

**DormCon Meeting
October 22, 2015
Location: McCormick**

Agenda:

- 1. In-Dorm Storage Announcements**
- 2. Move-In/Move-Out Policy Announcements**
- 3. Freshmen Dinner Updates**
- 4. Updates from Dining Chairs**
- 5. Updates from Housing Chairs**
- 6. VPSL Workshop**

Attendance:

Dorm	Representative	Absent
Baker	Mandy Lee	
Burton-Conner	Paul Hager	
East Campus	Sonja Postak	
MacGregor	Arthur Delarue	
McCormick	Mary Delaney	
New House	Trey Watts	x
Next House	Haley Horowitz	
Random Hall	Eric Mannes	x
Senior House	Adrianna Rodriguez	Proxy: Rodrigo Uricoechea
Simmons Hall	Kate Farris	
President	Yonadav Shavit	Proxy: Caitlin Heber
Vice President	Caitlin Heber	
Secretary	Sabrina Madera	
Treasurer	Jacqueline Liu	

Start Time: 19:37

0. Introductions

1. In-Dorm Storage Announcements

- Caitlin: The Institute wants to consider phasing out in-dorm storage, and the house managers are going to meet to make a plan for this.
 - Sadun: Why?

- Caitlin: The New House damages and having to pay for that has made them weary.
- Kate: Why can't they just say they're not responsible and let us store things?
 - Sonja: In my conversation with Henry, he said that it's come out of the water damage in New House. He didn't explicitly say, but despite the fact that they say they're not responsible, if you push hard enough they will rollover and pay for damages.
- Haley: Is this only personal storage, or private as well? Because, Next rents out the storage over the summer, but it's not personal storage.
 - Caitlin: It's just the personal storage; that should still be there.
- Mandy: Is MIT looking into a contract with a company for storage? Without in-dorm storage and the Metropolitan Warehouse closing, where are we supposed to store things?
 - Caitlin: We have stressed this in our meeting with Humphries, but he said they're looking into this, yes.
- Sadun: So, the ideal situation is that they're not responsible for our stuff, but we can still store things?
- Caitlin: We're going to continue the conversation on what they're doing to replace the Met. We should be aware though that this might be something they won't compromise on.
- Sonja: I think Henry did seem to indicate that he was interested in having us in the conversation after Nika and Bob have it.
- Sadun: Who's in charge of the House Managers program?
 - Sonja: Dennis Collins is covering as much of Roderick's job as he can, but on this issue, Henry is driving it.

2. Move-In/Move-Out Policy Announcements

- Caitlin: On Monday, they'll be looking over the Move-In/Move-Out policy; in particular, giving House Managers enough time to clean rooms before move ins.
 - Kate: There was a big student push to extend the move out time, and giving House Managers more time might shorten this.
- Sonja: I don't know what the deal is for other dorms, but East Campus is never vacant. It's different all across the Institute. East Campus was a nightmare; we had freshman moving in, and people weren't checked out and it was a problem. It's a campus wide conversation.
- Arthur: They already have a really hard job, and we have to be understanding of that.
- Sean: During REX in Baker, everyone had to be checked out of their rooms and had to have all their stuff out. House Cleaning cleans all the rooms in that time.
 - Arthur: At MacGregor as well.
- Kate: We also have to keep in mind early returns.

3. Freshmen Dinner Updates

- Yuge: I haven't heard from McCormick.
 - Mary: We're having it Monday..
- Yuge: If it doesn't seem to be happening before October, shoot Julie or me an

- email. East Campus?
- Sonja: Ours is happening tonight.
 - Yuge: Senior House?
 - Rodrigo: It's happening next week.

