

DormCon Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2013
Location: Next House

Agenda

- 1) Constitution Review and Ratification**
- 2) Bexley: Update and Next Step**
- 3) Discussion of DSL Communication Meetings/Housemaster Role in Communication**
- 4) Funding Proposal: Senior Haus Fall Fest**
- 5) Optional Discussion Topic: Sharing of best practices for information dissemination and input gathering between dorm execs and dorm residents.**

Attendance

Dorm	Representative	Absent
Baker	Andrea Gutierrez Marty	Absent
Burton-Conner	Akhil Raju	
East Campus	Kelly Snyder	
MacGregor	Walter Menendez	Absent
McCormick	Henna Jethani	Katherine Silvestre
New House	Anna Ho	
Next House	Linda Seymour	
Random Hall	Jacob Hurwitz	Proxy: Ben Kraft
Senior Haus	Alina Kononov	
Simmons Hall	Cosmos Darwin	
President	Eli Ross	
Vice President	Katherine Silvestre	
Secretary	Caitlin Heber	
Treasurer	Phoebe Whitwell	

Begin: 6:10
End: 7:03

1) Constitution Review and Ratification

- a) Ben and Jacob have been working on updating DormCon's constitution to reflect reality. The main changes were to include-
- A definition of DormCon membership. Membership is now split into two categories- full membership and associate membership. Full member dorms pay the DormCon tax. Associate member dorms are not represented at DormCon, but their residents may still run for DormCon officer positions.
 - Budgeting Guidelines. Financial section now defers information to this document.
 - Two Vice Presidents for Residence Exploration
 - Dining Chair(s), up to two may be elected.
 - DormCon Executive Meetings
 - Election Timing. The outdated version had April as the deadline for elections. The updated version now states that elections "shall be held annually, no later than second-to-last meeting of the spring academic term."
- b) General Discussion-
- The wording of the new policy stated that DormCon Exec would vote on dorms rejoining DormCon. Ben Horkley clarified that the rationale behind this wording was to allow DormCon flexibility in allowing a dorm to rejoin. After a very detail oriented discussion, everyone agreed that DormCon voting members, not exec, should be the ones voting on allowing a dorm to rejoin. Additionally, it was unanimously decided that a dorm should be allowed to rejoin once they begin paying dues again. These two factors, paid dues and a vote of approval from DormCon's voting members, are needed to become full members of DormCon. The general consensus was to make it relatively easy to rejoin because DormCon, ideally, should represent all dorms. However, wording was added to clarify that a situation such as succeeding and rejoining, cannot happen in two consecutive semesters, and that such behavior should be taken into account when voting on the dorm rejoining DormCon.
 - Further discussion occurred on the situation in which a dorm would like/need to join mid-semester. General consensus was that when a dorm joins mid-semester, dues would be proportional to the remainder of the academic term.
 - During discussion, there was emphasis on allowing anyone to come to DormCon meetings, including individuals who are residents of associate member dorms. Anyone who wants to be involved in DormCon can and should come to meetings, including exec meetings (an email to exec asking to come is necessary to attend).
 - Ben Horkley updated the Constitution during the remainder of the meeting with all the material above.

Vote passes unanimously (8 voting members present)

2) Bexley: Update and Next Step

- Eli: The joint student and faculty advisory committee reviewing Bexley was told at last week's meeting that the recommendation to demolish Bexley had been made due to the advanced structural damage of the building and for financial reasons. The committee, at least the student portion of the committee, was aware of the disrepair of the building, but was unaware of financial information because of MIT policies on financial disclosure. The decision to demolish, as opposed to completely gutting the building, came without warning. The press release publicizing the recommendation was released during the meeting where the committee was told the decision. It seemed the recommendation/decision came from Facilities, not DSL.
- Alina and Cosmos: Do we have a strategy of being involved in a more legitimate way the next time around? What are our next steps?
- Eli: a committee will be formed to look at undergraduate housing and what the land will be in the future. The process of looking forward is ongoing. Alina and Matthew are interested in reaching out to dorms about the crowding situation (do we need more, what do we need, etc.) They also have a meeting with Dean Humphries about the upcoming housing changes and to make sure everyone's on the same page. Leonid do you have any another idea on next steps?
- Leonid: a formal letter to President Reif would likely be the most effective next step.
- Eli: Chancellor Grimson will be filling a new position. Any individual passionate about the new chancellor should write a letter of recommendation for a candidate.
- Kelly: can we write a letter describing what we want in a Chancellor? I could possibly spearhead this and will send out an email asking about people's interest.

3) Discussion of DSL Communication Meetings/Housemaster Role in Communication

- The housemaster relationship with students, both personally and professionally, varies wildly across the dorms. Although Housemasters will always be contacted, going to student leadership is essential. In some dorms, residents don't interact with their housemasters. Two tracks of communication need to occur and will be occurring – one with housemasters and the other with student government.
- Leonid: how does this translate to decision making? Eli: we touched on this in our letter, but this discussion is about how you communicate with students. DSL is on board of working with student leadership.
- Matthew: what about difficult housemaster relationships? Is the RLAD a substitute? Eli: RLADs, in some situations, are more effective at communicating. This direction will also be pursued. Survey might go out about communication between dorm residents and the house team. There should always be an attempt to communicate with students.

4) Funding Proposal: Senior Haus Fall Fest

- Senior Haus would like \$405 for decorations for fall fest party.
- Jacob: will drinks with ID allowed?
- Alina: we will not have professional bar tenders, but yes, there will be alcohol and it has been registered through proper channels.
- Eli: presidents should advertise these awesome events DormCon is funding

Vote passes unanimously for \$405

5) Optional Discussion Topic: Sharing of best practices for information dissemination and input gathering between dorm execs and dorm residents.

How do you communicate and get feedback from your residents?

- Linda: Next House uses email and online forms. Monthly house meetings occur, and advertisement of events includes putting up posters in the main stairwell and talking to wing representatives.
- Alina: Senior Haus also emails residents which sometimes works and other times it doesn't. Occasional meetings happen. Senior Haus had a trial run of floor representative system and it wasn't effective.
- Kelly: East Campus has a "hall chair" for each floor. They have meetings every other week for exec and hall chairs, but residents come, too. Leonid: emailing chairs works well for dissemination of information.
- Ben Kraft: Random uses email (specific, smaller email lists) and house meetings occur occasionally.
- Akhil: Burton-Connor uses email, and general body meetings don't happen. The dorm has floor reps/chairs, but the chairs do not share information. Usually, information goes straight to residents.
- Cosmos: Simmons government, housemasters, and RLAD send emails. The dorm holds regular town hall style meetings every other week and the officers make announcements at house meetings.
- Anna: New House has different living communities and presidents of each community meet. Additionally, each community has their own area meetings. Presidents are the people to go to for sharing information with residents.
- Katherine: McCormick has executive team and house meetings once a month. Exec meetings have just started happening and they start the hour before dorm wide meetings. Generally emails and flyers work well to spread information