

President's Commission on Carbon Neutrality

Commission Meetings #21, 22 & 23 5/1, 5/8 & 5/15

This is a consolidated summary of the following three meetings:

1 May 2020 /2:00 PM/ Remote Meeting

ATTENDEES

Liz Barry, Andy Berki, Valeria Bertacco, Steve Forrest, Austin Glass, Jennifer Haverkamp, Brandon Hofmeister, Drew Horning, Greg Keoleian, Barry Rabe, Camilo Serna, Anna Stefanopoulou, Logan Vear, Lisa Wozniak.

Regrets:

Hank Baier, Anthony Denton, Larissa Larsen, Jonathan Overpeck, Missy Stults.

8 May 2020 /2:00 PM/ Remote Meeting

ATTENDEES

Hank Baier, Andy Berki, Valeria Bertacco, Steve Forrest, Austin Glass, Jennifer Haverkamp, Brandon Hofmeister, Drew Horning, Greg Keoleian, Larissa Larsen, Jonathan Overpeck, Barry Rabe, Camilo Serna, Anna Stefanopoulou, Logan Vear.

Regrets:

Liz Barry, Anthony Denton, Missy Stults, Lisa Wozniak.

15 May 2020 /2:00 PM/ Remote Meeting

ATTENDEES

Hank Baier, Liz Barry, Andy Berki, Valeria Bertacco, Steve Forrest, Austin Glass, Jennifer Haverkamp, Brandon Hofmeister, Drew Horning, Greg Keoleian, Larissa Larsen, Jonathan Overpeck, Barry Rabe, Camilo Serna, Anna Stefanopoulou, Missy Stults, Logan Vear, Lisa Wozniak.

Regrets:

Anthony Denton.

NOTES

UPDATES

Fleet Electrification and Environmental Justice Sub Groups

The Commission scheduled May 22nd to hear from the mobility electrification and environmental justice sub groups.

Carbon Accounting Sub Group

The group is kicking off the next phase of its work with a team of three recent U-M School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS) graduates and two SEAS research specialists. The group will integrate information from the internal analysis teams and external analyses into their carbon accounting framework. For more information, see the [meeting summary from April 24, 2020](#).

Spring Interim Progress Report

PCCN staff drafted the Spring 2020 Interim Progress Report has been shared with the Commission and Student Advisory Panel members for comment. This second interim progress report provides a summary of Commission activities over the past 6 months. The interim progress report will be released in early June 2020.

Summer Retreats

The Commission has reserved time for full-day retreats over the summer. This time will be used to develop recommendations for the final report. The retreats were originally scheduled as in-person, but this is now unlikely as the COVID-19 crisis continues. The PCCN Co-chairs and staff are considering how to accomplish the work via virtual means. While the Commission is looking into a securing a facilitator for the retreats, this issue remains uncertain due to financial restrictions set by the University.

Meeting with President Schlissel

The PCCN Co-chairs met with President Schlissel in early May 2020. During this meeting, President Schlissel emphasized that the PCCN's work remains a priority for the University, and highlighted how the COVID-19 pandemic shows the ability for society to mobilize quickly and thoughtfully to problem-solve. Currently, the Commission plans to maintain its momentum and adhere to the initial schedule.

INTERNAL ANALYSIS TEAM Q&A SESSIONS WITH THE PCCN

The Commission meetings throughout May and early June have been dedicated to giving commissioners the opportunity to consult with the internal analysis teams (IAT) on their draft final reports, which will inform the Commission final recommendations. Each team was given 10 minutes to present an overview of their work, followed by a 40-minute question and answer session.

Given the internal deliberative nature of the sessions focused on the IAT reports, these discussions are not summarized here. More information regarding the work of the IATs will be available in the PCCN's second Interim Report.

After review by the commissioners, the IATs edit their reports to ensure accuracy and clarity and address questions raised by the PCCN. Final IAT reports will be made available on the PCCN website as well as included as appendices to the PCCN's draft final report.

