Called to order 6:45 p.m.

**Voting Members in Attendance:**
Steve Baker (SB)
Joe Bretton (JB)
Tim Hazen (TH)
Mike Kenney (MK)
Andy Gruber (AG)
Nick Howard (NH)
Jimmy Jia (JJ)
James Hsieh (JH)
Matt Bachmann (MB)
Chris Williams (CW)
Dave Bailey (DB)

Reviewed report and minutes from October 4th annual meeting.

Motion to add Trustees’ report to minutes. Passed.
Motion to accept minutes as amended. Accepted.

**Reports**

**Rush Report**

JJ presented the 2000 budget, 2000 actual expenditures, and 2001 budget. Actual spending for 2000 was below budget of $12,575. The 2001 budget is increased to $13,480. The biggest increase is for transportation—no actives will have cars next fall. Rental cars and help from alumni will be needed. The rush book budget is significantly reduced, and the cell phone budget is eliminated, as many brothers have their own. Other items have been adjusted to reflect actual costs in 2000.

JJ: Issues related to 2002—the advising system will change.
SB: Next House, Burton-Conner, Baker and Senior House were approached with a new RA system, where freshmen choosing to live in an RA dorm make their housing selection during the summer, and are removed from the rush pool. Baker and Senior House rejected the proposal.
JJ: About 50 male freshmen have opted out so far.
SB: Will this impact the rush budget?
JJ: No.

Motion to accept rush budget. Passed.

JJ: We may move rush to later in the fall, and fund it from the social budget. We had 11 pledges in fall rush, and one pledge in spring rush this year.
JH: Are other houses doing spring rush?
JJ: I don’t know.

SB: SAE is gone; its houses are being sold. MIT’s worst fears are being realized—this is survival of the fittest. Don’t panic, but keep your noses clean.

**Treasurer’s Report**

JB: Not much change in per-person spending from 1999 to 2000. The apartment rentals set us back. This year we had increased electricity rates, a new water heater, and we paved the parking lot. Health
insurance (for Chay) went up a bit, and will go up a bit again next year. Costs remained level for most other things.

SB: Do we anticipate a surplus or a deficit?
JB: Looks like we’ll be a couple thousand dollars ahead.
SB: Uncollected term bills are creeping up again.
JB: We have only about $2500 outstanding now, and that should decrease this year.
MK: Are housing contracts effective at minimizing unpaid bills?
JB: To some degree. We have problems with MIT funding coming late, a few parental issues, and expense slips coming in late. The undergrads are doing a better job of collecting—more people are paying early for the 2% rebate.
MK: Are there any people to be concerned about, that we need to take contractual action on?
JB: No.

JB: The sprinkler loan was paid off this year, and the 1983 loan will be paid off, too. The only current loan is the 1992 loan.

Motion to accept treasurer’s report. Passed.

JH: Is Chay’s IRA paid up?
JB: Yes.

Old Business

Chay’s pension

New Business

Capital Improvement

MK prepared a pro forma projection of costs for relocation to Cambridge versus staying at Bay State Road. The figures are keyed to inflation. A base year was selected from the past 5 years, with no unusual expenses, and setting the operating surplus to zero. Added to this were capital expenditures for staying at Bay State Road. A 35-man house is assumed.

Under this projection, outlays for improvement exceed contributions into the Building Fund, which is also used to pay the mortgage. We may need to consider increasing the Building fund contribution.

SB: No houses are setting enough aside to capitalize repairs.

MK: We’re looking at a $2700 term bill (with this projection).
DB: Current term bill is $2450.

MK: In Cambridge the mortgage would be higher. The Cambridge projection assumes a $4 million building cost, and 45 members. It also assumes that the Building Fund is consumed, and a new mortgage of $1.5 million at 8.5% interest for 30 years.

NH asked whether expenses would scale based on number of members.
MK: Only food and commissary would be dependent on the number of members.

SB: One issue is whether IRDF funding will be available.

MK: We would start off [in Cambridge] with term bills $500-550 higher than at BSR. It would be 15-20 years before the new house became cheaper.

SB: It’s reasonable to expect that 10 years out there would be repairs needed on the new structure.
MK: In the long term, Cambridge is a good move. In the short term it’s a higher burden on the undergrads ($10-11 thousand per year), but at least they’ll have a nice, new house.

NH: But there will be an increased risk of small pledge classes.

