**Waste Reduction & Recycling Working Group Minutes**

**Wednesday, October 14th, 2009 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Administrative Building III, Room 124A**

**C**ampus   
**E**nvironmental   
**S**ustainability   
**T**eam

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**Introductions:**

Began at 3:35 PM

**Intro (Nessa Stone):**

Thanked everyone for being here to establish the groundwork and vision for the Waste Reduction and Recycling Working Group.

**Present:**

Nessa Stone - Operations Manager, Waste Reduction and Recycling, Chair WRR Working Group

Bill Beardall – Director, Grounds Management

Todd Becker – Emergency Manager, Environmental Health & Safety

Barry Olson – Associate Director, University Housing - Facilities

Lisa Eberhart – Dietitian, Dining and Catering Operations

Tom Karches – Systems Specialist, Infrastructure, Systems & Operations, OIT

Rhonda Sherman – Extension Solid Waste Specialist, Bio & Agri Engineering

Tracy Dixon – Sustainability Director, Sustainability

Meghan Cain – Student Intern, Waste Reduction & Recycling, Student Intern, RE3

Analis Fulghum – Education & Outreach Coordinator, Waste Reduction & Recycling

Aubrey Southwell - Customer Service Representative & Office Manager, Waste Reduction & Recycling

**Background and Working Groups Roles Moving Forward (Nessa Stone)**

History:

CEST has been in existence for several years but newly formed in 2009 with the mission to create and implement strategies for sustainability on campus - reports directly to the chancellor. The working groups will be the driving force for sustainability on campus. Collective working group plans go to the Chancellor and afterwards will go to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Looking Forward:

2010-2015 The Sustainability Strategic plan outline will encompass all working plans when complete. Our objective is to have the WRR draft presentation ready to present by Nov. 11th to the CEST group. Note that other CEST working groups are seeking more participation. Refer to CEST webpage frequently as a source for information. Sustainability Strategic plan is the WRR working group 1st priority.

Getting Perspective:

Video was played describing how a significant number of individuals will deviate from their habits for fun (compared to the average day, 66% more people chose the stairs over the escalator when the stairs were made fun – turned into piano keys) - “The Fun Theory”.

Sustainability must be geared toward working for the people, the economy (budget is important), and the environment. Establish perspective… when we think about this we have to think BIG, and about all the issues, don’t get bogged down by the small stuff.

Brief history of WRR:

1973 – Trash was dumped onto tables and employees would pull the recyclables (aluminum, steel cans and glass) from the trash to then go to the market. Discontinued due to efficiency and cost – wasn’t a sustainable concept.

1980’s – Picked recyclables out of bins at E.S. King Village instead of trash.

1990’s – Intent: University would divert all the yard waste and food waste from campus. Compost site facility opened on Inwood Road off Lake Wheeler (due to compliance issues the site has been downgraded and is now permitted as a yard waste facility). The goal has been in place a long time to divert yard waste and food waste from campus, with this group we would like to move forward with this idea.

2001 – Waste Reduction and Recycling office creation. Initiated a focus on campus education, following customer oriented processes, and upgrading and adding programs. Spent time and put capital investment into programs.

**Current Operations (Nessa Stone)**

Major recycling operations are performed in-house. This is very effective because we can control problem areas, numbers, figures, data collections, etc. We have our own roll-offs, and processes for bulk debris, scrap metal, furniture, office clean-out collections. Yard waste facility on campus (Inwood Road) collects all the tree trimmings, clippings and yard waste generated by the campus.

**Education and Outreach (Analis Fulghum)**

Described the great programs on campus listed below and directed everyone to our website which describes programs further. If students, faculty or staff need more information, call our office, we are available to present on programs.

We Recycle – founded 2003, volunteers go around and collect cans/bottles from tailgaters before home football games.

America Recycles Day – Reynolds coliseum carriage way, Nov. 13th, electronics recycling drive.

Pack-n-go sale – WRR partners with housing to divert valuable materials (which would have otherwise been discarded in the trash) from students. Hold a sale and the proceeds go to campus sustainability programs.

RecycleMania – Held January through March, RecycleMania is a nationally recognized competition with over 200 schools participating, this is our 3rd year, ranked 23rd last year in 1 of the areas, NCSU beat UNC in 3 of 4 categories.

Waste Audit – “landfill on the lawn”, we dump out dumpsters and volunteers dig through and tell us how much can be recycled or composted. Great if we want to audit buildings to gauge how well we’re doing.

Friday fest: Work closely with RE3 for this event. The city of Raleigh also attended.

**Discussion**

Barry Olson described how great move-in and move-out are, gives additional options for programs and educates our students about how much material is discarded and how much material can be diverted from the landfill.

Analis Fulghum – Great way for everyone to have fun and not be preached to about how to recycle.

Nessa Stone – Programs are an instrumental way to put faces to recycling and engage the students, it’s really what makes us come back everyone and do this.

Bill Beardall – Absolutely education part of it is important, otherwise it’s just trash.

Analis Fulghum - Spoke about diversion rate. As our office grows and programs expand we’ve seen a rise.

Rhonda Sherman inquired about the reason behind the jump – doubled diversion from 2002-2003 and 2003-2004.

Nessa Stone – Explained the increase was caused by the transition from when beverage containers went from needing to be sorted and separated, to the new commingled bins that collect bottles and cans in 1 stream.

