

iWG meeting 5-14-21

9-10:30 AM

Attendees: Ximing Cai, Morgan White, Brian Bundren, Qu Kim, John Dallesasse, Sandy Yoo, Meredith Moore

Guests: Justin Holding, Julija Sakutyte, Thurman Etchison, Maddy Liberman, Alexa Smith, James Trail, Sarthak Prasad

- Welcome and introductions
- Thank you graduating seniors, Joey, Jonah, and Creen!
 - The students were absent at the start of the meeting, but we wish them all well.
- SSLC – Maria and Joey
 - Meredith updated the group that the SSLC has elected four executive board members. They recently launched social media platforms to engage more student groups by the start of the fall semester.
 - SSLC also planning a Sustainability Summit in October (Campus Sustainability Month).
- [ZW003 GreenerOffice Delivery Service Enrollment](#)
 - **Comments needed on assessment**
- [ZW002 Join NERC Government Recycling Demand Champions](#)
 - What does this give to us?
 - Encourages organizations to purchase recycled-content and post-consumer resin goods
 - Zero Waste team recommends that we join as an “advocate” first.
 - Participating in the program gives us recognition for things that we are already doing.
 - It promotes the circular economy within our campus community.
 - We would be the first university to participate, which sets a positive example for others; we can continue to lead by example.
 - What would we be required to do?
 - Zero Waste team has discussed this recommendation with Aaron Finder, who is in support of this program.
 - Purchasing Office would work on optimizing our catalog (iBUY system), so the more sustainable options are displayed first.
 - We would be required to submit an annual report; however, it is more of a tracking mechanism and progress of any kind is acceptable.
 - At this point, it is not known who would be responsible for the reporting; this will need to be determined (one option is to assign a staff in the Purchasing Office to work as a coordinator for this effort). It would make the most sense for it to be the Purchasing Office.

- It would be helpful to know what we are already doing in terms of our sustainable purchasing in order to determine if we should stay at advocate level.
 - In addition to “advocate” and “champion” status, there is another option; State Recycling Organization Advocates commit to helping publicize the program and promote purchasing of products with post-consumer resin to their members and the public.
 - This is similar to what we are doing with SmartWay; we commit to help publicize the program, events, and messaging campaigns.
 - We can already get data from Office Depot / Office Max to understand which of our products qualify toward the sustainable purchasing program. Maddy said that Shantanu is communicating with other vendors to see if we could get similar data.
 - Maddy showed a draft internal environmental preferred procurement form that if implemented, users would fill out the form after each purchase; this would streamline the tracking process.
 - Checkboxes on the form included “is the item made of recycled materials?”
 - Since we would be the first university to participate, it could be possible to meet with the NERC program manager and there could be a different reporting system that works better for our campus.
 - Who would actually “join” the program? Purchasing, or a campus entity?
 - It makes sense that this would fall under the Purchasing Department.
 - **Next steps: We can route this recommendation for comments and transmit to the Purchasing Department since Aaron Finder is supportive of this initiative; Purchasing can decide which option is best (for example, we can start as a State Recycling Organization Advocate/advocate and consider champion status later on.**
- [ZW004 Reusable Dining Containers Program](#)
 - Justin Holding gave an overview about his motivation behind pursuing this initiative after noticing how many single-use items people use at restaurants or when dining-in.
 - Thurman said that Housing has been looking at implementing reusable containers very closely; Thurman and his Dining team think this a great idea moving forward and are discussing feasibility.
 - To put it into perspective, Housing Dining Services has purchased 1.5 million cardboard containers this year. They have to then pay to dispose of them, and the materials ultimately end up in the landfill.
 - Dining will continue to have a to-go option but needs to change how we offer this.
 - Earlier this year, Northwestern University representative presented at a Zero waste meeting since they have a reusable container program in place, even during the pandemic.
 - They use Ozzie products.
 - Thurman said that there are still some questions about implementing this on our campus; labor and space are potential constraints.
 - Like the Bevier Café program, students could potentially put down a deposit for a container and bring it each time they come to the Dining Hall. They would receive a sterilized container in return.
 - Sterilizing containers does require additional equipment/space and this would pose a labor concern.
 - James Trail said that were this to be implemented at the Union in addition to Dining, we would need to come up with a standard type of container. The labor would be a large undertaking.

- Clint Cissell at the Illini Union helps manage vendors, including Starbucks, and encourages the vendors to use reusables, but no standard is in place at this point.
- James said that we could add a process in the common area at the Union (in front of Starbucks) to start since the Union takes care of the tables. They could also add an end-take station for the containers.
- Labor and structural/infrastructural concerns would have to be discussed. The Union has a dish machine/sterilizer but it has not been used in a while.
- Could also discuss with CUPHD what their thoughts are; Justin said that he spoke with them and said there is not a lot of guidance. CUPHD says that you cannot bring your own reusable dining container, you would have to use the one provided.
- Unless there are restrictions with what can and cannot be used, the vendors are still going to prefer doing what is easiest/best for them.
- iWG or iSEE could host a conversation with Beckman, Union, Housing, and small restaurants to look at opportunities and how to address this?
- [LW003 Certified Green Building Certification](#)
 - Did not get the chance to discuss – will revisit
- Transportation iCAP Team presentation
 - See attached files
- Engagement iCAP Team presentation
 - See attached file. Some recommendations/documents are under preparation and could be submitted in summer.