MK: Not sure how the cost would compare to the dorms.
JH: MIT is planning to raise dorm rents.
JB: We’re currently about $1500 cheaper than dorms, so we have some room to increase prices and still be competitive.
SB: Should we raise the price, or do we want to be cheaper?
AB: It’s nice not to worry about the cost (of term bills) when rushing.
NH recommends staying below dorm prices.
SB asked how much dorms cost: $7000-$8000 is a conservative estimate not including food.

SB: Another option is to increase term bills and spend the money on capital improvements.
NH: Or put it back into the Building Fund.
MB recommends staying competitive with the Greek system for now, and consider changing term bills after 2002.
TH: Some houses are cheaper because they don’t have a cook. We could never compete with Student House, for example, nor should we try.

SB asked MK’s opinion on the two options.
MK: Even early on, the premium of moving is worth the amenities. Given the market, it wouldn’t make us uncompetitive.

DB: In talks with undergrads, the biggest downside raised is the timing of the move. If we could move before 2002, it would be nice to have a new house. But if we move after 2002, we have to regain footing in a new rush system, and then move.

SB: The problem is that this is a 5-7 year decision, so it’s hard to know what to do with undergraduate input.
TH: MIT will likely not make a start on this for 5-7 years, so a new house isn’t a choice for 2002.
SB last talked with Steve Immerman in the fall of 2000, and “all the air had gone out” of MIT’s side of the planning.
TH: According to SI, MIT has so many things on its plate before it can get to us.

SB: Thoughts on raising the number of members up to 45?
DB: Our 2002 goal is to keep the numbers as high as possible. We have 14 sophomores and 11 freshmen who will be seniors and juniors in 2002. If we have 15 pledges this year, we’ll be close to [45].
TH: I think the [pledging] numbers depend on the number of beds available in the MIT system.
SB: We need a certain number of beds to defray the costs of elevators, etc. We can argue about whether it’s 50 or 40, but 45 is as good a number as any.
TH: It won’t be 35.
MK: This is a strategic decision. It’s not clear what the best move is.
SB: I thought this would be clearer. We’ve been talking about this for two years. But 10-15 years out is still unclear.
TH: I feel we should wait and see for 2002.
MK: Improvements might increase the Bay State Road value.
SB: I doubt it’ll increase the value much.

List of Capital Improvement Projects

NH: First, fix code violations, such as sprinklers. Next, fix items that will save us money by recovering the costs. Third, things we need to do regardless of the first two concerns. Fourth, things that will make us more desirable during rush.
The priority item is the sprinklers, which we will address later this spring. Another item is switching to a gas in-line boiler--both boilers are beyond their useful life.

TH asked if there might be any short-term cost recovery; NH thought perhaps for the gas water heater. There wouldn’t be very much cost recovery from new boilers, but they would retain their value when the houses are sold.

AG: Some items seem small, like the “Life Safety” items.
SB: All of those could be addressed in a single year for $20,000. New heating would cost about $100,000 and be a multi-year project. Replacing the windows in 64 would cost about $20,000.

SB: Aesthetic items (related to making the house attractive during Rush) are very low priority; maybe we need to do some high priority items, and some low.
AG: Floors are small bucks, right?
SB: About $10 per square foot. Replacing the 66 first floor would cost about $10,000.

SB: Comments on this list?
AG: Want to see some of these get done.
MK: It looks like there is a consensus on spending $20,000 this year.
AB: We’re set on fixing the sprinklers this year.

TH: We should put off the new heaters.
NH: Wanted to put them on the list. We would need a new gas line, which would be costly.
SB: The cost of a new line is peanuts compared to the total cost. Combined heating and water is incredibly expensive. You have to replace everything. Electrical and plumbing work is easier.

DB: How much commitment is there to fixing up the house before 2002?
NH: Give me a list of undergrads who want to help research projects.
SB: We want undergrad input so that the aesthetic items aren’t neglected.
NH: This is to have a plan in place; not for immediate execution.

NH: The water heater was replaced 6 weeks ago—yes, it was copper-lined, with a 10-year warranty. It was replaced on warranty, plus about $1,800 for labor.
SB: Question—can we put off a major overhaul until 2005?
NH: We should expect to spend about $1,800 a year, and about $4,000 every three years for a total replacement.
DB: It doesn’t seem like heating is a big issue. It’s only a problem three days a year, and never in September.

SB: Undergrads should make a list of priorities for appearance. We will do those items that can be done.

MB: Bannisters—how nice a repair should we do? We should do more itemized cost research.

JB: Last year we only spent $1,400 on maintenance, so we should have room for more this year.
SB: But the year before, we spent $32,000.
NH: You should consult with the House Manager to eliminate niceties that aren’t essential, like spending $2,000 on the bar.

