

University Safety & Environmental Committee

12/11/25 Meeting Minutes

Members In Attendance:

Mr. Josh Edmonds – Manager, Housing & Residential Life
Mr. David Dan – Assistant Professor, Chemistry
Mr. Kevin Vedder – AVP, Human Resources
Mr. Fred Nichols – Director, University Police
Mr. Matt Bennett – Team Lead, Appalachian Center for Craft
Ms. Irene Sullivan – Administrative Services Specialist II, Communications & Marketing
Mr. David Hobbs – Administrative Services Specialist III, EHS, Chair
Dr. Chad Rezsnyak – Associate Professor, Chemistry
Dr. Jonathan Wiley – Assistant Professor, Counseling & Psychology
Dr. Abdul Momin – Assistant Professor, Agriculture
Dr. Neal Hunt – AVP, Research & Economic Development
Mr. Steve Norris – Team Lead, Facilities-Locksmith
Ms. Joni Gilmore – Administrative Services Coordinator II, College of Emerging & Integrative Studies
Mr. Dan Warren – AVP Facilities & Business Services, *Committee Executive Officer*
Ms. Michele Chumley – Facilities Administration Coordinator II, *Committee Administrative Services*

Absent Members: *Link to meeting recording emailed to absent members*

Dr. Edward Beason – Director, Student Affairs
Dr. Sid Bundy – Assistant Professor, Accounting
Dr. Jim Baier - Assistant Professor, Agriculture
Ms. Sonya Haney – Budget Planning & Management Coordinator IV, College of Engineering
Ms. Kimberly Hanna – Dean, School of Nursing
Ms. Claire Myers - SGA Representative
Mr. Braxton Westbrook – SGA Representative

1. Meeting was called to order, and a quorum was perceived at 11:02AM by Committee Chair, David Hobbs.
2. Committee Chair, David Hobbs, entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Motion was made by Neal Hunt and seconded by Fred Nichols. With no objections, motion passed.
3. Committee Chair, David Hobbs entertained a motion to approve the 9/18/25 meeting minutes. Motion was made by Neal Hunt and seconded by Joshua Edmonds. With no objections, motion passed.
4. Opening comments from Committee Chair, David Hobbs, included his optimism over the next year for improvement and movement with this committee. David also hopes to broaden the scope of the committee to include using resources and contacts at other universities in comparison with figuring things out.
5. Old Business
 - a. Executive Officer Dan Warren shared that the last set of drawings for the stairs between Stonecipher & Warf-Ellington were out for review last week and are

- completed. They will return to the architect and the civil engineer to finalize them for bidding out. Dan shared that it is going to be a big improvement.
- b. David Hobbs updated the committee on the Radiation Safety Officer position stating that they have been re-evaluating and posting based on some changes. In the meantime, they've been seeking outside assistance and exploring contractor solutions.
 - c. Dan Warren updated the status on the elevator upgrades stating that Regions two elevators are done awaiting final inspection, the RUC is complete, and the kitchen elevator is resolved.
 - d. Dan Warren shared that the new concrete contractor is an improvement over the previous one who over charged for low quality work. The new contractor is productive with quality work and has installed bike rack pads, one behind the library and has worked on the sidewalks around the "old quad."
 - e. Dan Warren updated the committee on Irene Sullivan's request, stating a bench and trash can were installed a week after the previous meeting at the shuttle stop at Foundation Hall. Dan shared that there were additional benches and trash cans from the AIEB project so there was pretty much no expense to accomplish that request. Irene Sullivan shared in the chat "The faculty, staff and students at Foundation Hall are very appreciative of the bench and trash can. I have witnessed both being used daily. Thanks for the quick response!"
 - f. Dan Warren shared updates with the steam pipe repairs stating that there are known issues and they are working with contractors to schedule.
 - Matt/Dan and BFA / East Stadium areas are time and weather dependent.
 - There have also been 70 plus steam traps replaced throughout campus, which increases the amount of condensate returned to the steam plant.
 - There is a leak by the steam plant (Dixie) and once repaired they can work on the Crawford gasket issue.
 - *Dr. Stinson has tasked Dan Warren with collecting an overview of problems with the steam distribution system. Dan will be working with Norman Walker and going through Capital Projects to get a campus consultant as well. The plan is to ask for pipe replacement in phases to stay ahead of issues.*
 - *Increased pressure on the steam lines has also increased heat and is killing the grass. Assessing how deep the new pipe should be buried to not kill the grass will be reviewed as well.*

