Theta Xi Housing Corporation of MIT
Board Meeting - July 26, 2005
6:42pm

Present:
Bachmann
Baker
Berkheimer
DeCleene
Hazen
Howard
Kenney
Maples
Herman
Williams

Others: Harlan, Lin

Past Minutes (AB)
- Adopted September 28th minutes

Treasurer Report (NH)
- Adopted final report for FY2003-2004
- FY2004-2005: no firm numbers yet, but looks like another surplus (but less than FY2003-2004 surplus). Accounts are rebalanced to stable levels and the "sprinkler loan" to the undergrads has been paid off.
- FY2005-2006: corporation 'charge' to undergrads will drop from 75k to ~60k this year, reflecting that balances are re-established
- MIT Assistance: mechanism for reimbursement is changing.
- Budgeting for $15k + RA stipend + IRDF Grants.
- 2003-2004 term bills: FALL/SPRING ~3100
- 2004-2005: FALL 3100, SPRING 2700
- 2005-2006: FALL budget 3200?
- Dorms: 2200-2500 + meal plan
- Brophy: email undergrad budget to the board
- Fall: 20 residents (incl. 2 boarders = Sebastian, Aaron Wiles), 10 non-residents
- Howard: get 2004-2005 report together for next meeting

Clerk (AB)
- I'm moving to California. Need to find a new clerk.

Advisor (CW)
- No report

New Business

Q: house feeling on changing agreement with associates about residency?

CW: General agreement at house level that we need to set better expectation at bid time and maybe language to force people to move in.

MH: note that other houses have had this backfire on them - AEPi had this completely unable to recruit and is now being more lenient.

TM: Why aren't the 9-10 people here? Some thinking of moving in junior year (all are sophomores)

MH: not parents, usually social/academic/personal choice/etc.
NH: How have they reacted to $800 non-resident charge?
MH: About half say it's ridiculous, half say they understand.

SB: What does the chapter propose to do if occupancy is as low as 20 in fall?
MH: Undergrads reacted negatively to grad students as boarders. Only 1 brother is a 1st year grad student, and he's already staying here.

SB: Financially we seem to be stable with 20 residents and 10 non-residents, thanks to MIT assistance and non-resident charge.
NH: Building fund contribution has dropped significantly.

SB: So we have three possible ways to get more residents: 5th year brothers, non-resident brothers, and unaffiliated grad students. Any others?
MH: Could get undergraduate MIT women. Recent alums only allowed for semester after that they graduate. That covers what MIT will allow.

Bending the rules - could allow Dustin (member, but not MIT student this semester), Joy, etc.
MH: Some rumor from MIT that if they catch us breaking the rules, they would reduce our assistance.
CB: Dorm license from Boston allows MIT students only.
TH: What about summer boarders?
SB: MIT lawyers have looked at that, allowing status quo for now.
NH/MB: Basic opinion, give chapter lee way to allow any Theta Xi to live here. Would want board approval for non-Theta Xi’s.
NH/TH: Also suggest to cap “illegal immigrants” at a small number 3-4.
AB: What about Aaron Wiles?
SB: Talked with MIT, they’ve said something about allowing a single exception if we give him some sort of advisor role.

MH: Talked with Rogers in April, they were only okay with Aaron then. Didn't push harder because didn't think we had any other possibilities for the fall then (Dustin was planning to come to MIT, Joy was planning to leave).
CW/MK: Uncomfortable with going outside of MIT guidelines, liability and risk mgmt concerns.
AB: Is this a budget discussion or philosophical? Allowing 2-3 extra boarders doesn't seem to be a big budget impact, these seem to be philosophical.
SB: Yes this is more of a philosophical discussion.
SB: What is story with Joy and Dustin?
MH: Joy - finished PT at Simmons, been here for 2 years, now doing internship and
MH: Dustin - not sure. MB: One thing he's said is that he's leaving MIT and looking for another school in the area.

NH: Move to allow chapter to make a decision on Dustin for this fall semester. Needs to come back to board before spring semester. Second by TJ.
Passes many-to-1

BD: Impact of boarders on house/rush/atmosphere/etc?
General conversation that it was a mixed message.

NH: Same motion for Joy.
Leaning more to not allow - much harder to justify to MIT.
MK: Make it an at-will lease?
SB: Motion to allow chapter to decide on Joy, allowing them to give her an at-will lease?
Fails 1-to-many
SB: Advice for chapter on encourage non-residents to convert?
NH: Set up designated “crash space”.
TM: Good stop gap for this year's sophomore class, but don't want to get into this pattern for future classes.
SB: One issue is that “crash space” was noisy.
MH: Chapter is adjusting this year. One quiet room for people to come study, one social room.
NH: advocates moving to sorority model, where living in house is a duty if required.

BD: other issues?
MH: social (friends in dorms), transportation (may be helped by daytime saferide this year), concerns about decline in campus involvement.

NH: need to stop trying to reinvent the wheel - other TXi chapters.
SB: summarizing: rush them continuously throughout their life or make it a commitment/expectation up front.
MK: could use the non-resident fee as rebate against future term bills IF they move in.

SB: what is new member program? needs to be more than coming across for meetings and cleaning.

MB: add more interactiveness to social program - not just movie night.
SB: wrapping up discussion.

MB: Want to set a limit where house is forced to have boarders.

SB: Don't do that for this fall, table to next meeting - whether board wants to establish min occupancy. MB: Okay.

Trustees Report (BD)
  • No report

Improvements (MB)
  • AAA Royal Windows (from FSILG Coop). Going with curved windows to meet historical commission requirements. Got estimate for all windows, both houses - $83k.

SB: do we need both houses?

MB: Wasn't that plan. My opinion is to just do 64, expect that quote will come down ~$50k.

SB: Wants to see proposal that they bring tomorrow, have them fax it to him. Consensus: Delegate authority to house improvement committee, board only wants to do 64, expects it to be ~$50k.
  • Banisters: next big thing after windows are done.
  • Kitchen: MB thinks this need attention soon. Cabinetry is big issue.
  • Tm: can use same carpenter as banisters for quote?

SB: Egress inspection status? Dorm license expired on May 1, need by September 1.
  • need to get RA rear window fixed so that bars release in an emergency.

National Convention

5 undergrads attending. $1400 reimburse from corporation, mostly from set aside account. Board agrees that this is okay as discussed on mail list.

Annual Stockholders Meeting

Need to have one. Need to send notice via mail, 60 days in advance.

Will hold meeting on September 21st.
Board Member Status

Give this some thought and get back to Steve.
AB: looking for a new Clerk.
SB: need to recruit more new board members (AB is youngest) and volunteers (Davis, Gruber examples)
MH: remember that any stockholder, including juniors and seniors, can serve on board.
SB: Task for next meeting - think about how to recruit up and coming alumni as volunteers. Assign to Matt Herman. What do we want these alumni volunteers to do?
BD: Look for specific people who have something special to offer.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 23rd, 7pm meal.