



**MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**November 13, 2025 from 11:00 pm to 12:15 pm**  
**(Teams Meeting)**

**Present:** Carly Jazbec, Sustainability Chair, Emmanuel College  
Eris Zhou, Building President Representative  
Shiven Srivastava, Victoria College Sustainability Co-Chair  
Vikas Mehta, Interim COO, Sustainability Committee Chair  
Ajay Sharma, Associate Director, Hospitality Services  
Anthony Yeung, Associate CAO, Financial & Revenue Services  
Scott Johnston, Associate Dean, Office of the Dean of Students

**Absent:** Elena Sun, Victoria College Sustainability Commissioner  
Katherine Morley, Victoria College Student Representative  
Kate Haliash, Victoria College General Student Representative  
Jennifer Ankrett, CAO & Bursar

**Recording Secretary:** Véronique Morris, Administrative Manager, Infrastructure and Sustainability

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**Attendance:** Vikas Mehta welcomed everyone. Meeting started with a round of introductions.

Vikas Mehta provided an overview of the Sustainability Committee, including its terms of reference, membership, and current initiatives.

**Review and approval of previous minutes:**

*Motion to approve the minutes held on March 28, 2025, by Anthony Yeung and seconded by Scott Johnston. Carried.*

**Business arising from previous meeting:**

Vikas Mehta updated the Committee about the Net Zero 2050 development plan undertaken by Blackstone Energy that should be available within one to two month's time; the project timeline is April 2026, and the plan will be Vic U specific. The emission reductions for Vic U's Net Zero 2050 Plan focuses on operational emissions (Scopes 1 & 2): Scope 1 (Direct) focuses on carbon generated on campus (Grounds equipment, natural gas used for heating, etc.) and Scope 2 (Indirect) focuses on utilities (purchased steam, electricity, chilled water, etc.) purchased externally by the University, especially steam. Scope 3 (Indirect) deals with overall institutional emissions (travel, transportation, materials purchase, etc.). Blackstone Energy was hired to work on Scopes 1 and 2. The plan would have a roadmap to get to carbon neutral for these two scopes by 2050.

**New Business:**

*University of Toronto most sustainable residence competition:* the Committee reviewed the brochure and discussed how to join into the competition to make the move in and out of the residences more



sustainably and environmentally friendly and to reduce waste, including Emmanuel College.

The Committee reviewed the report [Best Practices Guide for Waste Reduction in U of T St. George Campus Residences](#), which includes items that are part of the competition. After the review, the Committee can decide what initiatives to take in the residences. Shiven Srivastava asked if there are metrics for these initiatives, and Vikas Mehta recommended to check the competition form for information about the point system. Shiven Srivastava mentioned that they meet monthly with the Dons and the residences are already engaged in different competitions. Shiven proposed to provide the residents' communities with the list of initiatives from the guide; the residents' communities would select the initiatives they could undertake.

Vikas Mehta stated that the Sustainability Committee is a great place for student engagement, and the Infrastructure and Sustainability department is happy to support students' initiatives and offer training for proper waste diversion; requests/initiatives can be emailed at [vicu.sustainability@utoronto.ca](mailto:vicu.sustainability@utoronto.ca); we don't have to formally join the U of T residences competition but we can improve upon current initiatives. Scott Johnston stated that sustainability related initiatives should be championed by the students. Eris Zhou will speak to her Don and Building Presidents as well.

Scott Johnson presented several initiatives discussed at the Dean's office meeting such as the "one-time only used items" initiative that could divert and reduce our footprint from a waste management perspective, or getting a large bin to dispose of items, re-use or swap items such as extra sheets, fans. Scott Johnston favoured having the Sustainability Commission and students who are interested in sustainability come up with some ideas. Vikas agreed that student-led initiatives with formal guidelines such as the community garden have a successful outcome.

