

Library Environmental Committee Minutes—October 27, 2015

Present: Stephanie Perentesis (chairing), Kriss Ostrom, Susan Kendall (minutes), Aaron Tomack, Eric Tans, Jonah Magar, Emilia Marcyk, Patrick Olson

Guests: Jim Hensley, Brandon Baswell (Head of Custodians), Dave Smith (Single Stream Recycling), and Michael Mitschner (Recycling)

Infrastructure Planning and Facilities Update

Jim Hensley joined the meeting with three guests from Infrastructure Planning and Facilities (IPF).

1. Questions about the “mini baskets” program:

a. What are the mini baskets?

The “mini baskets” are for desk-side collection of trash in small containers that can be hooked onto a larger container for recycling. Each staff member is responsible for dumping their own “mini basket” into a centralized larger landfill trash can. Same with desk-side recycling containers. Custodial staff picks up materials at the central collection containers. This program has been rolled out across campus and, although not mandatory, is now in 75% of buildings, including the Administration Building, Natural Resources, and many of the newer buildings on campus.

The mini baskets with centralized collection program needs to be done on a building-by-building basis, as custodial staff need to have instructions of where to pick up the trash and recycling. It needs to be a top-down initiative.

Almost everything can be recycled at MSU, so there is less need for large trash cans. Since the Library also has composting, only material like Kleenex and Styrofoam would need to be landfilled.

b. How has this been rolled out across campus?

IPF staff have talked to larger groups of people or sometimes gone door-to-door to discuss the program.

The Main Library is now in a minority of buildings on campus that have not yet implemented this program.

c. How can the Library get involved?

The Library Environmental Committee along with Jim Hensley agreed that we will talk to Cliff about the program and plan to implement this program in the Library, if possible, after the spring all-staff meeting. IPF staff will be invited to the spring all-staff meeting to discuss the program and answer questions.

What will need to be done? IPF staff (Adam Curtis) can do a walk-through of the Main Library to see how many intermediate central collection containers there are and whether we need more or less. Because many are also in public spaces, we probably do not want fewer containers as they can get quite full at times of the year.

The Library will receive mini baskets for everyone along with stickers to put on trash cans converting them to recycling containers.

Jim Hensley will bring Jay and others in facilities up to date on these plans.

Informational literature accompanies the mini-baskets. Unlike other buildings on campus, the Main Library also has composting for organic material, so that would need to be noted.

d. Is this being done at other universities?

Yes, many universities have adopted a similar program.

Other universities have adopted various campaigns for shifting culture across their campuses. Purdue had the “banana peel” campaign. Western Michigan adopted the program because of a top-down decision by their president.

e. How could culture be shifted at MSU?

Note that this is not a cost-saving measure. It is being adopted as a measure to be more in line with university values.

There are several reasons to adopt a program like this.

- Paper, for example, is a commodity owned by the university, and employees should not be wasting it if there is a way to use it.
- Even though landfill is cheap in Michigan, there are other costs to throwing things away. Recycling, though, has benefits.

2. IPF answers other questions:

- a. How is the compost program doing? The compost program has added other buildings on campus, including several Sparty’s. They are maxed out right now and are figuring out how to scale that program up.
- b. Is there single stream recycling on campus? Single stream recycling is not being done on campus except for events like football games. Events involving more than 200 people and food use single stream recycling to simplify the number of contains needed. Michael Mitchner coordinates events waste and recycling.
- c. Can more permanent recycling bins be placed around campus outside? There are several permanent recycling bins outside but these get contaminated very easily, so IPF has been decreasing their numbers.

3. Other Business

LEC agreed to continue emailing agendas to Library staff.

Ecogram: Jonah has created an ecogram about where/how to recycle various items in the Library, including CDs, floppy discs, and other materials.

P.R deadline for spring 2016 events is 12/4/15

Communicated by email to the group from Eric Tans: The waste sort is scheduled for this Friday, October 30 from 10am – 12pm at the Recycling Center/Surplus store. We will be sorting waste from the library Sparty's similarly to the last waste sort, and we have worked with the Sparty's staff to ensure that the waste will be set aside for our sort.

Next meeting: Tuesday 11/24/15 – Chair: Susan Kendall, Recorder: Jonah Magar