

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
Environmental Issues Committee

Minutes

Chair and Meeting Convener: Shelly Yankovskyy

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Via Microsoft Teams

Attending: Meredith Lancaster, Debbie Carruth, Chia-Ling Ho, Daniel Baracskey, Clell Wright, Eric Blix, Knicole Lee, Bradley Bergstrom, Tera Ray, Tracey Martin, Raymond Sable, Alan Rowe, Shannon McGee, Shelly Yankovskyy

1. Approval of Minutes from last year's meeting

Motion moved, and seconded.

Voting for the approval of the minutes was tabled due to not having a quorum.

2. Old Business

- a. Sub-committee reports

- i. Campus Beautification and Stewardship

Report by the subcommittee Chair, Brad Bergstrom:

Overgrowth by invasive exotic shrubs (privet, camphor and others) of the native plant area outside of Bailey to the east and in northeast of the building. Several large longleaf pines recently died from beetles and/or lightning. Need to restore the irrigation after clearing exotics because those lines have broken down.

Accomplished: The invasive overgrowth was cleared by a contractor with a forestry mulching machine, and the operation was completed yesterday. There is space now to plant new young pine trees, to make up for the attrition.

Next phase: To restore irrigation to that area of campus, which will buffer effects of future droughts on the longleaf pines and strengthen them against future beetle attacks. The periodic droughts had caused the trees to become more susceptible to beetles. It is a big project with part of it complete.

- ii. Resource Conservation/Recycling:

Report by the subcommittee Chair, Shelly Yankovskyy:

Blended the resource conservation and recycling subcommittees into one.

Accomplished: There is quite some information gathering with some potential projects that can carry forward. Some committee members helped to get that information, dining halls, and recycling. For on-campus housing, there were some barriers to recycling, maybe has to do with custodial stuff. Instead of having them in separate bins, they were all treated as one. It felt there was some discrepancy with regard to recycling. Got the data from Ray. Moving forward recycling and resource conservation can do more with gathering the data.

b. Feedback/Thoughts from committee members:

- The potential to host recycle/reuse awareness events perhaps through collaborating with student organization e.g. VSU Rotaract club.
- Could reinforce the 3 Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle).
- For example, Chick-fila in Valdosta (not elsewhere) always has only the paper cups (double-wall) or, only Styrofoam, the non-biodegradable trash.
- Can Franchises use other material? This has not been addressed, and can find out more about this.
- To get students who have concerns over the environment involved. They are consumers, and they have every right to suggest.
- The possibility to reach out to SGA to come up with names of the students, can have one student recommended by the SGA, as a non-voting member. No need to vote because it is allowed.
- Discussed if resource conservation and recycling subcommittees should merge, and agreed that they can go together as one.
- Need to update the existing environmental issues website – there are by-laws, special obligations, annual reports and is a good starting point for committee members, and to get an idea on what subcommittees have been involved in.
- Debra Carruth (Debi) volunteered to update the website.
- Suggestion: Chairing a subcommittee for website maintenance?
- Website information to be updated: membership, meeting documentation etc., last updated in 2016.

3. New Business

- a. Subcommittee leadership – Shelly Yankovskyy was chair of Resource conservation and recycling subcommittees – need someone else to chair this year.
- Discussed the role of the subcommittee chair: Will put together meeting, to decide goals that you would like to achieve or work toward, and will write those up, and move forward with the goals. If students are involved, students can contribute their ideas.
 - Chialing Ho volunteered to be the chair for the recycling subcommittee and proposed collaborating with VSU Rotaract Club, which she is the advisor to, to host awareness event, for example, to promote carrying Tumblers with them to reduce waste.
 - Discussed how the number of subcommittee members can vary, with no set rule for that. Especially if students are involved.
- b. Goals for Sub Committees/ the larger committee: Reference the by-laws on the website
- c. The idea of reaching out to students interested in joining was supported. Could get a few names from SGA.
- d. Areas of Concern
- Potential area for future work: energy usage?
 - Supported the idea that Debra brought up on choosing a theme for the year and focus on that theme.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55pm.

Minutes by Chialing Ho