

Sustainable Blacksburg – General Meeting Minutes

16 October 2012 – 5:30 to 6:30 PM

Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive, Blacksburg, VA.

Present: Bill Claus, Kimberley Homer, Denny Cochrane, Starflower O'Sullivan, Christy Cochrane, Dave Roper, Rob Lowe, Lynn Brammer, Bruce Wicker, Marquita Hill, Su Clauson- Wicker, Cathy Jacobs (total 12)

Claus: Welcome and introduction to speaker, Denny Cochrane, Director of the VT Office of Energy and Sustainability (OES)

Cochrane: Personal history and path to leadership of the VT Office of Energy and Sustainability

Cochrane: Sustainability at VT – history, accomplishments and goals.

- The 2007 *Climate Action Commitment* set in motion a VT vision and vow to become a leader.
- Sustainability initiatives are included in 2012-2018 University 6 Year Strategic Plan, *A Plan for a New Horizon* – an indicator of their importance to the VT Administration.
- VT received a B+ grade/Silver rating from the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS), part of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). Scored 61 points out of a possible 100; a few points short of gold rating and the highest in VA.
- Named a Tree Campus USA by the Arbor Day Society
- Princeton Review information indicates that 70% of college students strongly consider sustainability efforts of potential schools; VT was selected as one of 16 Green Honor Roll schools in 2012
- Review of Sustainability Week events, 2007 through 2012

Claus: review of 2012 SB Activities; request for input from participants

- New website to be launched by end of 2012
- Fund solicitation will be tied to website launch
- **SB Reads**, a newly created book club, read *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story*. Participation was low, but expected to increase.
- Presentation of draft for new mission statement and goals
- Ideas for future programs put forth by participants:
 - Challenge all Blacksburg residents/students to reduce use of gasoline vehicles (e.g. one day/week) - Homer
 - Native habitat – encourage conversion of property to native habitats which include land and water, no pesticides or other toxins; enhance life of birds and other species - .
 - Increase awareness of sustainable issues
 - Use listserv to publicize these ideas.
 - Lead by example
 - How do we reach those who currently have no interest in sustainability issues?
 - Movie night

Bill Claus provided coffee, fruit, cheese and crackers for participants. Also, available free of charge were number of books on a variety of related topics which had been part of the SB Board's previous meeting location (Price House). Thanks to Dave Roper and others for contributing to this collection. Donations to SB for the cost of such items as the website, room rental, food, movies, etc. were accepted.