4. Updates from Dining Chairs

- Mary: Kate and I got with Dining a couple weeks ago, HTC won't be meeting this semester.
 - Kate: Although, Colombo said today we'll definitely be meeting.
- Mary: They're meeting individually with the dining chairs of each dorm, but there isn't a forum to initiate campus wide discussions, unless we initiate them. If there's anything that comes up in dorms that you want discussed, let us know.
- Sonja: Who got emailed?
 - Mary: The presidents of dorms that have dining halls.
- Kate: Dining has been decentralized.
- Caitlin: Is anyone else concerned about IAP meal plans? Are they happening?
 - Mary: They should be. There hasn't been an HTC meeting, but there should be, and we'll talk about this.
- Caitlin: What about the dining contract?
 - Mary: We met with Colombo, but they're really focused on the Visiting Committee right now. We have a meeting set for the second week of November.
- Caitlin: What is your general timeline to plan on presenting them with something?
 - Kate: We have to work on it, they're going to come up with a timeline and we'll start working on it. We'll have recommendations by the end of the year.

5. Updates from Housing Chairs

- Sonja: So, Henry and I are meeting every other week. He said the goal for the replacement for Dan Roderick is to have someone by January. Dan Roderick was the Director of Housing Operations, and he managed House Managers and Allied Barton. Now Dennis, who is above Dan, is doing most of his job, covering what he can. The people who report to Dan are also being asked to pick up a lot of the slack as well. Henry said maybe one of us from DormCon could be on the search committee looking for candidates. Also, one of the House Managers brought up that it felt like their budget was being cut, and we brought it up to Henry, and he basically laughed at us. He said that they were trying to reduce waste. It sounds like housing is trying to centralize spending. Henry told us that at some of the other schools, there was only one person who did the House Managers job for the entire campus, so keep your ears low. We also asked about the Night Watch rotation, and if it was considered a success. Henry said it was, but it's on hold until a new Director is found.
 - Caitlin: Do you know why they think it's a success?
 - Sonja: Officially, they wanted to do it so that when a person is out in a dorm, someone can cover and do it well. Because, there's been situations where Night Watches didn't know how to get around.

- Sadun: What was the Night Watch rotation?
 - Sonja: The Night Watches all switched for a week; Henry went on another rant and said that he wishes students didn't have as much ownership over Night Watch. People get really attached to them. Henry said apparently some Night Watch don't retire even when they want to, because they feel like they're letting us down. He feels bad. This will be a discussion we have in the spring.
- Haley: So what are they proposing to do?
 - Sonja: Nothing so far, nobody knows. It'll be a conversation for the spring, and I stressed to Henry that we want to be involved in this. We brought the security charter to him, and got some feedback. We're trying to get a committee running.
 - Caitlin: Kyle, Sonja, Yo, and I wrote this charter last week on what we want.
- Sonja: I also stressed to him who we want on the committee, and why we wanted them. We had some conversations and made some changes.
- Caitlin: That will be coming out to you in the near future.
- Sonja: We talked a little bit about the changes to the leave policy, so Yo and Caitlin asked us to bring up an obvious reason for why people couldn't get back to their dorms when they left. We brought it up to Henry, sounds like there's no official answer; it's just hard because of crowding. Without a formal recommendation from a medical professional that says a person would have problems if they went back to their dorm, there's nothing stopping them, except space. If you have any questions, I can shoot them to Henry.

6. VPSL Workshop

- Caitlin: Although confidentiality is pretty binding in this committee, I would like to hear your thoughts on the following questions: what are the three most important opportunities for the next Vice President of Student Life? What are some of the challenges? How the search committee should prioritize their search; what is more important to you in the next VPSL? Also, feel free to give me recommendations for names of people you think would be fit.
 - Haley: Are we talking about stuff that's not being currently done, or things we want different?
 - Mandy: We have a very diverse student body, which means people have vastly different opinions on things. The VPSL will need to work with all parties to ensure happiness.
 - Rodrigo: This person should be aware of Cindy's plans to potentially change the housing system.
 - Sadun: A major opportunity will be the successful colonization of Rage House. The number one challenge is fixing the DSL organizational culture.
 - Arthur: One opportunity is working with dedicated student leaders, and one challenge is working with students who are very stubborn.
 - Sean: One challenge is overcoming the current bias students have on DSL. Also, fixing the leadership in DSL.

