



Student Fee Board

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 3/3/23

Topic: Public Meeting

Present:

- **Voting members:** Lawrence Miller, Xiaoru (Tony) Shi, Jada Quinland, Yidi Wang, Brian Johnson, Najee Rodriguez, Sydney Gibbard, Cierra Chandler, Conor Kelly
- **Nonvoting members:** Alexa Clayton, Jolinda Wilson, Barry Bram

Absent:

- **Voting members:** Ava Philips, Dallas Zebrowski, Zander Golden
- **Nonvoting members:**

Agenda:

I. Call to Order and Opening Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 8:02 a.m.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

Motioned, seconded.

III. Adoption of the Minutes (February 24th, 2023)

Motioned, seconded.

IV. Public Comment

V. Old Business

VI. New Business

A.

VII. Topics of Discussion

A. 8:15-8:45 - Erik Cagle - Free Menstrual Product Access at Penn State

Emma: VP of Advocacy Days for Girls at Penn State

Erik: Manager, Custodial Operations

Emma: Request - retrofit with HUB model then replace. This would be a one-time fee. Current period product machines require quarters, though many don't have quarters on them. This initiative has been in constant conversation with faculty and students. Menstruating students should not have the burden of funding their equity when all students can contribute.

Background information and history. In 2020, Days for Girls conducted a survey with 500 menstruating students. 13% missed work or class due to lack of access to period products. Had to go home or didn't have products. Many schools in the Big10 do have similar, free programs. About 5 years ago, the HUB initiated free products, then found they could retrofit machines. People seem to be taking product when they need product. Then Pattee/Paterno pilot program, which has been successful. Flow2Go initiative - with offices that often close at 5, many students don't want to ask as this is stigmatized. This project was created out of years of student-based advocacy work.

Erik: Photo on the left is for-pay model. Not everyone is carrying quarters. Coin mechanisms don't work forever; even when there are coin dispensers, they may need to be replaced. Picture of photo in the middle is the retrofit that Emma described is in the HUB. This is a very simple wire that restricts coin mechanism. From a physical plant point of view, it isn't a permanent fix. The free model is on the right, also instituted in the Business Building.

Specific goals of the allocation and its utilization. Hope to retrofit existing coin-operating dispensers to begin providing free menstrual products as early as Spring semester 2023. Completely replace all coin-operated dispensers with newly purchased, convenient, no charge menstrual product dispensers. Create a free menstrual product. Establish a process for assessing success. Create a more inclusive and supportive environment for the Penn State community.

Proposed budget and timeline. Total request is \$309,500 (retrofit - \$40,000, 50% of purchase and installation of no charge dispensers - \$269,500). Our timeline is in 2023 Winter/Spring, retrofitting existing for-pay dispensers (500 hours), developing for-pay dispensers replacement schedule. If funding is secured through SFB, also ordering dispensers. In 2023 Summer, assign dispenser removal/replacement of for-pay dispensers and installation work to OPP trade workers. From there, continuing replacement program and completing replacement of for-pay dispensers by June 30, 2024.

Values and weaknesses. Accessibility (campus-wide free product), accountability & transparency (new survey every 3-years in continued collaboration between Days for Girls), fairness, equity & inclusion (use of inclusive language), justice (intersectionality of period poverty), weaknesses (unexpected delays due to supply chain, efforts to reach menstruators using men's restrooms).

Primary benefits are ending students needing to leave activities due to unexpected changes in menstrual health needs. This project is for students, by students. We believe 50% SFB, 50% University is the way to fund this request.

Brian: Regarding slide on weaknesses, you're working to enhance levels of comfortability?

Emma: We touched on supply chain issues and not affecting trans men.

Brian: Do you have any immediate solutions?

Emma: We're working with trans folk to assess their needs. Not asking to put products in men's room right now. We're hearing main problem is disposal, looking into discrete wrapping disposal as well.

Erik: From a physical plant point of view, with new construction and major renovation, gender neutral restrooms will be a standard moving forward. Also looking into product called Mask-It. It's a discrete disposal package that they could take into the stall with them.

Sydney: Could you elaborate on abuse of program, if you saw that and if you see that moving forward?

Erik: Physical Plant piloted the program at Pattee/Paterno library. Tracking use of product. We're always cost conscious, given constraints. Program was not abused, also wasn't abused in the HUB. We also have some failsafes so that they can't be abused.

