

## Minutes

### **Eastern Connecticut State University: Green Campus Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am Student Center 217.**

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Food Updates: - Jeff Kwolek reported that Willi-Waste is willing to test-run hauling Eastern's food waste to Quantum Biopower for composting. On Monday 2/20, Willi-Waste will deliver a compactor to hold food waste between hauls. Jeff already has the dining staff separating out food waste in preparation for this transition. He will talk with Willi-Waste about weighing our food waste.
  - A new fryer oil removal system is slated to be installed at Hurley Hall at no cost to the University. Chartwells will pay an \$80 monthly fee for the new pipe system, which will provide a clean, safe, hands-free way to dispose of grease. The collected oil will be diverted from the waste stream and repurposed into biofuel.
  - The delivery of leftovers from the Food Court and Hurley Hall to the Covenant Soup Kitchen is going successfully, with over 600 pounds of food being recovered in the past month. Deliveries are twice a week, with about 10 hotel trays of food given per delivery.
3. - Tour of Quantum Bio-Power March 9<sup>th</sup>: The tour group will leave campus at 10 am and return by 1pm. There is an 8-person limit so an additional tour date can be scheduled if there is enough interest; Fridays and Mondays seem to work best for most people. Please contact Laura Miller at [millerlau@easternct.edu](mailto:millerlau@easternct.edu) by March 6<sup>th</sup> if you wish to attend.
4. Garden Update: The community garden has been officially disbanded. A key deciding factor was the reduced availability of volunteers during the peak growing season. Along with facing the dearth of students in the summer months, GROW Windham is already involved in several other gardens and cannot take a managing role over Eastern's garden. Facilities is set to dismantle the garden, and GROW Windham will recover whatever materials are still usable (beds, trellis, etc.). Any members of the Eastern community that still have an interest in gardening work are welcome to participate in GROW Windham's other local gardens.
5. Waste/Recycling and Composting Updates:
  - Recycling Concerns: It was reported by ISE intern Weronika that at least one unnamed office in Wood Hall is outright refusing to recycle. While there were also observations of good office recycling habits, it was noted that many staff are uncertain of how custodians handle recyclables and are concerned whether custodians actually keep recyclables separate from trash when taking waste out to the dumpsters. Renee Keech has already gone over the appropriate disposal procedures with the custodial staff. There was also confusion about whether shredded paper can be recycled; Jenna Lafleur checked online and confirmed that Willi-Waste does not recycle shredded paper.
  - Recycling Outreach: In discussing these recycling issues, it became clear that more active recycling education is needed. One suggestion is a campus-wide email from an authority figure (department heads, the president, Renee) to encourage recycling and clear up confusion. A related idea is a semi-

regular reminder email, similar to the one sent by payroll, that shares tips and facts to keep recycling on people's minds. Another suggestion is to get a sustainable initiative (recycling, food recovery, Earth Day) featured on the Eastern homepage video-of-the-day. Twitter was suggested as a platform that could be suitable for delivering recycling messages to students. A contest was proposed—either between staff, or different departments, or by building—as a way to highlight Eastern's recycling champions and to incentivize recycling. Paul Torcellini is ordering a documentary on food waste; it could be shown at a University Hour or other public event, and it could feature a talk from President Núñez or Jeff Kwolek.

- Questions for Willi-Waste: Someone observed that there are no sidewalk recycling bins around campus, and there was a question of whether we could add some through our contract with Willi-Waste. It was suggested that since Gelsi and Wood produce a lot of shredded paper to protect student privacy, it would be worth it to see if Willi-Waste or another company could recycle our shredded paper. Paul observed that, by weight, it costs less to recycle than it does to dispose of it as trash. However, our current contract is paid by volume so we don't see such savings. It was suggested to renegotiate our contract to be paid by weight when it goes up for renewal.

-In light of these questions and observations, it was proposed to invite a representative from Willi-Waste to the next GCC meeting. Committee members could prepare topical questions in advance to help clarify Eastern's waste management.

6. Resilience Workshop – March 21<sup>st</sup>: Eastern will join the Town of Windham, Second Nature, and the Nature Conservancy to offer this workshop on Tuesday, 3/21 from 9am-1pm in the Student Center Theatre. The workshop will focus on understanding and advancing community resilience planning and hazard mitigation.
7. SAVE THE DATE: CT Alliance for Campus Sustainability Conference, March 31<sup>st</sup> at Wesleyan University: The free, all-day conference will have a theme of advocacy and empowerment. Laura Miller is working with Wesleyan's Office of Civic Engagement and Public Life to promote the conference. It was suggested that Wesleyan's civic engagement office could be a great resource on campus sustainability and recycling education in general. Registration for the conference will open up later in the month.
8. Earth Day: Paul and his students are ready to work with the Environmental Club to run Eastern's Earth Day event in the Student Center. The event will feature vendors, a display highlighting recycling, Paul's chicks and solar devices, and possibly a display by the ISE. Earth Day falls on a Saturday (4/22), so the event will need to be scheduled for a weekday, possibly excluding that Friday (4/21) because that is when the CREATE conference is being held.
9. Other: It was reported that a third party engineer is going to measure the current use of Eastern's circulator pumps. They will then wholesale replace certain pumps and their connected systems in order to boost efficiency. Eversource will pay 80% of the cost for the measurements and replacements.

For more information contact Laura Miller at [MillerLau@easternct.edu](mailto:MillerLau@easternct.edu)

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> 9:00am Student Center 217

