

Advisory Council on Sustainability
McGill University, James Building, room 302
September 17, 2019 (9:00 AM – 11:00 AM)

Present: Y. Beauchamp, M. Bergen, B. Buraga, K. Cook, R. Couvrette, C. Deny, B. Harvey, H. Lauzon, B. Lennox, K. Litwin, C. Manfredi, F. Miller, J. Nicell, S. Osiecki, A. Porlier, L. Rathmell

Guests: A. Peres, E. Wen

Absent with regrets: E. Bennett, D. Dutton

1. Welcome & Roundtable

Dr. Manfredi welcomes the group and invites everyone to introduce themselves, mentioning that there are several new Advisory Council members, including:

- Three new student representatives: Sophie Osiecki, Mary Bergen, and Bryan Buraga;
- External member: André Porlier, the Société de Transport de Montréal's Corporate Sustainability Manager; and
- Two new faculty representatives: Dr. Blane Harvey and Dr. Elena Bennett.

2. Approval of minutes from the last meeting and today's agenda

Dr. Manfredi confirms that the minutes from the last meeting were approved and that there are no additions to today's agenda.

3. Latest news related to sustainability

F. Miller presents recent sustainability news and ongoing sustainability projects, including:

- A new Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) project on the Macdonald campus, the **Ecological Improvement of the Dairy Cow Pasture**;
- McGill's Spring 2019 Convocation was the **University's largest Gold-certified sustainable event** with more than 15,000 attendees;
- Buildings and Grounds have led an SPF project which saw **standardized waste signage installed around campus**;
- A selection committee for **University-supported carbon offset** providers has been formed and has begun the process to select three providers;
- Athletics, as a part of their recent sustainability initiatives, has launched their **new sustainability website**;
- The **Interactive Accessible Network Map** project is underway to provide the community with better accessibility information and to make the campus more inclusive;
- The Office of Sustainability and the Flat Bike Collective will be participating in **Vélo Québec's Campus à Vélo** by offering a Free Breakfast for Bikers and bike repair workshops;
- Dr. Elena Bennett's new **Canada ecological network has received \$5.5 million** from NSERC;
- McGill has been named **International Green Gown Awards' Sustainability Institution of the Year** for its "ambitious yet realistic" Vision 2020; and
- McGill has received the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's **Campus Sustainability Achievement Award** for the Staff Ladder of Engagement.

4. Survey results (satisfaction & discussion topics)

Prof. Beauchamp presents the results from the 2018-2019 Advisory Council Satisfaction Survey, in which most answered to all questions that the meetings were “adequate.” He then presented the results of the Advisory Council Discussion Topic survey, of which student involvement, sustainability strategy and carbon neutrality were the most requested topics of discussion for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Some **additional topics of discussion** include:

- External members could present how sustainability is present in their organizations.
- A presentation on the new Campus Master Plan and the green initiatives embedded within it.
- Student involvement could be expanded to community involvement, so as to include stories from the broader McGill community, including staff.
- Carbon neutrality should continue to be discussed.

5. Advisory Council Annual Report

Prof. Manfredi presents a summary of the previous year’s Annual Report and asks whether the report reflects the conversations held.

A recommendation from the discussion:

- The report should highlight the tangible ways in which the feedback helped those who presented, to ensure the Advisory Council has a positive impact on the community.

6. Next Sustainability Strategy (2020-2025)

F. Miller presented the current structure of McGill’s Climate and Sustainability Action Plan, as well as the related consultation process, and feedback related to the plan’s strengths and weaknesses. A. Peres presented a rough structure for the next Plan, including inspiration from other institutions, potential categories, goals, and paths, as well as potential consultation timeline.

Some **recommendations** from the discussion include:

- Specific metrics should be included in the Plan’s short-term goals, with the goal of tracking and communicating the plan’s impact on campus.
- Metrics should also be qualitative to demonstrate progress on non-tangible aspects, such as how sustainability is embedded within the University’s culture, because they have the potential to push the institution to do better.
- Care should be taken in naming the new categories, particularly those that involve social sustainability and community involvement. They should also all be related to McGill’s long-term targets of carbon neutrality and platinum STARS rating.
- There should be a relation between the new categories, short-term goals, and the UN Sustainability Development Goals.
- A community-wide survey should be conducted to assess McGill-wide priorities.
- The plan should be released to coincide with the University’s bicentennial in 2021.
- There should be guidelines for the composition of expert groups, and external members should be invited to participate, if their area of expertise is relevant.
- Partnership could be established with other on-campus sustainability groups, such as McGill Sustainability Systems Initiative, and embedded with the goals.

- McGill's different campuses need to be considered and consulted in the development of the plan.

7. Student Project: MealCare

E. Wen presented MealCare's mission, goal, history, and the problems their mission hopes to address. She also listed some of the challenges they will be facing in the future, including partnering with all on-campus food providers, ensuring MealCare's future in the long-term, achieving carbon neutrality, and access to vehicles.

She said their biggest challenge is the lack on infrastructure available to them, such as lack of fridges and freezers. As a result, she said the amount of food they are able to pick up and redistribute to community partners is limited. She asked the group how MealCare can become institutionalized within McGill and how they can better serve the greater community.

Members suggested the following elements:

- MealCare could look towards community partners closer to campus or offering free food internally.
- A partnership could be established with campus fleet to facilitate transportation.
- Fridge and freezer space in the new University Centre could be provided once it re-opens.
- MealCare should communicate with McGill's new food service provider.

8. SPF 10th Anniversary

F. Miller announced that the Sustainability Projects Fund will be celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, beginning with a launch event on October 10th. More news on the celebration to come.

9. Next Steps & Closing Remarks

The next Advisory Council meeting will take place on November 28, 2019.