Emma: Days for Girls will continue to advertise bulk options as well. Days for Girls always has product and offers Flow2Go. Also reaching out to organizations.

Najee: Hoping to hear more about what marketing and outreach efforts will be pursued?

Emma: Days for Girls has marketing media. Our social media has over 1,000 followers. Probably push it out to CHAARG, Gender Equity Center, etc. - those who have bigger reach. Students will also see machines in bathroom.

Erika Cagle: Also strategic communications in Penn State Today and Physical Plant. We'll probably present on this when we talk with other universities in conferences from facilities point of view.

B. 8:45-9:15 - Krista Bailey - Bird Biodiversity Conservation Project

Joseph: Assistant Teaching Professor in Biobehavioral Health

Krista: Sustainable strategist at the Sustainability Institute

Chyvonne: I'm a first-year PhD in ecology program

Katie: Undergrad student studying architecture

Chyvonne: A bit of context for this study. Since the 1970s, a 20% net decrease in North American bird populations, totaling 3B losses. Direct causes include collisions with windows. Hundreds of collisions happen on our campus. Increased efforts in monitoring. To date, 536 collisions recorded. These collisions happen year-round, but specifically around spring and fall migrations.

Window collisions are preventable with visible dots. Growing interest on campus leading to increased monitoring of bird-window collisions.

Krista: This proposal is requesting additional engagement in monitoring bird data. Also bird safe glass on Susan Welch Liberal Arts Building. Student interns monitoring collision rates and educating the community. 2 students, both 10 hrs/week. OPP is already invested in building changes.

This is the design for the Liberal Arts Building. OPP has agreed to changing mullions that reduce risk to birds from see-through corners. Bird-friendly glass will be installed on ground floors. High-use area for students, faculty.

Katie: Student internships will help monitoring during peak migration. 6 days per week, 1 hour walking loop to check perimeters of ~10 building per student. Second big part is outreach and education - class presentations, educational social media posts.

Reasons to fund the bird biodiversity conservation project. Student-led efforts, support bird safety culture shift, and make a dramatic improvement in bird safety efforts at Penn State.

Student fee is most appropriate funding as effort is led by students.

Cierra: I'm curious as to how the glass works in preventing collisions.

Joseph: When a bird is moving through environment, they are looking into distance. Birds that haven't grown up in the city, they don't understand reflections. When there are dots, they will perceive crowded space and will slow down and turn away.

Cierra: So the plan is to implement glass in ground floors?

Joseph: Yes, that's where most collisions happen. Lots of sparrows forage closer to the ground. Trying to prioritize where greatest benefit is to be made.

Najee: Curious about academic connection compared to out of class experience. Any information on student perceptions?

Chyverne: More and more students asking questions. Really can contribute to what students are learning, not just peers but broader community.

Najee: With current University budgetary situation, do you have transition plans of internship costs? Would you consider folding into Sustainability Institute's request?

Krista: Don't anticipate folding into SI's requests. But looking into Erikson Grant. A lot of this is proof of concept to show impact.

Joseph: Window collision issue is at inflection point. 10-15 years ago, people knew very little about this. Now more people recognizing it. Big deal because this is completely preventable without being expensive.

Najee: Interested in implementing bird glass in other areas in the future?

Krista: Talking to OPP. Goal of this project is not just to assess bird collisions, but also to assess user experience. To really make a case that it is preventing bird deaths and that users don't have problem with bird glass. Hopefully retrofitting our current buildings.

C. 9:15-9:45 - Meghan Hoskins - Organic Materials Processing and Education Center Expansion

Phillip Melnick: Senior Director, Buildings & Grounds

Ayodeji Isaac Oluwalana: Facilities Specialist

Meghan Hoskins: Director of Operations at the Sustainability Institute

Phillip: OMPEC facility currently - processes food waste, leaves, scrap wood, pallets, logs, and plan debris. The facility enables the University to divert organics from landfills. Landscape operations, most of compost is reused on campus, but do sell small fraction to businesses and individuals. Biggest sale is to companies that do contracted installations on campus.

OMPEC has been around for more than 20 years. 10 years ago, physical plant started as an experiment in College of Agricultural Sciences. Grown to present use as full service, organics processing facility. Also do educational programming - in class, out of class experiences, research projects.

