

iWG Meeting Minutes – December 6th 2018

Attendees: Morgan White, Scott Willenbrock, Sean Reeder, Joey Kreiling, Micah Kenfield, Alma Sealine, Matthew Tomaszewski

Could not attend: Ximing Cai, Renee Wiley, John Dallesasse, Adrian Chendra, Jonah Messinger

1. Introductions

2. Approval of the Minutes

3. Summary of November 6th Sustainability Council Meeting

- a.** Morgan: There was a really good turnout, with Chancellor and Provost there, as well as several other important positions. Basic procedures were covered as well as who's on the council. Discussion items included:
 - i.** Overviewing all the campus prizes (Bee Campus, etc).
 - ii.** Second Solar Farm: there's an aim of having the RFP out in December.
 - iii.** Best management practices for UI farmland: a team is getting charged through ACES with the dean being supportive.
 - iv.** Living lab seed grant and green labs committee – we want to get a green labs coordinator.
 - v.** Sustainability minor, which is going well – about 100 students have gone through it.
 - vi.** iSEE just launched Teaching Sustainability portal.
- b.** Then the meeting got into iCAP goals. Several emissions and energy charts from iCAP portal were shown. Scott presented on PPAs, and how we could get more of them. The Chancellor then directed F&S to learn more about the details and impacts of buying more PPAs. Then the status of STARS efforts was shown. (We're in the middle of our peer institutions with STARS).
- c.** Scott: Illinois has become a hot bed for activity for developing solar farms because of FEJA. It's a great time to get in on the ground floor here to become a buyer. We have a PPA with an off campus wind farm, but we know from looking at the details that solar energy matches our use profile much better than wind, largely because we need to buy more electricity in the summer than in the winter. Many universities have done PPAs - the biggest ones include the UC system, Stanford, MIT. From interacting with a local vendor looking to build a solar farm near here, the prices they can offer are comparable to what we already pay for grid electricity. It wouldn't be a big money maker, but not a big money loser either. So the conclusion at the meeting was we need to look at the details more, or "take a deep dive" (Evan's words). Hopefully they can report back at the next Sustainability Council meeting in April.

- d. Morgan: One thing that we didn't get into at the council meeting is what those issues are that are being dug into. What needs to be looked at here? For one, we have a supercomputer. But it did not get a grant to be renewed, so the whole petascale facility will turn off soon. The campus peak energy usage will lose about 10% as a result. So the instantaneous demand will be smaller, but we're taking about annual amounts for clean energy consumption. Because of timing issues it's possible we might need to sell electricity back at several times during the year. Is there a limit on how much we're allowed to sell back? In sum, it is complicated, and this is what is being worked on.
- e. Morgan asked Micah to give a presentation about STARS in the spring to explain better how it works and how to get points. Micah agrees. Our goal is to get to platinum. Hopefully it can happen at the next meeting.

4. Updates

a. Student Efforts

- i. SSLC: A recent meeting fell through, but a few weeks ago several members had a conference call with Environment America who wanted UIUC to be a partner campus to push for getting to 100% renewable energy by 2050. They decided against it because EA wasn't really offering any support, just pushing to get this done. Joey wants to get more student involvement with what's already happening, like getting more students writing on the 2020 iCAP.
 - 1. Morgan reminded Joey that he can request agenda items, etc, on behalf of SSLC since he's a member of this committee. Joey recalled that at last meeting there was a discussion about getting an SSLC rep on the Senate committee for Campus Operations since SSC doesn't really fit this role anymore. Joey should talk to Adrian and Cathy Liebowitz and ask to have a conversation with them and John Dallesasse as to how to make this happen. Joey also asked if SSLC can get onto the Sustainability Council too, which Morgan thinks is a good idea. The iWG can put this forward as a recommendation. Everyone present agreed on this plan.
- ii. SSC: They have received 15-20 proposals this fall that went to step 2, totaling about \$1.7 million of funding. They are intending to allocate about \$450,000-550,000 of money at their next voting meeting. They have also just funded a micro grant to support native plants with the Student Farm. Some of the larger projects they're looking at include geothermal exchange for the Engineering Instructional Facility. An in depth explanation of this system at the planned building follows, as well as why we can't expand this system to other sites yet (not enough funding). Another project they'll be voting on is the Red Oak Rain Garden, where because of climate change the water is overflowing the sidewalk again. So the need is to raise the sidewalk.

b. [SWATeam Updates](#)

- i. Main updates can be found at the document hyperlinked above.
- ii. Morgan adds two updates for ECBS:
 - 1. They will be working with the American Advertising Federation (a student group) to promote energy conservation. There was a meeting with this student group recently, and they now have plans for them to promote energy conservation on social media.
 - 2. Chair Bill Rose met with Morgan and Ximing to talk about tightening up the numbers and metrics included in the iCAP. Specifically, standardizing what is included in them, and making sure campus boundaries for different metrics are the same (like space, energy, and water boundaries). He and Morgan will follow up to get the right numbers.
- c. **Recommendation Status Updates**
 - i. **[PWR013 Zero Waste Coordinator](#)**
 - 1. The assessment document is finished, and Ximing needs to send it to Mohammed. Should be going through to F&S for formal response soon.

5. Plans for 2020 iCAP Writing Process

- a. Originally Micah was going to share draft plans at this meeting, but because F&S wants to be more directly connected with iSEE on this process, this will be discussed further at the next meeting.

6. Carbon charge workshop discussion

- a. Matthew thought it went really well, and particularly that the presenter was impressed with our budget reform plan. A lot of good conversation, which really got people thinking about positive implications for the things we're looking to do.
- b. Scott: Yale doesn't ask units to pay their utility fees, like us currently. Their carbon charge is kind of trying to create an incentive system that our new budget model is creating. They named it as carbon charge. Sean thinks there's merit to having it branded this way. Scott agrees, and thinks that getting a carbon charge as milieu for a university has a positive impact and could bear fruit down the road. It would be tricky to implement here, because of the new budget model. It could be double jeopardy for a unit using more energy than their baseline.
- c. Morgan and Matthew explained how this new budget model will work for colleges and units, and how space will play into it.
- d. Morgan: Right now, the current model doesn't include systems & controls and retro commissioning. But the utilities budget is set through the utilities enterprise system. So there's two pieces, one is utilities charges and other is spaces charges. Where would a carbon charge get added? Is it possible to work this in? Scott mentions that Yale departments don't have a utility charge, but do have carbon charge. Matthew said having both here would confuse units. Some colleges would disproportionately benefit.

- e. Scott said with enough desire, we could implement something like a carbon charge. Even just having the words/concept out there that there's somehow a charge associated with carbon could have a big effect on units. It could further incentivize the lowering of utility use with the new budget model. It wouldn't really be that onerous on units – it's just a matter of branding.
- f. Further discussions of the merits of inserting a carbon charge or renaming a current charge into a carbon charge follows. Perhaps we should talk to the Yale representative (Peter Christenson) that gave the carbon charge talk to ask his opinions.