

UPFB Weekly Meeting

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

students, representative, project, sustainability, questions, funding, point, proposal, campus, sustainable, water, appropriation, charging station, space, experience, area, neville, work, board, facility

00:18

C**hair Rodriguez:**

I will now call this Friday, April 9 team meeting to order at 9:06am. Vice Chair Chandler will you please take opening roll call?

\*Opening roll call is taken and quorum is met\*

01:20

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Awesome. Well, as opening remarks, welcome, everyone to our second to last UPFB meeting. It's great to have you all here as we aim to conclude our new infrastructure and facilities proposals. And then as we continue to deliberate on other points or issues that we have brought up in the past few months related to fiscal year 26. That being said, I will now move into line item two of action items, given that there are no minutes to approve from yesterday's April 18 meeting as they are still being finalized, we will not be improving those minutes. And I will actually strike that given that I don't have to do anything until the adoption of the agenda. So everyone is aware of that procedure. And that being said, and now move into line item three of the adoption of the agenda. Is there a motion to adopt the agenda?

\*Seconded\*

02:25

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Seeing that as that has been seconded the agenda has been officially adopted meaning we'll now move into line item for a public comment. Are there any students here for public comment? Seeing there are no students here for public comment we will now move into line item five, reports from Standing Committees. Seeing that these are not established we will now move into line item 6.A of Campus Recreation new infrastructure facility proposal and we can begin with Campus Recreation Gym 2.

03:13

**CPBE Kurtz:**

Happy Friday everyone. Campus Recreation on campus presence, as you all know, has gradually been increasing year over year and in a informal way, it's not necessarily their fault as the University continues to increase enrollment. You know, increasing amount of students are using their facilities. Over the last two years Campus Rec has seen 75% of student population utilizing their services primarily at the intramural building, especially in the underclassmen demographic, and an average of 1.5 patron visits per year, year over year. Campus Recreation proposal for this infrastructure project plans to transform the IM building gym to into a fully open fitness center including an indoor fitness turf, open floor functional fitness area, and an innovative strength training equipment section. Pretty much encapsulate all the qualities of being quote unquote leading fitness facility. Now just for context, I don't know if you guys aren't familiar with where gym two isn't the liability but if you were to walk in, it's that enclosed indoor hockey rink looking area, like right in place in the middle of the first floor. Right now it serves as a semi functional fitness center. I know there is still scoreboards that they plan to extract in sports and that's what they plan to extract in various light fixtures of like the real thing that's like rounded into the floors that they want to remove. Now, I just received confirmation from Stephen this morning. So I'm gonna pull that up and bear with me try to read through what I had to clarify on right now. The project does not need a feasibility study. But basically, he does not have a full expense report of this given that they need to invest the funding for the actual initial design and drawing. So I'm assuming part of the design drawings would be coming from this, but this is their idea. As you can see, the green be the turf section of the equipment that they're using would be a combination of their new and their old equipment plus additional purchase of several other pieces. I mean, just from experience going to the IM gym and using gym 2, I know they have some of that stuff in there already. So that would probably be more of a just moving around. But he did give me a rough equipment costs of $500,000, as well as a $10 per square foot quote on the flooring for the turf and the overall flooring of the entire gym, which would be around $130,000. And he says their largest expense would be the actual extraction of the breaker board, the netting, the current floor, and installation of the new floor. There was an estimated cost of $600,000 to $1 million, but they would not know this final number until after we did and obviously there's contingency funding, they're voting 10%. So they're rough high point at this point is $1.5 million, which is lower than what their original proposal was. So with that new information we can do that type of deliberation. However, I would like to add one more thing before we get to the question. I'm sorry for the ramble. According to the American College of Sports Medicine standards, there needs to be a prescribed two square feet of pure fitness base per patron/member. And the campus recreation IM building falls over 40,000 square feet short of meeting that benchmark based on PSU’s enrollment, meaning whether you've been there or not, the IM building is just like too small for what they're offering, given how many students go to Penn State how many people use their facilities. So this is in part to help provide a safe fitness space that they can offer. And, you know, obviously develop a more inviting space people to be able to have trouble coming in working out or just no given themselves in space. So I'll pass it back for questions and discussion that could answer any questions that are up there.

**Chair Rodriguez:**

We will now open up the floor for any questions on campus recreation facilities proposal for gym two. We're gonna ask many questions for infrastructure and facilities given these are permanent commitments. And also our additional large expenses, Representative D’Elena.

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. Kind of in the map, the 2D rendering that you had before there was kind of large open spaces at the bottom there. Do you know if there's any plans to also put more equipment in there as time goes on, or you know, we're just keeping that space open until after we have to expand.

**CPBE Kurtz:**

From what I understand, most of the equipment that we showed in that 2D rendering is around the perimeter. And I think that was more estimated, just so they could get a number of how many machines they want, I would assume they would move it together to fill the space, because I do read that space a little too open. But other than that, I can’t provide much information. But I do want to add really quick that there have been submissions. All of these designs will go into effect January 2025. Designs were submitted in 2024 in October, in most of them construction starts in the winter of 2025, which honestly maybe the question might be this could be a partial funding now, and a modification next year. Sorry, that was not your question at all.

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Are there any other further questions? Representative Nevil.

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. This is formerly like the indoor roller rink area. Do we know the usage currently of that space? Because they have it slightly converted in this direction? Do we know what their usage number looks like?

09:39

**CPBE Kurtz:**

The gym specifically was not provided, but their usage, facility-wise, was provided and I can give more context of that. I can send that out via outlook. It's very high end, and like I was mentioning, regardless of the space that they're in within the facility, that square footage benchmark not been met in any of their spaces. But I do, see what you're saying. It is currently in use as a semi functional fitness area that's supported by Campus Rec.

10:12

**Representative Johnson:**

Brian Johnson At-Large Representative. Do you have any understanding of unanticipated costs that could develop from this? Or is it set in stone?

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I would say yes, only because there's no initiative we haven't provided any funding for them to get the entire spectrum on their expenses for the extraction of the materials, as well as maybe a supply chain or inflation inflationary cost of the equipment itself. And the retail price for those things are pretty stagnant. But if there's like any labor operation, and also along with that, I do foresee that being something that they come back in FY 27. I need to modify that in the follow up.

11:02

**Representative Johnson:**

Do you have any idea of what that could be? Just ballpark?

11:11

**CPBE Kurtz:**

If the equipment expense estimation was $500,000. Just for the equipment alone, I could foresee the operational labor costs paid anywhere in the thousands depending on how long it's going to take in and where it's coming from. But obviously, I'm not sure if there's suppliers or whatever.

11:37

**Representative Sciacca:**

Alternate Andrew Sciacca. Was there any explanation of what they were going to use the turf portion of the expansion for? It looks pretty small, based on the 2D rendering. I was just wondering what that would be specifically used for. Would it be more useful than just an open space and more training.

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I'm sure it's not going to be used for games, given the size of it. I know certain gyms just have turf, or comfortability, or sleds, or something like that. But given the volume of that, which is not as large as I was anticipating. I'm sure it's just another bonus of the space to you know, have that option.

12:19

**VC Chandler:**

VC Chandler, GPSA Appointee. I think this question is more for the ALs. So according to the report, they aim to be completed by 2025. And this is a request for 25-26 fiscal year. I know that there are certain procedures when people start a capital or facility related projects. So they need to secure the funding before they can start construction.

12:58

**AL Bram:**

Yeah.

13:05

Representative D’Elena:

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee.You said that what was formerly in there on scoreboards and stuff like that, I think just kind of from a maybe, I guess, sustainability standpoint, what are we going to be done with those kinds of previous parts, they're going to be scrapped or they can be reused or they can be sold to somewhere, or they just kind of getting trashed.

**CPBE Kurtz:**

That was not addressed. And so I don't want to make the assumption that they're going to be tracking.

13:45

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Any other questions? Seeing none, we'll now move into discussion. Is there any discussion?

13:58

**VC Chandler:**

Vice Chair Chandler, GPSA Appointee. So the design process typically awesome costs, I guess. Right. So I'm just curious about the who's funding that process? For soliciting designers and architects services. And I guess this is just a general question. I would love to know their other funding sources to start this project in the first place. And if we could, maybe have some sort of negotiation in cost sharing, though I understand the context of the budget.

15:01

**Chair Rodriguez:**

I can definitely follow up with that point. Is there any other further discussion? Seeing no further discussion, we can now move into line item 6.B of Eco Action’s proposal.