This is collaborative effort between OPP, Sustainability Institute, and several student organizations.

Funding request is \$2,300,000. Specific goals are to build an expansion that will provide added composting capabilities and capacity to support student zero-waste ambitions. Student internship opportunities. Reducing confusion as to what is compostable on campus, leverage the use of more compostable products - given way we compost at OMPEC. Decrease single-use plastic consumption on campus. Reduce amount of waste sent to landfill by approximately 500 tons annually.

Ayodeji: Total projected cost is \$3,000,000. SFB funding is \$1,150,000 per year over two funding cycles for \$2,300,000 request. OPP contributions: \$700,000 toward expansion cost, \$400,000 additional annual operating expenses.

Fall 2023, design and permitting. Winter 2024, bid. By Winter 2025, substantial completion.

Reasons for funding. Respond to student voices, comments, ambitions of moving to a zero-waste campus. Receive 5-6 student emails per week for single-use plastics in dining halls. Contamination reports, and food waste consists of 50% of contamination. Expansion also offers chance for renewed education and marketing strategy about material circularity.

Meghan: This work came from a waste stream task force. Support comments from lots of students and organizations, asking about styrofoam usage and single-use plastics. Make sure we include students as part of process.

Najee: Is composting redistributed across campus?

Phillip: We do more than composting, also make mulch. Right now, able to supply all mulch through processing at OMPEC. As far as composting, that's the natural decomposition of organic materials. Refurbishing planting bed, use composting at OMPEC to amend soil. Upwards of 90% composting created winds up back on campus.

Cierra: Could you expand on student involvement, what that would look like?

Meghan: We'll have to get a consultant from a design firm on board. Great to have membership group to select contractors - good to have student representation here. Ayo and Phillip trying to involve students - OPP has interns, Ayo speaking at classes. Want to include students at the beginning and in the following steps.

In beginning of process, design selection committee - environmental sciences majors. Really relevant to educational pursuits. Also during construction process, construction management activities. Once facility is built, there would be ongoing opportunities for students to participate in research, day-to-day operations of facility.

Ayodeji: Classroom experiences as well. Mentioned this project, and students are already excited and identified ways to participate.

Cierra: Communication from purchasing of buildings - if there's going to be a conversation to make sure materials are compatible, how does that work? For example, composting materials put in HUB trash cans still end up in landfill.

Phillip: Started to collect non food waste 10 years ago. Learned we couldn't process it. As for procurement, both procurement and end user departments that purchase these materials are predominantly on board to converting to materials that would be compostable. But we would have to test to make sure claims of compostability hold true. Housing & Food Services committed. Athletics interested. Also need to follow up with significant effort to educate University and community. Building facility is primary step, but need following educational steps.

Cierra: What is RFP? It was on the timeline.

Meghan: Request for proposals.

Phillip: When we solicit design proposals for the University.

VIII. Subject Matter Experts

A. UHS

Jolinda: UHS is preparing their 24-25 budget, due March 17th. Part of student fee component is huge part of their budget. Trying to gather anything for how they should work their budget. Perhaps a poll with how you are all heading with their request.

Barry: Sydney created a form or link to get initial sense of what you all are thinking about.

Jolinda: It's such a large request, and Penn State emphasis on accuracy of budget. That's why it's important we work it in or we don't.

Lawrence: Is the University working next week?

Jolinda: Yes.

Lawrence: If you have any questions for UHS, put them in their file by Sunday. Then Sydney will send it over to them, giving them a week. We'll then do that poll next weekend.

Barry: Sydney did post what the poll will ask in the Teams.

Lawrence: Are all budgets due March 17th, or just UHS?

Jolinda: All.

Lawrence: Do other offices need our input?

Jolinda: No. For UHS, because it is such a huge part of their budget, it's important. But for other offices, it's just a renewal, so not as important.

IX. Chair Report

Lawrence: Last hearings will be on March 17th. After that, we will start hearings. I will send out a what you need to put together for presentations for deliberations.

X. Comments for Good of the Order

Najee: Can we see numbers on what is requested vs. what is allocated for ESF and the Equity Fund?

Jolinda: Yes, I can put that together.

XI. Closing Roll Call

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.