SB: We’ve voted to earmark $20,000. Do we need to give the committee more direction or should we let them go?
AG: Perhaps put $40,000 on a list for more detailed costs, and then pick and choose from that.
SB: Undergrads should make a list for the committee, which will then choose items to itemize in detail.
SB: Dave Bailey, we’d like to hear from you at 6294.
SB: Let’s postpone the move until that time comes, and focus on the next two years, with the safety and aesthetic issues.
MB: Now that we’re putting it off for five years, the clerk should put together a package of floating information to prevent redundant discussions.

6294

SB: Where do we stand on invitations and plans?
DB: Haven’t heard from the secretary on where we stand.
AB: There’s an invitation in the Delta Digest, right?
DB: Yes.
MB: Doesn’t Stewart Howe normally send out cards automatically?
SB: Have the issues been settled regarding BYOB and co-ed events? Have the secretary email me.

SB: Should we try to have a meeting at 6294?
DB: We may have an initiation.
SB: A ritual meeting for the alums? That would be great. We used to have our annual meeting at 6294. Nut sure when that changed. The bylaws say the meeting will be on the fourth weekend in April. It probably changed because we must file taxes four-and-a-half months after the fiscal year, which ends on June 30.

SB: Should we change the fiscal year? No, it makes sense to end it in June. But we want some kind of meeting to encourage attendance.
MB: A brief meeting.
SB: Yes, topics of interest, and the board’s recent work.

Resident Advisor

SB: Does Bryan Adams plan to stay?
DB: Yes.
SB: Is he working out OK?
DB: Yes—he has been helpful whenever there have been issues.
JB: Are people going to the RA for advice?
DB: He comes to house meetings when asked, and sometimes he offers advice there.
MB: Theta Xi is not really a place where people tend to reach out for help.
NH: So he’s staying for just one more year?
DB: He has no specific plan (beyond next year).

Chapter Advisor

TH: I’ve been struggling to find the time and the desire to be proactive. That’s not about to change.
SB: We’re not inviting you to resign.
TH: I don’t wish to resign, but I’m not fulfilling my role.
AB: Steve, what are the qualifications?
SB: Originally, the chapter advisor’s job was to protect the ritual and make sure it was getting passed on. We had a verbal ritual until the 1930s. Now, his job is to provide a longer-term perspective. It should be someone who’s been around for awhile, and who’s planning to stay for the long haul. Theta Xi tends to have very young advisors, who stick around for two or three years. The ideal advisor might not be around every week, but could be around when asked.
TH: I’m happy to continue as I have been, but things seem to be running smoothly. One plus is that I’m on campus, so I’m always nearby.
SB: The Chapter Advisor ensures that Theta Xi knows and follows the Ritual, and is entitled to attend meetings; he’s the Association’s representative to MIT, and goes to meetings there; he represents the chapter at the Grand Lodge; and whatever else is agreed upon. There’s no obligation for him to be at house meetings.
AB: In general, the undergrads are pretty happy with the current setup.
MB: Should we post a query for interest to tx-net? Or don’t we want an active CA?
MK: If you do post to the ‘net, include the responsibilities and a job description.
SB: We have a very active Corp. Treasurer in Joe Bretton, and he’s been taking on some of the advisor’s roles.
MK: Should we increase the Building Fund contribution? This should probably happen in the near future.
SB: We probably have some room now that the 1983 loan is up this year. Let’s discuss at next meeting.

Topics for Discussion

JH: We should try to increase local alumni participation. There’s no alumni presence at ritual meetings. Should we try to increase local activities for alumni?
JB: Dave Cultice was going to work on this. We talked about having an alum BBQ (on Head of the Charles weekend). Steve Baker was about the only alum to show.
MB: Most alums only come back if someone they know will be there. First get the alums together, and then get them involved with the undergrads.
MK: Target activities toward a specific class or group of classes, for example, 1990 to 1993, do something for them. And different activities for different ages.
Shourov Chatterji: Maybe have one member of each class as a liasion? There’s one in my class, and we get together.
SB: My class is getting together, but in Acton.
JB: My class is getting together.
TH: We did that for years, too.

JH: Should we have alumni announcements on the website?
TH: We need to rejuvenate the tx-boston list, basically.
SB: Some things the house has been doing are good, like the announcement for initiation. Keep doing it. And the board needs to take the lead on some of these things.

SB: Thank you all for being here.

Adjourned 8:30 p.m.