



**Eastern Michigan University  
President's Commission on Sustainability  
Fall 2021 Meeting**

October 22, 2021

Tom Kovacs, Chair  
Chris Grant  
Katherine Greenwald  
Eric Bruski  
Luke Yates  
Paula Sears  
Alexandria Parsons  
Ronald Rich  
Jessica Kwek  
Stephanie Bell for Lyla Ellens  
Anke Wolbert  
Kristen Olson  
Mary Jane Fallot

Guest: John Staunton, Honors College

I. Chairman Tom Kovacs called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of Minutes -- Minutes of the March 12, 2021 minutes were shared on the screen.

Minutes were approved. No objections or abstentions.

III. Introduction of new commission members:

Eric Bruski – Currently an MBA student at EMU and has another master's degree from U of M. He works for DTE on the natural gas side. Eight-year history of managing the EMU account from the gas side. He is very sustainability minded.

Jessie Kwek – Junior at Eastern Michigan. Major is Political Science and Sociology. I am on the Commission as a representative from Student Government. Jessie does a lot of work with sustainability with Student Government.

Paula Sears – Registered dietitian with EMU. Her role with Dining services is to oversee the sustainability in the units.

Kristen Olson – Rejoining the Commission. Was originally on the Commission in 2017. Kristen feels that the commission is a really noble effort given the size of our University.

Stephanie Bell – LAZ Parking, director of operations for Park EMU. Main focus is the parking lots and vehicles on campus.

#### IV Chair Report --

Chairman Kovacs gave his report.

The last time we met the main thing we did was vote to become a member of AASHE. They are the main international body for sustainability in higher education. They have over 1,000 members. They have also put together a rating system called STARS which weights sustainability based on many different criteria. We now have a subscription for AASHE which is being covered by the Office of the President.

We have lost a member in our engagement subcommittee. Sherry Owens has left the University. Jennifer Boudrie from the Division of Communications is going to help us out. Jennifer had the following marketing recommendations:

- Distribute flyers which would have information and data about sustainability.
- Contact Housing to put those flyers in the residence hall.
- Contact University Human Resources to give out the flyers and information at new hire orientation.
- Reach out to students and employees through social media.

We would need content for the flyers and social media. We could also place stickers, magnets, or hangtags in the restrooms and dorms to raise awareness of sustainability issues and that our commission exists.

Chairman Kovacs did express concern about printing flyers since we are a sustainability group.

Commissioner Wolbert mentioned that in the CMTA there is a faculty member that teaches Public Relations. Could we tap into the PR or a marketing class? Students often have to do projects around marketing and PR. Maybe our Commission could be that project. If we involve students we might get fresher ideas particularly around social media.

Commissioner Olson suggested that for visibility maybe we should go ahead and do some larger posters.

Commissioner Fallot added that the idea of engaging the students is good because it gets them excited and it gives them something they can add to their resume. We need to keep in mind that some people are visual learners and they might need to see printed items.

Commissioner Greenwald asked what is the goal of the outreach?

Chairman Kovacs replied that the relevance of our commission to the wider campus community. They need to know that we exist. If the community doesn't know we exist then we could disappear in the future.

Hopefully very soon we will pivot to more of an actionable commission where we start to recommend to the Office of the President where we can be more inclusive of sustainability.

Commissioner Fallot stated awareness across the board regarding sustainability is important.

John Staunton offered that the honors students have to do volunteer hours. We should consider reaching out to Honors College students if we think of a volunteer opportunity.

#### STARS Criteria Report –

Chairman Kovacs shared the report from the 4 subcommittees and went over the various levels of progress on the 67 different issues.

The report was emailed out to the commission members for their review ahead of this meeting.

Commissioner Greenwald – I have put a Google form survey. It is a 3-page document which collects data about people's home school (department), criteria and brief descriptions that might fall into those particular categories. This document currently focuses on AC8 Campus as a Living laboratory and AC9 Sustainability research. This has not been sent out to anyone yet it is still in the development phase. We are trying to decide if we want to ask faculty anything else before we send it out.

Chairman Kovacs stated right now the plan is to send this out to all the deans and have them send it to the faculty within their college.

#### Engagement

Commissioner Fallot reported that everything we have is pretty much up-to-date. Moving forward we will start to look to what we can do with the information. Alumni information is also included in the report.

#### Operations

Commissioner Valdes was not able to attend today but he is going to send Chairman Kovacs an update.

Commissioner Grant reported out that he met with Bob Densic, Scott Storrar, Dieter Otto. They are working with a consultant called Commonwealth to help us with reporting on these issues. We hope to have data to Commonwealth by the end of December.

Commissioner Grant submitted some numbers on OP19 diversion of waste. For OP 9 Landscape Management, we do a grub control twice a year on the band practice field. Food pantry – we are getting a 5-gallon bucket from the Swoops food pantry every day for compost. We are also looking to get some buckets to all dining services for composting. For OP 15 Campus Fleet – We have a few electric vehicles on campus. For the most part our campus vehicles are gas and a few are diesel. Bob Densic is working on finishing that report.

Commissioner Olson reported we do not have a lot of information available from 2018. OP 13 does need some work. The work in reviewing this area takes a lot of time. It is a massive spreadsheet that needs to be teased apart. There are no policies in place for sustainability in this area.

Commissioner Rich talked about OP 16 Commute modal split – Compare levels of commuters compared to enrollment. How many students are commuting in single vehicles based on parking permits.

Guest John Staunton, Honors College

In the Honors College we have honors students who have a community service requirement.

So, we have a lot of students who are looking for ways to volunteer and get involved.

One of our partnerships this year has been with Huron Valley Watershed.

The Honors College is very interested in having a conversation in how we can partner with the commission to help with sustainability issues.

Commissioner Olson is willing to serve on the Engagement subcommittee.

Next meeting will probably be in March 2022

Commissioner Kovacs adjourned the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

