

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Environmental Advisory Council

Initial Meeting

Thursday, November 8, 2007 - 8:30 am

CCH 271

Minutes

Present: Larry Fischbach Roy Coons, Environmental Manager
 Louis Katz Fran Trevino, E,HS
 David Jensen
 Liz Smith

Absent: Renee Gonzales

1. Introduction of Council members and opening remarks by Mr. Robert Lovitt, Executive VP for F&A:

Meeting was called to order at 8:35 am. Council introductions were made.

Mr. Lovitt asked what environmental issues we are currently concerned about and that he would like to know about any other issues that may occur.

Louis Katz stated that in his general observation of safety on campus that environmental education is needed. Sink drains are still being used for disposal of anything.

Mr. Lovitt offered that Web CT could be utilized for online training for faculty and that it is easy and simple to use.

Mr. Lovitt excused himself and left for another meeting.

Discussion Notes:

Liz Smith said that there are universities that have gone through an informal conservation process and going towards that end would be beneficial in the long term. Students in science are enthusiastic to save the planet and students should be involved in the University effort in promoting environmental issues with our "piece of the island". Also noted was that most of what goes out into the Blind Oso is Stripes owned.

Louis Katz recommended that students call up the Susser's (Stripes owner). Influence our environment campus oriented how to protect the stormwater the more environmentally friendly the better we are. As island moves across the way we will have more environmental issues.

Roy Coons suggested using a logo such as the City of Corpus Christi's dolphin logo – "Nothing down the Drain".

David Jensen stated that waste management is a big issues and finding who generates waste on campus is a problem. Environmental Management System Projects have to be done to gain recognition we have to have projects going to acquire status from the State of Texas.

Roy Coons said that a student was working on environmental management plan. Motor Pool has waste oil and batteries and the Motor Pool area is used for illegal dumping. Should anyone see anyone dropping off any type of waste the Environmental, Health & Safety office should be notified. HRI has a detention pond to capture any discharges from the building. Parking lots could have grass pavers made with holes.

Laurence Fischbach asked should Waste Management include recycling? Students have said they would take care of the recycled materials if they could get to the bins. Cans are not being recycled. The infrastructure is not there to capture stormwater that could be used in our sprinkler systems. Plants that are indigenous to our area should be utilized. Parking at Hans Suter – council should conduct a survey on conservation development.

David Jensen offered that tertiary marshes with cattail are natural filters for runoff. Plants should not be cut down because we need the filtration, marshes should be enhanced like the Hans Suter walkway. Need to incorporate stormwater outlets of which we have 5 different locations.

Liz Smith stated that cans and plastic bottles from the Recycling Bins are being disposed of altogether, which defeats the purpose of recycling. This effort should start at a core area, i.e., the University Center and spread out to other buildings. Labeling is a must. Deal with the economics and stewardship because it is the right thing to do. First thing dealing with expansion of university and expand to new site. We have to leave a "Footprint" that shows what we have done to maximize the environment. Changing vegetation on shore, how we deal with it or whether or not it is perceived as an issue or not. Questions should be posed to the Environmental Science classes. Kim Withers can work on this by organizing lab assignments for the students. The HRI hill area could be turned into prairie grassland. It is a good idea and has to be looked at. Paula Maywald has looked into this area and says it is a big project, but well worth it because it is the first thing you see approaching the campus. Currently, the wrong kind of grass is growing. There are some limitations because of the types of soil and some high traffic areas that would have to be avoided. Plants such as honeysuckle could be identified with signage as native plants. The Hike and Bike Trail – Back to Nature perimeter could be productive making more of a bid deal about the H&B Trail. Ted Eubanks with Nature Tourism – Coastal Birding Trail, to increase nature areas what can be enhance in that area. Have a study area with an environmental learning lab that would be amenable and have access to students. Arts & Sciences could work on projects Dr. Hickman and Dr. Leyman use the island for learning labs. The Children's Writing Camp: Liz and Kim Withers take students around island as a "Place of Reflection" Advise from Botanical Gardens and

Audubon Society may be some underwriting would be the first steps. A new Texas Parks & Wildlife Interpretive Specialist asks students who want to be trained to work with events on campus and coastal bend.

Louis Katz said that if we are going to recycle we need to add signage. November 12-14 is American Recycle Day, but if do not have the bins or commitment with educating first it won't work. Totes get picked up twice a week and emptied twice a week in the University Center. Paper is recycled in the Center for the Arts. Being on the shore, it seems like we have an immediate effect. Stormwater goes out into the ocean from our parking lots. New parking should have some passive environmental pond when under construction. Americarecyclesday.org is a informational website. Katz thought that environmental issues could be mentioned during the fall and spring faculty meetings. Make a point to favor native plants i.e., oleander, mesquite and Texas ebony. Parents of students visiting the campus during orientation can be made aware of environmental concerns and what we are doing for the campus. A number of people are taking alternate means to get to campus by riding bicycles. Need bicycle racks. The first entrance when walking is dangerous.

Roy Coons offered an invitation to Louis Katz to attend a Environmental, Health & Safety Committee Meeting and bring up pedestrian crossing safety concerns. Rates for recycling also are a concern. If the campus community sees that they are not committing, it won't happen. Roy Coons said that "recycling in general has fallen on hard times". Batteries, oil, bulbs, cardboard are recyclable.

Laurence Fischbach stated that no one is running the recycle management.

2. Review the Commission for the Environmental Advisory Council.
Mr. Coons asked for the members to review the material.
3. Review of TAMU System Environmental Policy
Mr. Coons asked for the members to review the material.
4. Review Draft Copy of the Environmental Advisory Council By-Laws.
Mr. Coons asked for the members to read the Draft of the Commission of the Environmental Advisory Council and make note of any changes.

Roy Coons asked for a motion to adjourn. David Jensen motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Liz Smith. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

The next meeting is set for Thursday, December 6, 2007 at 8:30 am in the Physical Plant Conference Room.