

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE
University Environment Committee
Meeting of January 13th 2020, 1:00 - 2:30 pm
Online meeting (Zoom)

Attendance: Thomas Wilson (Chair), Ria Bhutra, Clifford Knee, Sarah Battaglia, Michelino Puopolo, Frederick Walter, Matthew Eisaman, Gary Kaczmarczyk, Heidi Hutner, Jeanne Charoy.

Meeting called to order at 1:05PM

Consideration of the December minutes: Sarah Battaglia made a motion to approve the minutes. Michelino Puopolo seconded. The minutes were approved without opposition.

Chair report. Thomas Wilson proposed that the committee identifies specific topics to work on in the Spring and committee members can volunteer to serve on the teams for these topics. The goal is to have some things deliverable by the first of May. Teams could generate a report after consideration by the committee. Projects that don't get any volunteers by today or the next meeting (i.e., February) will be put hold until somebody takes them on. Heidi Hutner suggested that the committee circulates a list of the possible projects.

Proposed projects:

- The Ashley Schiff preserve and Lake Brianna projects: These two projects are ongoing and Thomas Wilson and Malcom Bowman will continue to lead them.
- A research project that aims to gather information about the environmental advantages of remote work: Matthew Eisaman, Mona Ramonetti and Sarah Battaglia will take the lead on this project. In addition, this project may look at parking on campus. Wilson asked whether parking has been better on East Campus. Battaglia answered that it has become much worse because there is a twenty person allotment for some programs and they must keep track of what students get parking what month and alternate. Wilson added that students who do clinical work must still come to campus, but students who can be remote would save parking space.
- Frederick Walter is interested in a project that would address the bicycle aspect and parking aspect on campus. Something that addresses general transportation issues, not necessarily in relation to remote work. When, in a year from now, the pandemic is not the enormous change agent that it is currently, problems that existed before it may resurge and now would be the time to come up with solutions for them.
- The efficiency, recycling and liveability subgroup could focus on changes in habits and educational materials. For example, a project could focus on water bottle use on campus. Several colleges are banning water bottles on their campuses and install more water stations instead. Wilson mentioned that a coordinator on a water station project had presented information on this to the committee, so the committee could contact them again. Jeanne Charoy will work on this project.
- The committee has been receiving requests for advocacy (or taking positions of advocacy) that are beyond the scope of the University. For example TIAAADivest! and a

group called Water Watch have both requested the committee's attention. Wilson suggested that a working group should be in charge of evaluating these requests, discussing the pros and cons and bringing their findings to the committee so that it can pass recommendations to the University Senate Executive Committee. Hutner is interested in participating in this group, since these requests have come through her and she is well connected in that world. Eisaman is also interested in participating. Wilson added that there are a limited number of opportunities to get the Senate's attention, so the committee should make sure that it uses these opportunities optimally.

Committee members may suggest other topics or ideas in subsequent meetings. .

Open discussion of the COVID situation: Wilson mentioned that the vaccine is being distributed - some of his family members have received their first or second doses. Everyone over the age of 65 is eligible to receive them now. However, there are no appointments available. Stony Brook University will have a vaccine point of distribution (POD) at the R&D park. University instructors who teach in person are also eligible. However, in-person staff members are not included for now. The next phase should include all university employees who are not remote. Gary Kaczmarczyk mentioned that eligibility is regulated at the State level. The plan for distribution is being changed. There will be availability. The POD at the R&D park will open on Monday (1/18/2021) and stay open 12 hours per day, 7 days per week. It is operated by the NYS department of Health. The distribution of the vaccine itself is done by SBU Medicine following the directives of the State for the distribution. Kaczmarczyk added that everyone on campus has done a great job containing the virus and that hopefully we will get more vaccines rolling out and 2021 will be a better year.

Wilson said that, as mentioned in the last meeting, Stony Brook University is the only big SUNY campus that made it through the semester without having to go to all-remote instruction, and that positivity rates on campus are as good as anyone could hope for. Wilson thanked everyone for what they have done to make this happen. Kaczmarczyk added that it has been a team effort. Walter said that on the vaccine eligibility website, SBU is not yet listed as a provider. Kaczmarczyk said that once the state organizers get to a point where they know SBU is ready to be up and running, what's on the website will change. It's not clear yet when SBU will be listed as an actual site.

Old and new business. There was no new or old business.

The next meeting was scheduled for the second Wednesday of February (2/10/2021) at 1 o'clock.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Charoy