- Sonja: The chancellor has the initiative on working with the student-administration relationship; they have to be on board with that as well.
- Rodrigo: I'd say we want someone who's had a position similar to this one, and someone who's fostered a good relationship with the students; particularly someone who hasn't had a hunger strike against them.
 - Caitlin: I actually brought this up to Jag, and she said hunger strikes are prevalent in higher institutions.
- Sonja: This one might be harder, but I'd love to see someone who's had experience with MIT already, as student or faculty. To understand where we're coming from, and be able to change DSL.
 - Sean: On that note, I think that's great. When people from the MIT community challenge us, we listen.
 - Kate: I think we should avoid being that insular; people from outside communities can have an interesting perspective on this.
 - Haley: I think we could just say they would have a strong academic or engineering background.
 - Sadun: I don't give a shit about their educational background.
 - Kate: I don't care either, but if anything, I'd rather them have a humanities background.
 - Yugi: I think someone who has an educational background in doing jobs like this would be better.
 - Sadun: We want a wide pool. We don't want to restrict them on their resume.
- Paul: A VPSL with a similar academic background would be helpful.
- Arthur: What's the timeline for this committee? Are there even any candidates?
 - Caitlin: I cannot tell you.
- Rodrigo: Just to clarify, Colombo is retiring in June?
 - Caitlin: Yes.
- Arthur: What is the typical level of experience that we want? Do we want someone with 30 plus years of experience, or a young and upcoming swashbuckler?
- Caitlin: We should also consider what kind of degree they have, perhaps.
 - Arthur: They're dealing with people. That's not a good indicator.
- Mandy: They need to have ideas about what they want to do, but also be open to hearing other ideas. They can't just come here and go through listening to other people.
 - Sadun: Every new member goes on a listening tour though, even Cindy. She spent a year with the mindset that she wanted to learn about MIT.
- Sonja: My biggest concern is the two ends of that spectrum: the "I've done this job and know what I want to do", or the "I have no idea and I'll do anything anyone says". They do need to have a degree of leadership or initiative, and need to understand what they want to do and get it done.
 - John: They should be able to listen to ideas, and also accept that they're wrong.
- Mandy: Knowing how much to weigh everyone's opinions. They'll have a lot of people talking at them, but they need to know how much to consider each one.
- Hope: Someone who has their own opinions, and stands up to their ideas.

- Sadun: What are the things we are hoping VPSL to do when they show up?
 - Kate: We already discussed changing leadership in the DSL; there's a lack of communication.
- Sadun: It's hard to say how you would make an organization more good at thinking, but that would be great.
- Paul: A person who's thinking about dorm leadership as well.
- Caitlin: Any last thoughts?
- Sydney: My biggest concern is looking for someone with too much experience. Older people tend to expect much more and are less willing to put the time in.
- Caitlin: Are there peer institutions who's residential systems are performing really well?
 - Sean: Isn't Rice similar to us?
- Kate: Somewhere we feel Residential Life is being done well.
- Caitlin: If you want to give feedback, send me an email.
- Paul: Are there any members of DSL we think would be great?
 - Sadun: Phil Walsh, although he probably won't want the job. Also, Andy Eisenman, Director of Housing when Scott Kruger died in the late nineties.
 - Kate: At the very least, if these people don't want to run, can we ask that they suggest colleagues?
 - Sadun; Another name I've heard thrown around, Matt McGann, currently works in Admissions.
- Lily: If presidents could please start taking a look at the DormCon constitution, make a mental list of things that are being done poorly, etc, and bring it to the next meeting.
- Sonja: If you guys could also pop your heads down during peak hours, and see if the desk is chaos during Parent's Weekend. If it is, we'll work on trying to set up a new policy for next year. The other thing is, for dining dorms we are having signs put up telling families how to get into the dorm and where to stand, so hopefully they won't get in the way of the ID readers. There is no special policy. Apparently, if you sign in once, you don't need to sign in again for the next 8 hours.

End Time: 20:41