6. New Business

- a. David Hobbs shared the top findings in their gap analysis that the committee will have some involvement in assisting with.
 - First, there is a lack of training infrastructure university wide. The previous Director of EHS terminated the Legacy System and we have not found a new solution.
 - Kevin Vedder shared that Leslie Hamlett is in the training position now.
 - *David Hobbs shared his goal to have employee training in one system and integrated with the employee database. Possibly will discuss in Spring 2026 post Talon launch with Kevin Vedder.*

- Kevin shared phase 2 of Talon eventually will look at their LMS (Learning Management System) as there are limitations to our current D2L platform.
- Chad Rezsnyak shared the student/campus community is moving to Canvas LMS with the Freshman class starting in Fall 2026 and the rest of campus fully on it by Spring 2027.
- Kevin Vedder added that we would likely stick with D2L for this next year and then reassess Talon LMS at that time.
- The second item from the gap analysis that David Hobbs addressed in Christopher Clark's absence was Contractor Management, particularly the safety aspect.
 - The expectation is that any contractor, according to the Multi-Employer doctrine (OSHA), that we have on campus working, is subject to the same safety rules and regulations that we expect of our own employees, and that is not occurring.
 - Currently any department on campus can bid for a contractor and there is not a centralized system to know who they are, when they are on campus, and what work they are performing. *We need a structured system to track all of this.*
 - If the contractor does not have safety regulations set up internally as part of their business, we need to provide them with training we give our own employees. We need to monitor them. We need access to things like their incident rates to potentially veto contractors.
 - Christopher Clark would also like the opportunity to meet with contractors, depending on the scope of work, before they begin work.
 - *Dan Warren advised the first step he recommends is to get with purchasing and confirm if there is safety compliance standard language in the contracts, and if not it needs to be part of the contracts.*
 - *David Hobbs shared that Christopher Clark will have a detailed report to go over at the next meeting with recommendations of what we need to do.*
- The next issue stems from a lack of funding to solve safety issues across campus.
 - David shared, we find issues, provide a corrective action via a report, and next year when we return nothing is fixed.
 - 95% of the time the issues persist because the department does not have the funds to address the issues.
 - The single biggest impediment to seeking corrective action is lack of funding. Departments are expected to fix safety issues out of general budgets, and they do not have the funds.

- One suggestion is a general University Safety index or the possibility of departments setting aside a small portion of their budget for corrective actions to be addressed.
 - Neal Hunt shared that with research projects there is a certain percentage of the budget that goes to those issues.
 - *Please think about this and come up with ideas and suggestions on who to involve. This is something to move towards in the future.*
- b. *2025 Campus Security & Fire Safety Report deferred to the next meeting for Fred Nichols.*
- c. No Miscellaneous New Business

7. Status of EHS Projects – David Hobbs

- a. David shared their department is working on Policy 191 Bicycles and micro transportation devices on campus as one of the larger hazards we are facing on campus.
- The biggest issue is we are allowing these devices to be stored and charged in dorm rooms.
 - Most universities restrict storage of these devices inside because of their batteries and the risk of fire.
 - Lithium-ion batteries when they start to combust are an issue, you cannot just dump water to put the fire out, nor will a normal fire extinguisher put out the fire.
 - This will likely be a couple of years to fix and transition to new infrastructure that is needed.
 - Policy 191 Section V. Letter D is an incorrect statement as we do not have storage areas for these devices on campus.
 - *David Hobbs asked committee members to ask your contacts at other universities how they are safely addressing these devices on their campuses.*
 - We need a master plan, some ideas discussed were storage lockers outside the building, Dan Warren shared a solar charging device, also costly, GFCI protected, David Hobbs also suggested storing the batteries separate from the devices.
 - *David Hobbs and Joshua Edmonds will work on a survey for the Spring Semester of the residents to assess how many devices we have on campus.*
- b. David Hobbs shared that EHS is moving to Government Affairs in January,
- *400 Series of university policy will need to be updated to reflect the change in ownership of the department.*

8. Such Other Matters- none

9. Committee Chair David Hobbs entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Neal Hunt and seconded by Joshua Edmonds. Without objection, motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 11:46 AM.