Tom Karches – Does anyone come behind and pull items that can be recycled out of the trash? Or when something is thrown away is it then on its way to the landfill?

Nessa Stone confirmed when something is thrown in the trash it is then sent to the landfill.

Nessa Stone – Even with campus growth over the years our landfill totals are staying the same, recycling numbers are increasing more significantly than the landfill bills.

Analis Fulghum – described materials diverted from the landfill via the graph for 2007-2008.

Bill Beardall – Clarified C&D does not include bond projects, but other construction on campus.

**Perspective**

Video with purpose to propose the question “will more people throw their rubbish in the trash bin if it is more fun to do?” Verified that collection in this 1 can collected 72kg (41 kg more than the bin down the street) - proving if you make it fun people will change their habits. Volkswagen sponsored the ad.

Perspective Explanation (Nessa):

The video gives us an idea that we need to look at the bigger picture and not get bogged down by small issues. We have a lot to accomplish in a short amount of time and we should look at how things affect the whole university and not so much individuals.

Let’s have fun with this group and the ideas. Describing social change, we would like to come up with a catch phrase on how to describe “reduce, reuse recycle”. We receive many questions and comments on *how to dispose of certain items*, but we’d like to educate people to think about more, *is there an alternative item that could have been used? Did you buy the right product? Was this a necessary product?* Let’s make sure everyone understands the importance of the other questions.

We also get many comments *there’s not enough recycling bins on campus*, a positive response to promote ideas is *maybe there are too many trash cans on campus*.

Another frequently asked question, *why don’t we recycle Styrofoam?* Let’s give alternatives in the purchasing of products. Create a loop in the packaging system, box and crate as an alternative to Styrofoam, etc.

Composting – huge impact on campus. We don’t have a compost program on campus in dining halls, and only small scale for events. What we hear from the campus community is it’s time to have it.

**Discussion**

Lisa Eberhart – Composting is going to happen and that there’s no choice but for it to happen.

Barry Olson – Everyone of our restrooms produces paper trash, but housekeepers take all the bags and trash it, could we look for potential for that paper to be composted?

Nessa Stone - This is great, how do we get there, let’s set goals and change the idea of how we handle waste.

Bill Beardall – had a dream that the level 4 compost site was not large enough and too far out. Noted this year we downgraded from a level 4 compost site to a yard waste site permit.

Nessa Stone – there are other options; the intent with the site is that it would be an in-house facility, we don’t have the resources or capital currently, but potentially we could benefit from contractors. This is a big topic that will make a big impact. This year’s Friday Fest was great with their composting, worked out well, large group of diverse people attended the event and where there was waste stations set up for trash, composting and recycling. The sites were monitored and they were able to pull 36% of the stream for composting. If this gives a snapshot of what is possible on campus, this is a good indicator for the potential for composting. Brooks picked up the compost.

Nessa Stone – a household battery recycling program will be launched soon, WRR is partnering with housing to establish the program in residence halls, Tally and the library. Also e-recycling (CD’s, diskette’s, cell phones) is collected for recycling on campus. This is not something we advertise on a large scale because it’s an expensive program, but we will be moving forward with the expansion of both of those recycling programs in the residence halls on campus.

Wolf Village, the dining halls, and the brickyard are currently the only outdoor recycling on campus. We get a lot of requests for walkway bins, it’s something we’d like to explore and try and obtain approval to move forward with. Those are examples of some of the big programs.

Rhonda Sherman – was there a jump in recycling rate when deskside bins were introduced?

Analis Fulghum - unfortunately no because right around the same time the economy got bad so less paper is being used and the 2nd side is being used more frequently – which is good but explains the lack of jump.

Nessa Stone - Paper, bottles and cans, and metals we receive a rebate off of, which helps supplement salaries. WRR pays for e-waste and batteries.

Nessa Stone – we would like everyone, including ourselves to get a basic understanding of the mandates and commitments for waste reduction and recycling. Specifically there are laws, ordinances and executive orders that impact recycling; these impact how we can move forward and we need to keep them in mind. Asked that everyone look into the programs WRR has and why we do them, and to review policies other universities have approved and abide by.

Resources will be posted on the CEST website. Other resources listed in presentation, the aashe.org website is a great resource but requires a log-in.

Lisa Eberhart will contact Meredith and Dining to begin looking into composting program.

**Next Meeting (Nessa Stone)**

We’ll conduct a SWOT analysis to look at planning and decide if it’s sound; we’ll also take a look at the diversion rate. An objective for our WRR working group is to come up with a goal diversion rate. Then we’ll set milestones to help us work toward achieving this diversion rate. We should start thinking of ways to reach a number that is both feasible but high enough that we need to do some work to achieve it. Please come back with ideas to discuss strategies to achieve the diversion rate.

Let’s set aside an hour and a half for the next meeting.

Barry Olson will be gone the last week of October.

Rhonda Sherman needs to leave campus by 3:15 the next 2 Wednesdays.

Nessa Stone asked that if you cannot come to the meeting please do submit ideas beforehand so we can discuss.

General Consensus:

Two shorter meetings may be easier to schedule than 1 long meeting. 3:00 or 4:00 works well for everyone. The last Wednesday in October and the 1st Wednesday in November could potentially work for most.

Moving forward meetings will be set monthly.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Aubrey Southwell.