15:31

**CPBE Kurtz:**

Eco Action plan is will be phase 2 of the collaboration between Penn State Eco Action and the Office of Physical plants (OPP), the landscape design management staff, and they requested funding to the execution of phase two of the sustainable landscapes implementation plan, also known as SLIP. Funding for phase one was sold out in combination of $75,000 from the board and $100,000 from OPP in 2022 and 2023. That initial project phase was completed with students, professors, stakeholders from PSU OPP professionals who are hired to design and consult the sustainable network and those stakeholders will be involved in phase two. Phase two is a crucial transition from planning to action. More precisely this project in this proposal aimed to replace high maintenance landscapes such as lawns that require weekly mowing, increased awareness of sustainable landscape types and management practices to gather support from students, faculty, staff, university leadership and the broader community, and to complete two projects as defined in phase two’s final report. And I can I will go over those facts in just a second. The project does provide environmental and student benefits that personally just in a proposal standpoint can be seen as objective so I did a little bit of but this is the budget breakdown of their two projects. As I previously mentioned, the West Gate meadow project and the chapel wood’s project, the West Gate meadows project surrounds the West Gate building on West Campus, you know, the one with the bridge. They plan to have a large sun dial on the side, if you were to walk towards the West Gate building and see any grass, that's the grass they’re talking about. That would cost roughly $31,000. The lawn painting, which is literally just surrounded areas of grass, from when I got into Google, hort tech, and then contingencies and soft costs. The Chapel Woods project is stationed behind the... It's in North Campus. They're in North Campus dining halls in the newer residence halls. Obviously the tree costs, shade meadow, matrix planning, hort tech and soft costs. Now, this recommended appropriation does imply that both OPP’s resistance to raising their maximum funding within these proposals should not fall directly on the UPFB’s budget for continuing of the phase two. That should be $205,000. So we can amend that in a second. But just cutting the project total in half, and splitting it between OPP. Now, similar to yesterday, these recommendations are on the basis that we should want to approve these projects. But clearly, this is up for discussion and collaboration and deliberation on the feasibility and validity of any of these infrastructure projects. So I'll pass it back to the questions and deliberations that we can go from there.

**Chair Rodriguez:**

And we will now move into questions. Are there any questions? Beginning with Representative D’Elena.

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. Apologies if you’ve discussed this before, but could you clarify the resistance from OPP?

**CPBE Kurtz:**

It wasn't specified the resistance, but as I was looking at the numbers, I'm unaware of the resistance for them to only match up to $100,000 as we are almost tripling, if not more, our appropriation from phase one to phase two. So that's kind of where this negotiation of the recommended appropriation.

19:45

**VC Chandler:**

Just to supplement, it's not really resistance. It is that they don't have the money. They actually decreased the amount of employees at OPP.

20:01

**CPBE Kurtz:**

One more point there. I wanted to point out, sorry for clarifying this earlier. The recommended appropriation also leaves out the appropriation or funding for both contingency and soft costs. Obviously, like I said, everything is up for discussion. However, given the state of stability of our own budget and our portfolios that we fund, I don't know if it necessarily is in place to be covered soft costs like that that can be potentially externally sourced another.

20:36

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Are there any further questions? Seeing no further questions will now be in discussion. I will begin by making a motion to amend the amount to $205,000.

\*Seconded\*

21:05

**Chair Rodriguez:**

And give them that second, and we'll now move into questions on that proposed amendment. Are there any questions? Seeing no questions will now move on to discussion on the proposed amendment. Is there any discussion on the proposed amendment? And see no further discussion. Since this is a modification to the amount, Vice Chair Chandler, will take vote by roll call for that amount with these keep in mind, we can still ultimately vote this down. This is just an augmented amount for the number before we move back into general discussion on the overarching project. So since we're making a fiscal adjustment, Vice Chair Chandler, you can be general whenever you're ready.

\*Passes unanimously\*

23:16

**Chair Rodriguez:**

And I am here as well with the consensus. Okay, we'll now move back into regular discussion. Representative Nevil.

23:25

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. It feels like their goal is to decrease maintenance. But I really question how much maintenance they're going to be saving on to small spots of grass on campus for $410,000.

23:42

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. While I do kind of get the reservations first, I do think like this is a nice little kind of ease into perhaps, what might be a larger project for future boards. So for example, while this might be two different areas. And sure, for some of money, it could turn into much larger projects across the university. So for example, if West Gate and Chapel Woods happen to go, maybe 20 years down the line, and that is ultimately what will have to be just given the process of all this, they might start going to more and more different areas of the university that could house these kinds of projects. Initially, the presentation that we got a couple of weeks ago and seems like they're doing this for great environmental reasons they want to fully commitment to be a more sustainable institution, one of the first Big 10, if I'm not mistaken, and this is the first step, because after all, if we don't look sustainable, if we don't act sustainable, then we're never going to actually use sustainable. Sustainability is the future.

24:42

**Representative Johnson:**

Brian Johnson, At-Large Representative. I understand the point represented in D’Elena’s making, but I do personally share the reservations of Representative Nevil and that the scope of this doesn't seem to match up with the cost. I understand the mission for sustainability. And I certainly appreciate the passion behind it. But I think we all know that throwing money at a situation, especially this sum, won't necessarily guarantee that. And as for if it will set off larger projects and the campus. I just don't see why we needed to start with such a staggering propensity of projects in the past. I think this needs further discussion.

25:31

**Representative Concepcion:**

Giselle Concepcion, UPUA Appointee. I do think this gets that sort of like, I only voted on this yesterday, but sort of like the issue like multi year projects, and like one Fee Board funding something that another one might not be as interested in? And so how do you figure that out? Is not I'm not really sure. But I will say that this is, for me, at least in terms of how I'm thinking about it is really dependent on some of the modeling that we get in terms of like, what the fee is going to look like as a whole? And what that number is going to look like. I would definitely be in favor of maybe cutting some line items or not in favor of the entire project. If I think it's going if it's one of those factors that’s maybe the fee higher or a little bit higher than we'd like to see, compared to some of the other things that we've already sort of discussed that I think are more of a necessity. So I would like to see like how this plays into the larger picture, just because I do I do agree with the reservations. But I'm not entirely like ready to shoot it down on principal bases. So in that case, I think maybe looking at the numbers might be helpful there.

