

**STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE**  
**Campus Environment Committee**

Meeting of November 13th, 2019, 1:00-2:20 pm - draft rev 2, 12/03/2019.  
Provost's Conference Room, Administration 407

MINUTES

Attendance: Tom Wilson (Chair), Frederick Walter, Sean Deery (acting Secretary), Michelino Puopolo, Mona Ramonetti, Dmitri Tsybychev, Gary Kaczmarczyk, Shirley Lim, Matthew Eiseman, Larry Swanson, Joanna Kaczorowska, Malcolm Bowman, Syeda Hasan, Xinwei Mao

Meeting called to order at 1:04pm.

Minutes from the 10/09/19 meeting were approved with no edits after a motion by Hasan and second by Tsybychev.

**Chair Report**

Chairperson Tom Wilson gave an update about the November University Senate meeting. At the meeting, Wilson updated the Senate about the infrastructure and parking issues that the Environmental Committee is working on. Senior VP of Finance and Administration Kathleen Byington also gave her own presentation about campus parking issues and infrastructure issues. Two main points included a proposed road through Clair's Woods that would lead directly to the entrance of the Research and Development Park and the projection that the campus' wastewater treatment plant will be at 90-95% of capacity after current construction is completed. Wilson asked Byington if the Environmental Committee could be represented on the Ad Hoc parking committee being formed by the University, and Byington agreed that the Environmental Committee should be involved in the process. Since the Ad Hoc committee is starting in the coming weeks, Wilson suggested some preliminary solutions which included; having students or residents park at Smith Haven Mall, expanding LIRR commuter service, create financial incentives for carpooling, and add a parking garage next to the LIRR station).

**Sub-committees**

*The Natural Environment group* has water level data from Lake Brianna/East Recharge Basin from 09/09/19 to 11/07/19. During this period, there were 19 days with rain, but not every rain event raised water levels. Students will start to correlate the rising water levels to rainfall amount. Wilson will eventually get a GPS survey to tie to water level rise to the actual height of the water, not just where the sensor is. Frederick Walter suggested having a measure of the soil moisture. Gary Kaczmarczyk pointed out that over half of the campus drains to this stormwater basin. Malcolm Bowman asked about the catch basins of the football field, but they are likely not linked to the stormwater basin.

Also, members of the Senate Executive and Environmental Committee met with Interim President Bernstein about officially designating the Ashley Schiff Preserve as a conservation

area. Bernstein said he will not encroach on the Preserve, but he does not feel comfortable acting on the preservation effort as an Interim President. The Environment Committee hopes to use state legislation that was drafted on this subject close to 10 years ago, but was never introduced. The goal is to have legislation ready to vote on when the next President of Stony Brook University is confirmed. Assemblyman Steve Engelbright will likely be our main point of contact at the state level, but the Environment Committee needs to confirm authorization and reporting procedures from the Office of Government and Community Relations. Other options would include using students to push for the legislation because they enjoy a blanket approval for lobbying elected officials, asking the Senate Executive to have Office of Government and Community Relations give staff the same blanket approval to contact legislators as students, or looking into becoming designated as a University Lobbyist.

*The Efficiency, Recycling, Livability group* will be reorganizing under the leadership of the new Coordinator Jeanne Charoy. Graduate Student Sean Deery overviewed the previous projects (energy reporting, campus gardens, reusable smallware program), but suggested that the next phase of projects will likely focus on education during orientations and sustainability education written into the learning outcomes of every academic major. Chairperson Wilson suggested that Lauren Osa has a team of students that have been tracking the water bottle refill stations' usage. Wilson also suggested that branded reusable bottles/mugs should be given out at orientation and graduation. Shirley Lim mentioned that the water bottle refill stations are not installed in some buildings and the stations that are installed are generally dirty or have an expired filter. Gary Kaczmarczyk reminded the committee that Fix It can be used to report dirty refill stations or stations in need of a filter replacement.

*Transportation group* was still looking for a Coordinator and Mona Ramonetti volunteer to take the position. This will be a very active committee over the next few semesters.

