

Sustainability Council Meeting  
December 13, 2022  
2:30 – 4 PM

*Attendees:* Chancellor Jones, Madhu Khanna, Elizabeth Murphy, Jennifer Fraterrigo, Meredith Moore, Eric Green, Luis Rodriguez, Susan Martinis, Rob Roman, Morgan White, Ehab Kamarah, Daphne Hulse, Tim Knox, Danita Brown Young, Mike DeLorenzo, Lowa Mwilambwe, William Bernhard, Paul Redman, Jeffrey Jenkins, Venetria Patton, Owen Jennings, Jack Reicherts, Rashid Bashir, Adam Davis

1. Zero waste (Jennifer Fraterrigo)
  - a. Progress report
    - i. Pouring operations data includes Athletics, Dining, Catering, Housing, Union
      1. 500,000 individual bottles of water sold annually
      2. Plastics increasing, aluminum cans decreasing
    - ii. 20-30% of the campus solid waste is getting recycled
      1. Compostable products are currently not getting composted – there is a need for a large scale composting program.
    - iii. Started collecting waste from Athletics summer 2022
    - iv. Drivers of demand
      1. ZW005 – drinking water survey and water taste test (flavor and convenience were two primary factors) and half of participants could not tell the difference between bottled and tap water
      2. Additional filling stations needed
    - v. Discussions with Coke
      1. Focusing on engagement and plastic diversion
    - vi. Partnering with Athletics
      1. Zero Waste Basketball Game – Nov. 14, 2022
      2. Next step: develop program for recycling in tailgating areas
  - b. Next steps
    - i. Continue strengthening relationship with Coke and Athletics
  - c. Discussion: waste reduction strategies that we could pursue with a focus on plastic
    - i. Reduce demand through behavior change & more convenient alternatives
    - ii. Identifying opportunities to increase recycling
    - iii. Regarding Athletics/follow-up on Zero Waste Basketball game
      1. Bottles and cans often get left in bleachers and then thrown away
      2. Need for permanent recycling infrastructure
      3. Need for organic waste option (compostable ware)
      4. Need for available alternatives – absence of filler stations, policy for people being allowed to bring in water bottles (allowed but not widely communicated)
    - iv. We are cognizant about the potential revenue hit and need to investigate this further.
      1. Planning to conduct waste audits

2. Energy planning (Ehab Kamarah)
  - a. Progress report
    - i. Completed five EPCs (\$107 mil investment), return on investment was over \$200 mil
    - ii. iWG and Energy iCAP Team recommended hiring a consultant to help develop Clean Energy Plan
  - b. Next steps
    - i. Solar Farm 3
      1. 50,000 Mwh/yr with solar and wind; need 90,000 MWh/yr to reach iCAP goal
    - ii. Energy Performance Contract – proposed 7 buildings, upgrade to HVAC and control systems
      1. Audit + implementation = \$40 mil estimated project cost
    - iii. Working on new Facility Condition Assessment
      1. Collaborated with System and other U of I institutions to together work with a consultant
  - c. Discussion: scenarios for achieving cleaner energy
    - i. We know that we have not done everything that we can to reduce our energy usage? There is still low hanging fruit.
    - ii. What types of additional energy reductions we should work on? Options include:
      1. Increase funding for F&S energy conservation programs (centralized conservation and efficiency projects)
      2. Increase funding in Revolving Loan Fund
        - a. \$5 mil exists; \$1 mil at separate fund at the Union
      3. Support more incentives and rewards for individual actions (Energy Conservation Incentive Program, Freezer Challenge, Illini Lights Out)
        - a. With the new budget reform, there is now a financial incentive to reduce energy consumption in the units.
      4. Cost-share/match funding with SSC projects that reduce campus energy use
        - a. Jack Reicherts reported that SSC supports this idea.
    - iii. Facility Condition Assessment should be completed before RFP to ensure best outcome
    - iv. Susan Martinis asked if on capital project proposals, is there an energy reduction section to help factor in sustainability when prioritizing projects or making decisions?
      1. Ehab Kamarah responded that our standards exceed the state minimums by 20% and all new buildings are at least LEED Silver.
      2. By adding new buildings, we usually take one offline (which is typically less efficient).
      3. Are there situations where we may have to choose less costly, but less energy efficient projects?
        - a. Utility reduction factors are included in analysis to determine priority projects.

- b. Mike DeLorenzo responded that when analyzing projects, deferred maintenance is taken into account.

### 3. Sustainability in Campus Strategic Plan (Madhu Khanna)

- a. How can we incorporate sustainability and the iCAP into the Illinois Strategic Plan?
- b. Sustainability is currently not as visible to external audiences – we strive to reach the entire population to have the greatest impact
- c. How can we extend this culture to make sustainability more front and center – included in strategic thinking and more cross-cutting?
- d. William Bernhard agreed that we should identify ways to interweave sustainability across the four primary goals/platforms.
  - i. For example, DEI is not called out separately, but instead is embedded across the goals.
  - ii. Part of larger goal to become a natural part of our operations; sustainability could bridge across the areas of emphasis.
  - iii. Madhu Khanna responded that we would love to engage with this process to try and make this happen.

### 4. Old business

- a. Sustainability general education requirement (Luis Rodriguez)
  - i. Doesn't increase number of hours but this requirement would be built into other gen ed categories
  - ii. Increase visibility while potentially incorporating sustainability in existing courses
  - iii. Rashid Bashir proposed a certificate in sustainable design at the undergraduate level, talking with Rachel Switzky about this program
  - iv. iSEE has discussed the potential for a graduate certificate in sustainability
- b. Sustainable land management report (Adam Davis)
  - i. Next steps:
    - 1. Agronomy Handbook chapter on sustainable farming practices
      - a. Dr. Giovanni Preza-Fontes, Asst. Professor of Field Crop Extension Agronomy, potentially interested in having his group work on this. Will need postdoc support.
    - 2. Outreach with university tenants
      - a. Work with interested tenants on University-owned land to showcase selected sustainable land management practices in the updated Agronomy Handbook.