the original pledge for recycling and the complexity of the process of recycling itself in the present conditions. The original pledge sets the goal by weight and this proves to be an unsubtle, and perhaps unhelpful, measure of movement toward sustainability in the area of recycling.

Regarding the transportation goal the committee lamented the absence of a representative from Parking and Transportation to replace Dave Ricketts who retired. We noted that only the UI fleet is measured in this item of the pledge. Transportation on campus includes other vehicles: those used by commuters to campus (faculty, staff, students) and those used by UI employees in the exercise of their work assignments. We should be thinking about what Stratis called Scope 3 emissions, that is to say the full campus transportation picture.

In relation to goals about sustainability-related research and public engagement, the committee expressed concern that the full breadth of UI faculty and student activity in both areas is still unknown.

Regarding the educational, curricular and extracurricular, components of the pledge, we focused on courses for the general student population rather than those training as sustainability professionals of one kind or another. We proposed to encourage and facilitate, where we could, the proposal by faculty of sustainability-related courses within the existing General Education categories in CLAS. We proposed to start by encouraging the inclusion of a course in Environmental Justice, in the diversity category, and a course in systems thinking, in the quantitative and formal reasoning category.

Barbara asked those present to volunteer their time and attention to the promotion of at least one of the 2020 goals in the 800 days before the end of 2020.

Tony and Patrick volunteered to pursue the goals related to energy production and energy conservation management.

Matthieu, Patrick, and Blake all expressed interest to work with Beth on the recycling goal.

Matthieu also volunteered to pursue a better system for capturing all sustainability research and public engagement on campus.

Blake also expressed a commitment to working on extracurricular sustainability education for students.

Eden offered to initiate conversation with a faculty member who might teach Environmental Justice as a General Education course.

Barbara offered to take the question about sustainability courses in the existing Gen Ed categories to the Sustainability Certificate Advisory Committee that shares this commitment. Stratis also sits on that committee. She also expressed interest in working on energy conservation management.

The committee then turned, briefly, to brainstorming ideas for 2030 goals. The idea proposed and recorded but not discussed yet are

* LEAN curricula put to use, for example in orientation(s)
* Incentivize students to go “abroad” in Iowa and do projects in the state or Midwest
* Include sustainability knowledge as part of performance reviews for staff
* Convert UI grounds to prairie, pollinator gardens, bio-blasts…
* Take back the tap
* Building students’ opportunities to participate in sustainability efforts via courses or extra-curricular opportunities
* Institute a sur-charge on air travel devoting the proceeds, eg, to a sustainable utility system
* Hold an annual sustainability conference that includes all campus entities eg UICH, athletics as well as the colleges, FM, HR, Office of Diversity and Enrichment …
* Make use of Regents’ Sustainability Plan, including green purchasing and buying local
* Advertise the sustainability goals more, keeping them alive, provide frequent updates to students and all via social media
* Make all blue rec’s electronic including signatures (perhaps by 2020?)
* Create a consistent recycling infrastructure
* Increase sustainability influence on purchasing
* Investigate recyclable materials being made into energy pellets

The committee adjourned agreeing to follow up on its 2020 commitments at its November meeting and fold in the energy and expertise of committee members absent at this October meeting.