*The Research group* is looking into other campuses who have integrated on-campus renewable energy production. The University's co-generation contract with Calpine Energy expires in 2023, and the University is trying to renegotiate the contract by Spring 2021 to allow renewable energy production. Malcolm Bowman pointed out that the Research & Development Park has the ability to integrate renewables sooner than the rest of the campus because of it's relatively new acquisition. Also, Bowman would like to ask Calpine if educational renewable energy units could be put to use/on display around campus. Chairperson Wilson would like the research group to;

- Pull together all of the Ashley Schiff Preserve information into one Google Drive,
- Research the Port Jefferson shuttle to figure out the costs, ridership, routes, and future plans.

Bowman suggested a shuttle bus from Ronkonkoma to SBU, scheduled to meet each arriving and departing train from morning to evening.

## **Guest Speaker**

Guest - Larry Swanson, Director of Waste Management and Management Institute, School of Marine and Atmospheric Science.

Swanson gave a presentation about the University's wastewater treatment plant which was built in 1989 in Sewer District 21 as an oxidation ditch with tertiary treatment serving over 20,000 people on campus and in surrounding homes/businesses near Route 25A. The plant on campus is designed to manage 2.5 MGD with an average flow over 1.7 MGD. The University added a TMDL nitrogen treatment extension to the plant in 2014 after the EPA warned of high levels of nitrogen in the plant's effluent. The EPA could further restrict nitrogen levels which would be hard for the University to cope with given the facility's design. If further restrictions are put in place, the University has predetermined locations to discharge excess wastewater into the ground near Stony Brook Harbor.

Currently, the discharge from the wastewater treatment plant on campus is sent to the Port Jefferson Wastewater Treatment Plant where it undergoes Ultra Violet disinfection before being discharged into the Long Island Sound. Close to 10 years ago, it was reported that the University had the largest amount of radioactive iodine discharge in the country because of the medical waste being excreted into the Hospital's wastewater. The Hospital has since changed its policy with patients - allowing them to leave the hospital after radiation treatment which has greatly reduced the Hospital's radioactive discharge.

Some questions that were raised included Malcolm Bowman's inquiry into whether or not the University has considered replumbing the buildings so treated water could be used for toilet flushing, landscaping, and other uses to which Swanson replied by saying replumbing would be very expensive and has not been considered. What has been considered is using treated water to irrigate local golf courses, which Swanson is not backing because of the potential exposure to radiation and wastewater. Frederick Walter asked about the nitrogen production of the University compared to other nitrogen sources (like fertilizers and cesspools) to which Swanson pointed to a subwatershed student conducted by Suffolk County which overviews the contributors of nitrogen to Long Island's watershed. Xinwei Mao was concerned about the ability of the campus' wastewater treatment plant to capture nitrogen, but Swanson suggested that the Suffolk County Department of Health Services has to report and comply with nitrogen output. Finally, Wilson wants to get clarification on the issue of nitrogen output versus plant capacity after all campus construction is completed.

## **New Business**

- European Union is proposing a ban on all single use plastics
- Michael Youdleman - Coordinator of Recycling
- Might try to get Tony Gentile to speak about single use reduction, gardens, other.
- Might try to get MTA to communicate with us about reverse commuting.

Next meeting is 12/04/19 at 1pm in Administration 221.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Deery

## **ATTACHMENT - MAR 392 LIST OF IDEAS**

### **MAR 392 - Waste Management Issues**

**Fall 2019**

**Instructor: R. Lawrence Swanson**

#### **Ways to Improve Recycling and Reduce Waste on the SBU Campus**

- Update Stony Brook's recycling website about its policy on glass as well as the signs above recycling trash cans to show that glass is no longer being recycled
- Provide more trash cans on campus, not only in main areas like the SAC plaza
- Include programs about recycling in first year orientation sessions
- Ban plastic water bottles and install water fill station systems in every building
  - Clean and service water foundations to encourage use (water fountains are often too dirty for people to want to use them)
  - Eliminate plastic water bottles in vending machines or cafeteria areas
- At night in the dining halls, continue to use washable plastic dishes instead of switching to disposable paper plates
- Provide incentive for students to collect plastic bottles
  - Begin a program where students can collect and redeem plastic bottles in exchange for money added to their meal plans (Wolfie wallet)