

Transition Team for Sustainability

Minutes from Meeting on 6/10/2008

Meeting convened at 1:00 pm in 201 O'Neill by Susan Todd. Present: Ron Johnson, Tom DeLong, Eli Sonafrank, Gary Newman, Tomas Marsik, C. P. Price.

Susan Todd did introductions of the members of the transition team, including those who were not able to attend today.

The first item of business was to describe the team's purpose: to provide a final report by 7/14/2008 (with a draft by 7/7/2008) which recommends short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals, and actions towards those goals, for increasing the sustainability of UAF. The focus is to be at the highest levels of activity, which indicates that the team is not charged with developing detailed plans.

The next item of business was to go through the FAQ's that are listed in the agenda. This included a working definition of "sustainable", and the distinction of the transition team from other organizations and groups on campus and in the Fairbanks area which are working towards increased sustainability.

Next, the team decided how to conduct business. The method will be to try to reach consensus, and to otherwise report the majority vote on decisions. Since the team meetings are public, and schedules for future meetings will be posted on the Chancellor's Transition Team website [<http://www.uaf.edu/transition/teams/>], we must accommodate public comments. It was decided to introduce guests at the beginning of each meeting, and to allow each 3 minutes of comment (to be extended per the discretion of the chair), as the team has a tight time schedule to accomplish its task.

It was decided to include educational/curricular goals in the discussions. The question of social issues/social equity was raised; it was decided that the report could refer to the UN's 15 points of sustainability [<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm>], and how the more limited scope of this team's recommendations fits into those 15 points.

Next, Eli Sonafrank gave a slide presentation (which had previously been given to the Borough Assembly) summarizing the NRM 430 class project/report "Draft: UAF Campus Sustainability Plan". That report considered 10 topics, which will form the basis for the teams discussions and research. There was discussion of some of the particulars of the presentation (procurement, waste management, the eco-dump, what is currently recycled, the vision [a zero waste campus], incentives for reuse, surcharges for disposables, increasing recycled content, decreasing toxic waste, decreasing virgin paper use, complete reduction of landfilling by 2050). The main thrust of the report was clarified: it focuses on goals (targets), not on the means to those goals (actions). It was agreed that the team needs to recommend actions, that it is important to make a change.

We agreed that one of the team's most important short-term recommendations is that the incoming Chancellor's first actions should include becoming a signatory to the "American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment" document. Since that document has a number of very specific targets, not all of which are realistic for Alaska in general or UAF in particular, those are items that we could address.

We also heard that Facilities Services is already working to institute meaningful changes. However, there is a real need to make the current efforts more visible. To that end, the team members were encouraged to revisit the energy report (the UAF Utility Development Report, which is on the team website) as well as the UAA Energy Policy Plan (which is also on the team website).

The team concluded by assigning reading of the NRM 430 draft plan, and using the categories from it for the basis of recommendations for both targets and actions for short-term, medium-term, and long-term. It was suggested to rank the recommendations. To compile the individual recommendations, Susan will create and distribute a template table (which was attached to a subsequent message), and then will merge the responses. It is requested to have responses as early as possible before the next meeting (scheduled for 1:00-2:30 pm on Tuesday, June 17 2008 in room 214 of the O'Neill Building.)

Submitted 11 June 2008, corrected 12 June 2008.