26:36

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative, I think kind of off of that point, whether this is something that we can have further conversations about. But exploring kind of cutting the current path of we're cutting, which is finding half of the project. And exploring only doing one of these. So whether that's doing West Gate at what looks like it's about $65,000, rather than $105,000 to at least give them the opportunity to explore projects like this and see how feasible it is, and kind of do all that real implementation stuff. And if we think it's for the betterment of the students that they find out that it's for the betterment students, future fee boards can invest their money in this. But at the same time, if it's something that doesn't work out, or doesn't seem like it's realistically a good idea, I think it's not to say it's always $65,000 investment, but it's always $65,000 investment standpoint rather than a $410,000 investment.

27:38

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. I'm also you know, for if we want a line item edit, also we want to do we just want to be pragmatic too. But that being said, like in the brief, they say creating meeting places and service opportunities for clubs, sports, the health and wellbeing of students, along with so many other kind of out of class experiences or potential for out of class experiences. And that is ultimately what we're here for. I think, you know, this is one of those things. And as I walk, I walk by West Gate, like literally every single day, and like there's just like there's nothing there. And it's very, you know, not only very depressing, you will get an environmental wise, very just kind of not savvy, but also just kind of University-wise, not very smart.

28:23

**Chair Rodriguez:**

And as a point of privilege too, for context. The one thing to also keep in mind with funding as well is that, if there were to be a proposal for lowering the amount or having an adjusted amount, that's fine. And they also have the ability to say no, and to our proposed amount that we might modify and get to them. So even if, for example, something was recommended of potentially $64,000 or beginning some aspects of the product, we can still reach out and say this is something that the board wants to intervene to, to some extent, this is what we're willing to provide. Is this, okay, on your end, or are we going to just return that money? That's ultimately direction, you all can go in, but I'll leave it at that and go back to further discussion. Is there any other discussion?

29:25

**Vice Chair Chandler:**

I do want to emphasize the point that Representative Nevil mentioned about maintenance that this does synergize well as the overall OPP’s plan and then campus’s plan, like managing the green spaces on campus because it is expensive to mow all the lawns. So these spaces allow self matintenance, especially decreasing the work load on employees. But I do agree that we can invest in one of these, see the feasibility and the impact on the students is very experienced.

30:19

**Chair Rodriguez:**

And is there any further discussion? I would just add, I guess that the number can be subject to change. I mean, I would prefer to have some sort of consensus or idea of consensus before officially bringing this forward. So, if you would like to provide your initial idea for providing an amendment to to a certain extent, I would implore you to do so. But I guess I'll ask three questions just to gauge consensus. First question will be, I'll ask you raise your hand, if you're in full support of the $205,000. The next question will be, are you in support of a reduced amount? That is TBD. And the third question was, will be, are you just not in favor of funding? So even if it's an augmented number, it wouldn't matter. Is everyone clear on that. So the first question, funding the $205,000 as a whole, where are we with that? Raise your hand.

31:30

AL Bram:

What about the people on line.

31:34

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Okay, so we have a good point. Okay. Representative Kelly and Miller, did you hear those three choices? Okay, so out of those three, just listen, if you if you relate to it, but I don't know if you all heard this, but I was gonna say raise your hand for the first question. If you support the $205,000 for one of the projects. We will wait virtually to see if there are any raised hands and we will move on to the next question. All right. So thank you, those who are in favor of funding, albeit to a reduced augmented amount, similar to the amount posed by Representative Nevil, please raise your hand. You can lower them, and then all those in favor of not funding this proposal, please raise your hand. Okay, so we will explore the augmented option first, with the input that was put in mind to see what that will look like. I will also, you know, inform those where it may be relevant that budget modifications are still possible. So it's not the end of the world or having to wait another two years to reapply if there is you know, tangible collection of data or just student experience following the potential utilization of that augmented amount on the table for you all to be aware of. And before I close the floor for discussion, is there any other discussion? Seeing no further discussion, we'll now move into line item 6.C, the student farm proposal. Chief Budgeting and Planning Executive Kurtz, you can begin whenever you're ready.