Ajay Sharma stated that the key to a successful sustainable initiative is how sustainable the initiative is. A good example is the "Eat After Eight" and the "Garbage Separation" programs, which continuously improve every year. Initiatives taken by student bodies must be passed on to new members for continuity. The Chop Value program, introduced last year, is a contribution of the Sustainability Commission student members. Shiven Srivastava indicated that students can approach the Sustainability Commission with ideas and ensure that there is some sort of legacy for sustainable initiatives.

Scott Johnston asked what the next priority should be to improve the campus (i.e., waste, water usage, lighting). Vikas Mehta informed the Committee that nearly many of the annual deferred maintenance projects have built in sustainability component (i.e. LED lighting upgrades, water bottle stations, Blue Community initiative resulting in plastic waste diversion, windows replacement, etc.). If more signage on waste classification is needed, I&S can help; Groundskeeping team is working on the standardization of exterior garbage bins for ease of waste diversion. I&S welcomes suggestion from students to install more water bottle stations in academic buildings. I&S team is happy to review other student initiatives and how we can support the students from an administrative point of view. Waste diversion is an important initiative which is on-going and will require continuous improvement.



Carly Jazbec mentioned that a group of students at Emmanuel College were interested in tending to the gardens around Emmanuel College, Victoria College and Annesley Hall. Carly asked that Grounds and Maintenance staff, or other parties that may need to be involved, contact her to help the students setting up.

Eris Zhou raised concerns about microplastic pollution originating from the laundry coin-operated machines and asked if it is possible to have microfibre collectors. Vikas Mehta explained that the machines do not belong to the University and asked Anthony Yeung to review if there is any infrastructure improvement that can be done; the Maintenance team can work with the third-party vendor. **Action:** Anthony to review infrastructure improvement of laundry machines with his team. **Action:** Anthony will ask Asha Bridgemohan, Associate Director Ancillary Services to reach out to Kambiz Jahromi, Director Campus Operations to discuss this issue.

*2025 Vic U waste management and sustainability initiatives:*

Ajay Sharma highlighted the sustainable programs in place in Food Services, with a focus on affordability. Ajay Sharma encouraged Committee members to help spread the word about the new “Campus Comfort Combo” program, a budget friendly nutrition option for students, available once a week; vegan and vegetarian meals have been very successful with the students, implementation of eco-containers in both Ned’s Café and the Dining Hall; “Eat After Eight”, a food donation program in association with VUSAC; 90% of food containers are compostable or recyclable; “Chop Value” program with whom Food Services is associated to collect used chopsticks and turned them into furniture; “Greener by Default” a program Food Services is affiliated with to promote plant-based cuisine. Ajay Sharma discussed students’ concern about garbage separation at Ned’s Café and confirmed that organics are separated behind the scenes. Food Services is providing the students with the option to place their organics out in the Dining Hall as well. Food Services has created a “Trash 101” to assure students that garbage is separated, and organics are recycled. Food Services only sell local produce and encourage greenhouse produce to be processed. Food Services is refitting their equipment with the help of I&S to ensure equipment is power energy friendly.

Scott Johnston inquired about installing water bottle filling stations in residences. Vikas Mehta responded residences have readily available drinking water (i.e. kitchen sinks, common rooms), which is not the case in academic buildings. Scott Johnston mentioned that when it comes to shifting away from paper towel in bathrooms, he is aware of the balance between energy use and noise. The Dean’s office can provide reasonable cutlery and encourages the use of ticket containers in conjunction with the Dining Hall.

Shiven Srivastava informed the Committee that there is a problem with water heating in South House and students let the water run for several minutes before it heats up. **Action:** Maintenance team to investigate issue with domestic hot water. Fixx Request issued.



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Carly Jazbec asked if the students could use more renewable containers in Ned's Café. Ajay Sharma responded that there is already a program in place at Ned's Café with signage, which is the same as the program in the Dining Hall and containers and cutlery are all composted.

Anthony Yeung: no new business.

Scott Johnson: no new business.

Vikas Mehta thanked the Committee members and adjourned the meeting.

**Comments and questions:**

Add to next agenda item:

- Agreement to hold one in-person meeting annually, with two meetings conducted via Microsoft Teams.

**Next Meeting:**

Executive Secretary to send next meeting date.