The following IAT teams presented to the PCCN over three sessions:

CAMPUS CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION IAT (May 1st)

Faculty Co-leads: Profs. Samer Ali and Joe Trumpey

Student Research Assistants: Jude Boudon, Meg Czerwinski, Ben Ingall, Lisa Maillard, Chris Merchant, Madeline Peery

The campus culture and communication team researched ways for U-M to be a leader in sustainability culture change and education. It explored how a Research 1 university can engage its full community to reinvent how universities reduce their carbon footprints, focusing on four topic areas:

1. U-M as a living-learning laboratory
2. Creation of a higher-level administrative office to coordinate carbon neutrality activities
3. Campus-wide sustainability education and training
4. Decarbonization of individuals' retirement investments

INTERNAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION POLICIES IAT (May 1st)

Faculty Lead: Prof. Tom Lyon.

Student Research Assistants: Jessica Carlin, Lyanda Dudley, Taylor Lind, Larson Lovdal, Katarina Nehrkorn.

The internal energy consumption policies team focused on two key policies: a revolving energy fund (REF) model for each U-M campus, and a carbon pricing system for U-M. The final report laid out these two policies and considers how they could work separately and together at the University.

BIO SEQUESTRATION INTERNAL ANALYSIS TEAM (May 8th)

Faculty Co-leads: Profs. Heather Dawson and Rebecca Tonietto.

Student Research Assistants: Nicole Blankertz, Hannah Mosiniak, Lara O'Brien, Caleb Short, Chenyang (Crispy) Su, Cyrus Van Haitsma.

The bio sequestration team determined the existing land use and land cover of all U-M landholdings including but not limited to, Matthaei Botanical Gardens and the Nichols Arboretum, the U-M School for Environment and Sustainability landholdings, and the Bio station. To our knowledge, this is the first time that all U-M landholdings have been assessed to this depth. The team addressed the importance of acknowledgement of the provenance of the land holds from Native American tribes. The team considered recommendations in three areas:

1. Protecting and expanding U-M-owned natural lands, and including their ecosystem service contribution in land-use decision making processes.
2. Enhancing bio sequestration potential on U-M-owned natural lands through restoration and enhancement.

3. Cultivating physical and cultural campus landscapes with ecologically and environmentally friendly practices prioritizing justice, inclusivity, and transparency.

COMMUTING INTERNAL ANALYSIS TEAM (May 8th)

Faculty lead: Prof. Jonathan Levine.

Student Research Assistants: Grif Barron, Samuel Maves, Abas Shkemi, Gwyndolyn Sofka, and James Wooldridge.

The commuting analysis team was charged with identifying ways to reduce the carbon emissions resulting from U-M faculty, staff and student daily travel to and from U-M campuses. The team's draft final report spanned five key areas:

1. Housing development as a long-term solution to move U-M faculty, staff and students closer to campus to shorten the commute.
2. Land use planning.
3. Parking policies to reduce the incentives currently in place to drive.
4. Ridesharing, vanpooling and public transit solutions.
5. Alternatives to the commute such as telecommuting.

FOOD INTERNAL ANALYSIS TEAM (May 15th)

Faculty Co-leads: Profs. Lesli Hoey and Andy Jones.

Student Research Assistants: Caroline Baloga, Sarah Bellaire, Rebecca Harley, Marc Jaruzel, Nathalie Lambrecht.

The team was guided by a fundamental group of advisors which helped ground-truth its findings. The advisors included Alex Bryan, Martin Heller, Steve Mangan, Jeremy Moghtader, and Keith Soster.

The team focused on two main priority recommendations to reduce food-related emissions:

1. Shifting toward and scaling up plant-forward food procurement and consumer diets.
2. Reducing and diverting food waste from landfills.

The team also advocated changing campus culture and institutional capacity and norms to align with decarbonization of the University, including the many food systems on campus.

UNIVERSITY TRAVEL INTERNAL ANALYSIS TEAM (May 15th)

Faculty Co-leads: Profs. John Williams and Ming Xu.

Student Research Assistants: Hyo Sub Choi, William Chown, Jiangzhou Fu, Nate Hua, Cathy Lyu, Monica Yen.

The university-sponsored travel team focused its work on three priority areas for recommendations:

1. Standardizing travel data collection to facilitate carbon footprint calculation and provide feedback to travelers.
2. Developing mechanisms to assist a reduction in the amount of individual travel.
3. Establishing a mechanism for travelers on University business to pay a carbon mitigation fee for travel.

The remaining two IATs, on Building Standards and External Collaboration, will meet with the PCCN on June 5th.