**CPBE Kurtz:**

The Keiko Ross Student Farm is requesting an appropriation of $750,000 from UPFB. To go toward the project total expense of almost 5.7 million on a new building on the farm’s property this project is coined the Farm Hub Engagement Space. It includes five elements of production, education, meeting and greeting, facilities support, and events. The Farm Hub Engagement Space would be the perfect place to hold events like Harvest Fest which is student farms, large fall programming event. This would also included a new coverage system as well as outdoor teaching kitchen, outdoor classrooms for up to 35 students,office space for administrative materials and welcoming areas, restrooms, changing rooms, covered parking for 20+ bikes, and an event lawn area seen above, temporary that tent area, acceptable drop off zones, covered stager and long amphitheaters. Now as we know student farm that has great collaboration with dozens and dozens of RSOs sn campus. A lot of their cost sharing comes from those external RSO. And of that 5.7 million for the total project expanding the $750,000 from UPFB have not been targeted in utilization as of now. Most of the funding will be sourced through their donor fundraising and naming opportunities. Please ignore anything under alternative sustainability director of operation that is not a part of the requested proposal. And to be frank, I don't even know why they submit that. But under the top infrastructure and operations, their feasibility study collaborator, as well, as all the design collaborator has broken up this project into four scopes, which would be scope A, B, C, and D. And that kind of encapsulates those five elements of the project that we were going over earlier, more so in an infrastructurally and financially based approach from their side, but they're how they run business. So scope A would be the washing and packing office and event coordinator, scope B, the cold storage and their structures that they use, scope C, kitchen and restroom, as a lot of plumbing issues and renovations in that regard, and scope D, stormwater remediation, bringing their total expenses to $5,678,000. Now, the recommended appropriation for the student farm, I have as $750,000, based on the validity of their expenses to what they are planning to do with that, however, like everything else, I'm gonna throw it back.

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Great. Questions and discussion. Representative Nevil.

37:10

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. Do we know that we plan to make this available for all student organizations? Or is it just the ones that are currently partnered with they're using their spaces?

37:24

**AL Bram:**

Yeah, they have to make it available for a student organizations.

37:41

Representative Nevil:

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. Would the spaces like the outdoor teaching kitchen and that type of stuff, be also available, if they could turn it into potentially rental spot for outside organizations like State College organizations, if they want to come in and do something there that they could like, potentially also make some income off of this. Is that in the plan? Do we know anything about that?

38:07

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I mean, that wasn't specified in the proposal, but I could assume given the facility services, I would come to the conclusion that that's definitely feasible.

**AL Bram:**

Yeah, I mean, I think that's been part of some discussions that have they would need to think about the structure, but they are they are going to that would be an ones that this group attempt to figure out.

38:45

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. Representative Nevil’s question about, you know, opening us up to the broader student population. It's possible you're kind of in addition to the what they're currently doing, you know, community farming projects, gardening nights and stuff like that, just to kind of not only build a sense of community, but also just allow students to have like a more hands on ritualistic type of project in terms of farming and stuff like that getting literally involved.

39:20

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I mean, I think, given the extension that this would provide the student farm, I think, on top of their already stated operations for in a multitude of the services they provide and then I think anything is possible.

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Seeing no further questions. We'll now move into discussion. Is there any discussion on this? Seeming no discussion on this proposal. We'll now move into our last new infrastructure and facilities proposal which is Penn State Sustainability portfolio package, and just as some context to introduce, essentially they were going to introduce individualized projects so separate ones for each one, I informed them no, just include a holistic project portfolio package recommendation that we can look over. And we would make choices and decisions based on what would be most relevant to the student experience and also practically fulfilling our objectives and goals. That being said, we'll now throw it over to Chief Budget and Planning Executive Kurtz.

40:45

**CPBE Kurtz:**

This one is a little bit dense so please bear with me on this. Penn State Sustainability has proposed four branches of a new infrastructure projects four being their Reuse Water Initiative, Sustainability Experience Center, their Sustainable Labs, and their Solar EV Charging Station. Now I think it would be best for me to just read off straight through their proposal what each of these are as I did not want to mess up any of these. So let me get a summarized version of these.

**Chair Rodriguez:**

I recommend opening the materials folder as well too.

**CPBE Kurtz:**

The water use project benefits units reliant on groundwater here at University Park. Penn State takes a one water approach to holistically manage shared water resources and take staff water, water, wastewater and stormwater work collaboratively to manage water resources from extraction and consumption to treatment and recharge so that campus communities do not have to worry about the safety or accessibility of safe water. This keeps water clean and protects our wellfield regional groundwater and surface water resources and improves resiliency and drought and climate change impacts. Now the reuse water project is implicit on the Susquehanna River Basins Commission's to pass their grant program giving Penn State Sustainability the majority of their funding anyways, but in the event that they that grant does get accepted, this is the price it would cost. As for the Sustainability Experience Center, coined the SEC this project will enhance accessibility to a key site risk, thereby quote unquote broadening its appeal for students seeking recreation, exercise, retreats, meetings, or simply a serene spot for outdoor rejuvenation. Currently, the site encompasses two research forest with sweet gum and black walnut trees. The community garden, Morningstar house, the innovative eco machine, and two function in wind turbines. The proposed enhancement includes the addition of an accessible pathway and 0.5 mile running/walking route, enriching the quote unquote wellness opportunities for students. The Sustainable Labs is the next line item. This Sustainable Labs project has the potential to save energy and thus greenhouse gas emissions every year, which affects all students and all community members by quote unquote reducing our combined climate impact. In a greener challenge program run at University of Alabama Birmingham, over 1 million kWh was saved in one year due to maintenance of their ultra low temperature freezers. Penn State Sustainability Labs plan to mirror these operations. This reduction is enough electricity to power 133 homes equivalent 685 metric tons of carbon dioxide this project will train students that the operations of the laboratories are important alongside the research basically implementing sustainable research practices into Penn State laboratories. And lastly the Solar EV Charging Station quote unquote a visually striking statement of a commitment to clean energy and growing the EV charging network. Purchasing portable chargers would allow flexibility with where and when EV chargers are placed. The potential benefits of portable stations include providing renewable energy for EV charging, bypassing the conservative impact in the landscape and available parking spaces, and making it possible to provide chargers where access does not exist. Locations could be at places like the SEC which was their Sustainability Experience Center, and the arboretum parking lot. Students who have electric vehicles will be able to chart their vehicles knowing that energy is directly derived from the sun. As you can see above, all of these products have a rough estimation and note they do not add up together if you add them all together for fringe and a couple other various off costs. As expected, our recommended appropriation did go into the validity of some of these projects, and they did not provide the most extensive budget sheet. But the recommended appropriation above does remove the Sustainability Experience Center and the Solar EV Charging Station, leaving the Reuse Water Initiative and Sustainable Labs Initiative included in that appropriation plus the remaining soft costs that were not clarified in the proposal.

45:53

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Thank you, Chief Budget and Planning Executive Kurtz. We will now open up this package for questions. We'll begin with Representative Nevil

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. I got a handful of questions here. So this Solar EV Charging Station, is that going to be free for use? Will people have to pay to use that? Is it going to be free for non-students as well? Or is it only free to students?

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I can't clarify. But I would assume that there wouldn't be any service that would be that would be a confirmation of students saying that, that makes sense.

46:32

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Yeah, a point of privilege, Administrative Liaison Bram, can you provide context as to other entities or projects that are accessible to other populations outside of students, because of hypothetically, EV Charging Station obviously would have direct impact on students if they were to push more EV and everything like that, but I don't see any logistical way in which they could ensure that it's only relegated to students, which is fair and reasonable, I guess.

47:14

**AL Bram:**

It's actually really hard to kind of do that across any units.

47:26

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Campus Recreation has external patrons.

**AL Bram:**

Right, but they pay fees.

47:30

**CPBE Kurtz:**

The only electric charger I know of are in various parking decks surrounded, and no that's not student base but you aren’t paying I guess. The fees don’t go to the deck. They require additional payment. But other than that, I'm not quite sure at all.

48:02

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. Do we know where the Sustainability Experience Centers is planning to be built?

48:11

**AL Bram:**

South of the... fields.

48:36

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. You mentioned during your explanation, as well as it's in the brief as well, the Basin Commission Grant Program, you're set to apply in January 2025. Does that not mess with our timeline a little bit, because obviously, they have to go through an entire process review. And at that point, you don't really know how long that very process takes. We don't know how much you're going to get. So you know, we're here for fiscal year 25-26. And while that is in the early year 25. Doesn't that kind of mess with one kind of appropriate months?

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I made note of that too. I will probably have to request further explanation only because of that Reuse Water Program. We did not receive any expense report or a line by line item what these costs. So if they were to be able to use this 1.6 rough until that grant’s made. I made note of that, to be brief. I'm not sure how to plan to delegate that money internally but it is close to done.

49:46

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Do our administrative liaisons have any fiscal context as to how that potentially would play out or...

50:01

**AL Saunders:**

Because it is all about the timing of the grant...

50:05

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Have we had cases, Administrative Liaison Bram, where a grant has been delayed or... okay. Well, so that's happening.

**AL Bram:**

Yeah. The Hunger Free campus grant. Most recent example. And I think they wrote about that in the student advocacy proposal, if I’m not mistaken. So they extended the deadline to use the funds. But I think we have to do something creative, but having to go to a different facility. Given the way all grants, both state and federal, are just not working very efficient.

50:57

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. I know the recommended appropriation has the funding of sustainable labs. But they're now in their second year. That's what the brief said. So can you kind of shed any light about how those have been used so far with the engagement of those, etc.

**CPBE Kurtz:**
No metrics were given on their engagement labs, or I guess I should say, no metrics were given on how that implementation of the Sustainability Initiative under the lens that they're working under hadn't been received either earlier. But that, again, is another thing that I would like to clarify, because I would like to get some more knowledge.

