



The **UNIVERSITY** *of* **OKLAHOMA**
Environmental Concerns Committee

Minutes

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE MEETING 03/1/2018

Call To Order

A meeting of the Environmental Concerns Committee was held at the Leafy Green Freight Farm, Couch Restaurants, and the Walker Tower Community Kitchen on March 1st, 2018. It began at 9:00 AM and was presided by Burr Millsap, Associate Vice President for Administration & Finance and this year's Committee Chair.

Attendees

Voting Members in Attendance: Sara Mata, Jeff Widener

Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: George Ahmadi, Sarah Ballew, Trent Brown, Dave Hambright, Brian Holderread, Burr Millsap, Dan Phoenix, Kolt Vaughn

Agenda Items

On-site Presentation by Frank Henry, Food Services Executive Director

- I. Leafy Green Machine Freight Farm:
 - Housing and Food Services, along with the student group OUR Earth, joined together to bring the Leafy Green Machine to campus in the fall of 2016. The freight farm is an upcycled shipping container.
 - The container operates in farm mode from 2:00 pm until 8:00 am. Red and blue LED lights simulate sunshine and the average temperature of the farm is in the 60's. The farm consists of 256 vertical growing towers. Coated seeds are planted in a peat moss growing medium.
 - Currently, the farm is growing lettuce. Lettuce heads take approximately 6 weeks to reach maturity. Once harvested, the produce is served in on-campus dining locations.
 - The farm is structured to recirculate water and requires only 10 gallons of water and 120 kWh of electricity per day.
 - The farm requires zero herbicides or pesticides. The produce is not able to be certified as organic because the certification stipulates that produce be grown in soil.

- II. Food Services Sustainability Initiatives:
 - Approximately 10 years ago, Couch Restaurants underwent a renovation. Highlights of the renovation include:
 - Flooring was sourced from recycled materials.
 - The tray return was removed and Couch Restaurant transitioned to a trayless dining operation in order to reduce food waste.

- Plastic straws are also no longer offered (except for at Freshens for smoothies).
- Aquahealth water filters offer quadruple filtering. Couch Restaurants offers both flavored and unflavored filtered water. There is also a filtration station on the first floor of each residence hall to encourage the use of reusable bottles.
- Food Services seeks out local vendors. MIO stickers are placed in Couch Restaurants to indicate which food items have been sourced from Oklahoma. Some notable local vendors include:
 - Red River tea which is served in Couch Restaurants and was started by two OU graduates.
 - KiZE Bars are sold on campus and were developed by students in the Price College Integrated Business Core program.
 - Peach Crest Ranch in Stratford, OK provides beef and pork.
 - Brad Burnett supplies eggs.
 - 1907 Meat Co. supplies the campus with meat from a network of local ranchers. In Couch Restaurants at the 1907 Meat Co. station, there is an interchangeable sign which is updated to indicate from which ranch today's meat has been sourced.
- To-go food from Crossroads is served in compostable containers.
- Bring your own reusable cup and you will receive a discounted price on drinks.
- Couch Restaurants upgraded their dishwasher to a Meiko unit, which reduced water consumption from 350 gallons an hour to 53 gallons an hour. Additionally, the unit recirculates heat to reduce electricity consumption.

III. Power Knot Food Digester:

- The Power Knot Food Digester at Couch Cafeteria is an aerobic bio-digester that mixes food waste with Powerzymes (microorganisms).
- The food waste is decomposed and converts solid food waste materials into grey water.
- The digester is a closed system with an auger in the middle which rotates the materials. Inside of the system are rubber pellets that contain and distribute the enzymes.
- The system has a computer component which automatically weighs and tracks all of the materials which enter the digester. The computer also allows the operational health of the digester to be easily tracked.
- The system works most optimally when food is inputted every 40 minutes. Food waste from the meals are set aside to input as close as possible to that schedule.

IV. Walker Tower Community Kitchen:

The community kitchen contains:

- 2 induction stove tops. The stove top has a sensor and will shut off after 45 seconds if the cook has left the area.
- 2 Bosch convection ovens.
- 2 Kitchenaid mixers.
- A dishwasher which requires only 90 seconds to run a cycle.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM.