

MINUTES

President's Council on Sustainability

Meeting of September 22nd, 2025 3:30pm

Present: Kate Stoneman, Kevin Caffrey, Diana Binette, Pamela Grothe, Suzanne Sumner, Eric Bonds, Amira Said, Cara Landsberg, Brian Ogle, Jeremy Larochelle, Lia Fowler, Sushma Subramanian, Alan Griffith, Pamela Taggart, Melva Kishpaugh, Samira Fallah, George March

Introductions

Annual Report/Budget Information Follow-Up

While UBAC recommended a budget for PCS, the BOV did not approve it. Instead, co-chairs can submit specific requests for funds through to Jeff McClurken.

Subcommittee Overview

The subcommittees will remain the same as the 2024 – 2025 school year: Composting, Finance and Sustainability, Curricular/Academic, and Student Engagement.

Climate Action Plan Draft Feedback

Alan Griffith wants the PCS to review and provide comments on the CAP for one more week before revising the document. He recommends looking out for any language that suggests that the president has already agreed to recommendations within the document and removing them. The CAP should be a supplement to the PCS annual report that is given to the president every year.

Alan Griffith has created a second document with the academic portion of the CAP that will go to the UFC and will not be shown to the BOV. This document mirrors the recommendations that will be given to the president but also includes the academic goals instead of administrative goals. He will send it out to the group soon for revising. He plans to share it with the UFC in a few weeks.

Both documents say that the PCS becomes the center for oversight and action for all the recommendations within the documents.

Alan Griffith suggests creating a statement for why the document is important and why inaction would have consequences. We could include information about the Clean Economy Act, how UMW is supposed to be a leader, and how UMW could be left behind as other institutions move forward within sustainability.

The solar panel project has been shut down and energy performance contract is at a standstill. We can still push to try and get progress to be made on the energy performance contract.

Renewable Energy Action Petition Update

The petition currently stands at 305 signatures. The Sustainable Bingo was successful in collecting signatures as well as getting students engaged in sustainability. Faculty and staff are encouraged to show their classes the petition as well as put them on department Canvas pages.

Princeton Review Feedback

Send any ideas you have on the Princeton Review report to Brenda Togo.

Composting Update

There is a DEQ grant in process right now and the IMPACT grant for community composting is being put to use with Brenda. Amira Said is collaborating with other groups like Green Crew and Jonathan Stevens to bring more awareness to composting on campus.

Individual Updates

Amira Said went to a meeting with students from all universities in Virginia where they discussed university priorities. She said sustainability was not made a top priority because other universities already have funding in place for sustainability and UMW does not.

The sustainability committee in SGA is going to be inactive this semester due to a limited number of senators in the SGA.

Eric Bonds did research over the summer looking at rooftop solar panels at different school districts in the region, along with Germana Community College . Many programs he looked at have created very successful solar projects that power the school systems and save money. This can be broadened to other state schools to make the comparison between successful solar projects and UMWs lack of solar power.

Amira Said says she can communicate information to the President and BOV through her role as the SGA President and to let her know if there is anything she can do to help.

What are other avenues to bring up PPAs and the CAP besides just submitting the report. Time to invite Brian Gorham to our next meeting.

Lia Fowler wants to host another sustainable clothing swap in the Fall and wants to make sure it is on everyone radar to look out for in the near future.

Mary Becelia wants to remind students to attend the Career Fair on Thursday 9/24/25 in the CRUC.

Brian Ogle has been looking into the proposals for data center construction in the area. Seems like localities have an interest in the easy path to revenue without raising taxes, but localities cannot regulate data centers as an industry.

Eric Bonds talks about how a natural gas power plant is being proposed in Chesterfield. Students should think about getting involved in tracking these power plants. Amira Said thinks we could host an event where students write letters to city council sharing their concerns on the construction.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33 pm