51:42

**VC Chandler:**

Cierra Chandler, GPSA Appointee.To provide additional context. So you mentioned that the Sustainable Labs are in their second year. They really are pushing within my department, and the materials lab to really get all of the labs onboard. So at this point, it's largely the socialization of sustainable labs efforts....

52:18

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Are there any other questions? Seeing none, we'll now move into discussion. Representative Nevil.

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. I'm going to beat a dead horse that we've talked about a lot over the last several weeks. Sustainable Labs to me is just not something that should be funded by the student fee board. It is academic buildings, they are laboratories that are used by students in an academic setting. And yes, every once in a while those laboratories may be used by the student organization, but it's a laboratory that you go to class and you use. I just don't understand why, if this is something that the Penn State wants to take on, and this is something that the academic units that oversee these laboratories should be taking on as part of our sustainability model as academic units not as the student fee board. I also struggle with the solar EV charging station and $250,000 for anybody to come up and use it. When I think we could invest in our $250,000 in solar panels, and probably get a better return on sustainability than let's just put a car park and how many students have EV vehicles? And what percentage of the student body are we even supporting at that point? And are we really investing $250,000 of student money into the... Or are we just investing instead for people being able to charge electric vehicles? And then on the other two, I think that the reusable water and the sustainability experience that are both really good investments, at least of this proposal are the two stronger investments of students dollars?

54:10

**VC Chandler:**

Cierra Chandler, GPSA Appointee. I agree that this Sustainable Labs is largely academic in nature, and completely in research. So I agree with that. I would love to see the solar EV charging station have some alignment with other initiatives. They already do electric vehicle charging. And I would love to see how this could better align with their plans on campus. Regarding the Sustainability Experience Center, the Morningstar house is currently not used. So before I would say, before funding the Sustainability Experience Center, I would love to see its metrics and data of using the Morningstar house to show evidence of use before going to expand this area. And on Reuse Water, I believe that as a land grant institution, I believe we are responsible to make sure that we are managing our water systems equitably.

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. At this point, I'm just kind of repeating certain things, but I think Reuse Water, I'm just gonna echo those points, for the sustainable labs. I don't think we are in the business of academic funding. And I think we get the clarification on what those metrics are in terms of engagement. There, for example, they do come back and say it's a large portion of clubs you know, ended up kind of using it, then maybe we can have further discussion. But as it stands right now, you know, previous representatives points to kind of stand. As for this is the Experience Center, I also agree, I think that the problem with the solar charging station is largely isn't the fact it's very difficult to just get parking here at all. So to now then say, Okay, if you do have an EV, here is this far away, or the campus that you might be able to do it? I think, you know, maybe if they were to line themselves up as Vice Chair Chandler said, with more transportation, kind of goals and stuff like that, that would actually be a very worthwhile investment. If, for example, if we wanted to have you know, kind of, maybe this is a ludicrous idea, but like the on campus vans, the shuttles, you know, maybe if we want to orient those to be more EV, and they can use those, that would be a phenomenal idea, because that's an all inclusive thing that goes towards the student experience. And I think that's a lot better going forward. Additionally, I think Representative Nevil brought up a good point of like, how do we, if we were to fund this or somewhere in the future would to fund this, how do we make sure that external people aren't using it without cost to feed, you know, maybe making it an ID, you know, you have to show your Penn State ID and then you pay a subsidized fee, whereas someone off campus that's using it, if this does get funded has to pay a full fee, that's kind of the better parts of that going forward.

57:13

**CPBE Kurtz:**

I'd like to echo that real quick in the sense that and this was briefly touched on in the proposal, I think briefly for a reason, but there's only a new charging stations will be placed up near the arboretum as well as the Sustainability Experience Center being down at the house off campus... in the more... Penn State’s more nutrient dense sustainability areas, more green areas are, you know, a beaten pathway actually there, you got to get there in due time. So I think that the problem or the lens that I was looking at this under is, obviously sustainability wants to be immersed into the Penn State experience and the culture, but for the extremities, geographically in which all of these would take place. For this price, I'm not sure how immersed it can be given how far they are, plus, the questionable prioritization of maybe certain majors or certain students, instead of an overarching competition with everybody.

58:21

**Representative Concepcion:**

Giselle Concepcion, UPUA Appointee. I agree with a lot of the points that have already been made. I just think the EV charging station is not relevant to many students, as well as the sustainability labs being academic. I do have some questions about like the Sustainability Experience Center, I actually think of all of these ideas, that's probably the one that supports the out of class experience the most. And I would like to see like a little bit more of it in terms of how they're looking to engage with students. Like bringing students out to this specific location. It kind of reminds me of sort of like the student farm and how the last few years like it's increased popularity, and it's become like a spot for student organizations to come and do events and do programs. So I'd like to see a plan for them to kind of have a similar experience, because I want that utilized. And then my last comment is about the Reuse Water System, like I absolutely understand, like the merit and like the need for this idea. I do have some questions on whether or not like the student fee should be paid for like a reusable water system, because I know that water is like technically part of the out of class experience. But like, I'm like, I'm sort of like struggling to make the connection. So I don't know if any of the Administrative Liaisons have any insight on like, if this is like really in the scope of the fee. I saw that and I kind of immediately thought it wasn't so I was just interested.

