

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Green Energy Fee
Wednesday, October 24, 2012 YU 460**

Present: Katie Savinski (Chair, VP for Student Life), Nicole Brown, Grace Wang, Ed Simpson, Michael Gore (AS Green Energy Fee Education Coordinator), Regan Clover, Seth Vidana, and Jacob Lesser

Absent: Victor Celis (VP for Academic Affairs), Nina Olivier (AS Environmental & Sustainability Program Associate Director)

Advisor: Kevin Majkut

Secretary: Kaylee Galloway

Guest:

Katie Savinski, Chair of Green Energy Fee Committee, called the meeting to order at 2:33pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

III. INTRODUCTIONS

IV. BACKGROUND

A. Charge and Charter and Member Roles

Savinski displayed the Charge and Charter approved by the Board of Directors. The AS Board decided to make some formatting changes to the Charge so that it was more accessible for students who are interested in GEF. Savinski added Gore, the AS Green Energy Fee Education Coordinator, and Clover, the Green Energy Fee Program Coordinator, as non-voting members of the committee. Savinski said both positions were involved last year and that they are necessary to include in the committee, but as non-voting because they work so closely with the fee. Victor Celis, the VP for Academic Affairs, is the Vice Chair of the GEF committee. Celis was unable to attend this meeting because of another meeting, but will be present in the future. Jacob Lesser, Student-At-Large will be appointed at the Board of Directors meeting tonight. Savinski is still looking for another Student-At-Large. Nina Olivier, the AS Environmental & Sustainability Program Associate Director, was also unable to attend because of class. Savinski said that she has been reviewing a few Student-At-Large applications and hoped to have the position filled by next meeting. Majkut referenced the third bullet of the Charge regarding recommending changes to the fee level and program as a whole. He said that the fees go to the Board of Trustees at the June meeting but that it will have to go through the Board of Directors and the Vice Presidents. There will be an analysis in the spring to whether there is a need to increase or decrease the fee. This committee is where that conversation starts.

B. Rules of Operation

Savinski referenced the Rules of Operation document and noted the mission statement. Also pointed to the description of the program as a whole. GEF will be the committee that hears proposals for the allocation of funds and allocates the operating budget for GEF staff. The committee will forward recommendations regarding the allocations of funds to the AS President and WWU's President Bruce Shepard. Majkut will be the one who holds the funds. Savinski said there needs to be an update made to the GEF graduate program because the

position does not exist anymore. Majkut commented that the AS as the originator of the fee, has a value about students providing services to other students. Started out by wanting students in the positions, but realized it was not viable. Made a good decision to make it a staff position. Wang asked about the statues with the project. Regan will do a presentation.

C. Budget

Majkut stated that one of the Revised Codes of Washington (RCW) grants students the authority to create fees either through official votes of the students or through the vote of the official student government. At the university, students propose fees but the Board of Trustees (BOT) under their legal responsibilities impose fees. The BOT agreed to create a fee between \$4-9. It is currently charged at a rate of \$.70 per credit up to maximum of \$7. Increasing the fee to \$9 would not require a vote of the students; rather, it would only require a vote from the AS with this committee making the recommendation. Value is held by both AS and BOT that if the fee increase exceeded \$9, then the students should have some voice in the matter at an election level. Majkut said that currently there is \$537,557 in the fund balance, which is what the money that GEF started out with and has built up over time. Most of the money has been generated by the cost of RECs. He said that the REC cost kept going down and the fee didn't go down as quickly, so a substantial reserve of \$300,000 was built up through the first five year term. He said also that the fee developed around \$292,000 a year, and last year there wasn't an allocation of money for projects. Majkut said that at the beginning of this five year term, there was a decision made to spend down the \$300,000 reserve built up over this five year term to fund projects. He said that \$50,000 was taken to pay for a year of RECs so the reserve would now have \$250,000. He said the original plan was to spend down \$50,000 a year by adding it to the fee which in a sense artificially inflates the amount of money available for projects. Since then, it has been decided to front load the projects so that if there are more projects to be funded now, it would be preferred to do so as a way to create awareness and a larger impact on campus. The university and students can then decide if it is a good fee to continue charging. Majkut said \$292,000 is intended to be generated from the fee. Expenditures include \$50,000 to reserves, about \$50,000 for RECs, about \$50,000 for staff and student position, and \$10,000 in operational expenses from marketing to copying. Total funds available after aforementioned expenses are \$309,176 that can be distributed for projects. Majkut said that the money being built up should be spent. He said it would be more appropriate to start out the year with \$100,000. Money collected this year should be used because students who pay should receive the benefits as quickly as possible. Majkut said the concepts of the projects have been approved but the funding requests have not. Vidana said that fund is going to go up and down and that it is our task to educate the public. He said that there is no process that allows for the reserves to be spent down. Majkut said that it is important to ensure that every dollar that is spent is spent well, but that every dollar should still be spent so that we can get as much money into the process as possible. There is no sense of how much money is needed for projects yet, but that we should have a better sense of that by the end of the year.

V. PROJECT UPDATE

Regan presented a PowerPoint presentation to the committee for project updates. She reported that there are four project teams and explained the three phases of the application process. The four teams are Sustainable energy efficiency dorm (SEED), Western SOLutions, Wilson Library Hydration Station with Green Energy Resource Kiosk, and Driving Down Energy with Dashboards. The SEED team is re-assessing the scope of their project. They are looking to add a convection oven, water sense faucets, led lighting, energy monitors, and more efficient fridge.

VI. DISCUSSION: What does this committee want to address this year?

A. Renewing Rules of Operation (Fall)

B. Budget approval for projects (Winter)

The committee discussed that during Winter quarter they will look at approving the budget request for the four conceptual projects.

C. Establish timeline for new project concepts to come in/what to do with RFP/scales of projects/Process/scaling grants

Clover said that there are no dates set yet for submitting new requests but that it will probably occur sometime in the spring. A rolling application process was discussed, but the committee questioned issues of consistency. Vidana said it would be important to take Clovers time commitment when considering a rolling deadline.

D. Evaluate how Green Fee works

E. Committee/Fee name

The committee discussed the possibility of changing the name from Green Energy Fee to Sustainability Fee.

F. Revisit rating tools; address fairness - criteria for different scale/cost for projects

Brown brought up the issue of the rating tool used in the last project concept approvals and she hoped to look into that this year. The committee said that if they decide to have a different scale of projects they may create separate rating criteria.

G. Set aside small fund for smaller, streamlined project ideas

Fesser brought up the idea funding smaller and less expensive projects. Simpson suggested that a certain amount of the money be allocated for smaller, experimental projects.

H. Administration (set process to communicate with admin on pilot projects)

Savinski wants to see a set process created to start conversations with administrators about pilot projects. Vidana believes that the administration has a responsibility to follow up. Savinski suggested the idea of creating a committee proposal that can be sent to the board of directors for approval suggesting to the administration further action on the pilot projects.

I. Independent study arrangements

Brown brought up the idea of independent studies and internships to have students work on their proposals. She recommended that a faculty member work with the students.

E. Address ongoing maintenance issues and the fee

F. Evaluate current system with Renewable Energy Certificates

VB. NEXT MEETING DATE:

November 7, 2012 @2:30pm VU 567

YIII. MEMBER REPORTS

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52pm