1:00:00

CPBE Kurtz:

Quick off branch of that. The feasibility study for the Sustainability Experience Center is being conducted in fall 2025, and external sources will be funding it. And then they've also tested that they're accessible pathway is in hopes that they would emphasis, you know, included for the sustainability side. And so that could be something that could be a budget modification given the result of the feasibility study and not conducted by UPFB or not funded by the UPFB.

1:00:35

**AL Bram:**

I struggle with a direct connection to the out of class experience.

1:00:47

**Representative Nevil:**

Tim Nevil, At-Large Representative. Yeah, that kind of concurs with the water feeling. I think that if it were something that were like partially funding, if it was like the State College borough who also was benefiting from this, and the university and OPP, and all these other entities we’re funding it and we were told, Hey, can you chip in $250,000? For water, I'd be like, okay, but $1.6million that feels a bit extreme. And then not to beat a dead horse again, but the EV charging station, if they put it at the arboretum, with the student commuter resident pass, I can't even park at the arboretum until after 5pm anyway, so that's not really fair to me, because students can't park there. So who's using that? Not allegedly students?

**Representative Sciacca:**

Alternate Andrew Sciacca. Do have any information for how many students EVs currently or just a general sort of estimate.

1:01:55

**CPBE Kurtz:**
No, they do not. But, again, EV users are in the minority for sure.

1:02:08

**VC Chandler:**

Cierra Chandler, GPSA Appointee. I agree. In general, there's a lot of circles to this story that really are not within our purview. And I think this the reuse water will be similar to the composting initiative that was funded last year by the board, obviously not, like, I guess one could argue that is not within the, you know, directly the responsibility of the student fee board to upgrade a compostable system. I believe that the reason why there was a lot of... people were in favor of supporting funding, due to climate anxiety, and I think also, I believe that the uncomfortableness of cost sharing. So I think it's completely worth it to see if this is the full price, or if there is the ability to cost share.

1:03:03

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. I'm looking at the map, but the Reuse Water, which is on page 9, and I just I guess one of the concerns I've since come up with since looking at it is that it only really kind of affects this upper right northeastern part of campus and it runs through East Halls. I guess, kind of it might necessarily recommend any expansion. But I think, you know, the large populace of the people are off campus. And it's only it's disproportionately actually it doesn't even touch any other kind of halls, or residencies areas, where people are going to be obviously, I get that there is going to be water usage. And then there has to be housing off campus more in these kind of farm and kind of athletic areas, but also like, you know, if, if they're going to go for East why not go for the residence hall. So that's concern.

1:04:13

**Chair Rodriguez:**

So we will now close the floor for discussion, make note of these concerns so we get some feedback. So when we do begin deliberations, we have more specifics on the inquiries that you all have laid out today. And so I will try to send these questions out, hopefully by today. That being said, we'll now move into line item seven of the chair report and discussion. Our last meeting will be on April 26, which is next Friday. Please be sure that you were there, business casual if you can, end of year stuff for final deliberation. So make sure that you are there. And we will also, like I said yesterday, be helping coordinate at the end of year reception. Probably at Administrative Liaison Bram’s house.

1:05:04

**Representative D’Elena:**

Hayden D’Elena, UPUA Appointee. Are you anticipating next week's meeting being a larger or longer or denser? Due to the volume?

1:05:21

**Chair Rodriguez:**

I will say that we're going to explore all options.

1:05:24

**Representative Concepcion:**

Point of privilege, but isn't like the new board coming in next week at nine but in a different room.

1:05:38

**AL Bram:**

Yeah. Well, the new board is going to stay on feasibility studies that may be presented in room 230. Vice Chair Chandler and Representative Johnson. They will be at the new board meeting.

1:06:20

**Chair Rodriguez:**

Right, any other questions? Seeing none, we'll now move into line item 8.C, executive committee reports. Are there any reports? Seeing no reports from the executive committee, we will now move into line item ten of comments for the good of the order? Are there any comments for the good of the order? Seeing no comments for the good of the order, we will now move into line item 11, closing roll. Vice Chair Chandler.

\*Closing roll call is taken and quorum is kept\*

1:06:53

**Chair Rodriguez:**

I now adjourn this Friday, April 19 meeting at 10:12am. I hope you guys have a fantastic Friday and rest of your weekend. Thank you